



Prifysgol Cymru
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
University of Wales
Trinity Saint David

Code of Practice for Research Degrees 2018/19

**(Covering PhD by Research, MPhil by Research, MA
by Research / MSc by Research, PhD by Published
Works, and Part Two of Professional Doctorates and
MRes programmes)**

Contents

1.	INTRODUCTION	4
1.1	RESEARCH DEGREES STRUCTURES.....	6
1.1.1	Committees relating to Research Degrees provision.....	6
1.1.2	Research Degrees Admissions Sub-Committee.....	6
1.1.3	Research Degrees Committee	7
1.1.4	Annual Review Boards	8
1.1.5	Ethics Committee	8
1.1.6	Administrative structures for research degrees	9
1.2	RESPONSIBILITIES.....	9
1.2.1	Responsibilities of Faculty Directors of Research Degrees	9
1.2.2	Responsibilities of Director of Studies	9
1.2.3	Responsibilities of supervisors	10
1.2.4	Responsibilities of postgraduate research students	11
1.3	KEEPING IN CONTACT	11
1.4	LEAVE OF ABSENCE	12
1.5	INDUCTION.....	12
1.5.1	Induction for PhD by Research, MPhil by Research, and MA by Research / MSc by Research.....	12
1.5.2	Induction to Part Two of Professional Doctorates and MRes programmes.....	13
2.	ADMISSIONS	13
2.1	GENERAL ENTRY REQUIREMENTS.....	14
2.2	NON-STANDARD APPLICANTS.....	15
2.3	RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT	15
2.4	ENROLMENT	15
3.	SUPERVISION	16
3.1	LEAD SUPERVISOR.....	16
3.2	SUPERVISOR (NOT LEAD SUPERVISOR).....	16
3.3	DIRECTOR OF STUDIES	17
3.4	ADVISER.....	17
3.5	GENERAL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR SUPERVISORS	17
3.6	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR DIRECTOR OF STUDIES	18
3.7	SPECIFIC CRITERIA FOR APPOINTING A SUPERVISORY TEAM.....	18

3.8	SPECIFIC CRITERIA TO ACT AS LEAD SUPERVISOR WITHIN A SUPERVISORY TEAM.....	18
3.9	USE OF EXTERNAL SUPERVISORS.....	19
3.10	SUPERVISORY LOAD	20
4.	METHODS, MODES AND PERIODS OF STUDY	20
4.1	METHODS AND MODES OF STUDY	20
4.2	PERIODS OF STUDY	21
5.	CHANGE OF MODE, TRANSFER AND WITHDRAWAL	22
5.1	CHANGE OF MODE OF STUDY.....	22
5.2	TRANSFER OF CANDIDATURE.....	23
5.2.1	Transfer in from another institution	23
5.2.2	Transfer out to another institution	23
5.2.3	Transfer to higher award.....	24
5.2.4	Transfer to a lower award	24
5.3	VOLUNTARY WITHDRAWAL	25
6.	INTERRUPTION OF STUDIES AND EXTENSION OF TIME LIMIT.....	25
6.1	INTERRUPTION OF STUDIES	25
6.2	REQUIRED TO SUSPEND	27
6.3	EXTENSIONS TO THE MAXIMUM TIME LIMIT FOR COMPLETING A RESEARCH DEGREE.....	27
7.	PROGRESS MONITORING	29
7.1	RESEARCH PROJECT APPROVAL.....	31
7.2	ETHICAL APPROVAL	31
7.3	ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT	31
7.4	PROBATIONARY PERIOD OF STUDY (PHD BY RESEARCH ONLY)	34
8.	EMPLOYMENT FOR POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH STUDENTS	35
8.1	GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANTS	36
9.	SUBMISSION AND PRESENTATION OF THESIS	36
9.1	SUBMISSION OF THESIS	36
9.1.1	Note on early submission	37
9.2	ACCESS TO A THESIS.....	37
9.3	PRESENTATION OF THESIS.....	37
9.3.1	Maximum word length.....	37
9.3.2	Inclusion of artefacts within a thesis	38
9.3.3	Inclusion of published papers in a thesis	38
10.	EXAMINATION.....	39
10.1	CONSTITUTION OF EXAMINING BOARD	39

10.1.1	Chair of Examining Board	39
10.1.2	Nomination, Selection and Appointment of Examiners.....	40
10.2	TIMEFRAME AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR EXAMINATION.....	43
10.3	REQUEST FOR EXAMINATION BY ELECTRONIC MEANS (VIDEO LINK)	44
10.4	DUTIES OF MEMBERS OF THE EXAMINING BOARD.....	45
10.4.1	Particular role of internal examiner	45
10.4.2	Particular role of the external examiner	45
10.4.3	Particular role of Chair of Examining Board	45
10.5	EXAMINERS' REPORTS	45
10.5.1	Content of the Report.....	45
10.5.2	Procedures for Reporting Serious Concerns.....	46
10.5.3	Responding to Research Degrees Examining reports.....	46
10.6	CONDUCT OF THE EXAMINATION	46
10.6.1	Preliminary examination of the thesis: MPhil by Research, PhD by Research, PhD by Published Works, and Professional Doctorate	46
10.6.2	The oral examination.....	47
10.7	AFTER THE EXAMINATION	48
10.7.1	Notes on possible outcomes	49
10.8	FORMAL NOTIFICATION OF OUTCOME	51
10.9	FINAL SUBMISSION OF THESIS	51
11.	ACADEMIC APPEALS, AND COMPLAINTS ABOUT SUPERVISION	51
12.	UNFAIR PRACTICE IN RESEARCH DEGREES	51
13.	REVIEW OF POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH DEGREE CANDIDATURE DECISIONS BY DEAN OF QUALITY AND STANDARDS	51

1. INTRODUCTION

This Code of Practice for Research Degrees sets out the policies and procedures of the University of Wales Trinity Saint David (hereafter the University or UWTSD) related to all research degrees offered by the University. These include the PhD by Research, the MPhil by Research, the MA by Research / MSc by Research, all Professional Doctorates, all MRes programmes of study, and the PhD by Published Works. The Code of Practice for Research Degrees also applies to collaborative partner institutions with research degrees provision. This Code of Practice for Research Degrees applies to all research degrees students registered for UWTSD awards. For students registered for a University of Wales award, please refer to the University of Wales' Common Academic Framework for Research Degrees.

It is intended to provide information to members of academic staff, research degrees students, administrators, and members of examining boards. Together with the regulations contained in the Academic Quality Handbook 2018/19 (see Chapters 7, 8, 9 and 10), it forms the framework for the management of research degrees.

The Code of Practice for Research Degrees contains a range of policies and procedures, which should be treated as having regulatory authority subordinate to the Research Degree Regulations set out in Chapter 8 of the Academic Quality Handbook 2018/19.

The code has been drawn up after consulting various documents published externally, including:

- QAA Quality Code – Chapter B11 – research degrees;
- HEFCE October 2002 report “Improving standards in research degrees programmes”;
- SET for Success;
- Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales;
- NQA Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance;
- UKCGE: The Role of Publications and Other Artefacts in Submissions for the UK PhD;
- VITAE Researchers Professional Development;
- Concordat to support the Career Development of Researchers.

This document should be read in conjunction with:

- the Research Degrees Regulations in Chapter 8 of the Academic Quality Handbook 2018/19;
- the Procedural Framework for Collaborative Provision in Chapter 9 of the Academic Quality Handbook 2018/19;
- the assessment and progression regulations in Chapters 6 and 7 of the Academic Quality Handbook 2018/19 for Part One of the MRes and Professional Doctorates programmes of study;
- the recognition of prior learning regulations in Chapter 10 of the Academic Quality Handbook 2018/19;
- the University's Research Ethics and Integrity Code of Practice, Research Data Management Policy, Intellectual Property Policy, and Health and Safety Policy;
- Programme of Study Handbooks for MRes programmes of study and Professional Doctorates.
- The University's Collaborative Partner Operations Manual.

Note: Every effort has been made to ensure consistency between the different documents produced by the University of Wales Trinity Saint David for the management of research degrees. Faculties and collaborative partner institutions are responsible for ensuring that any

supplementary information given to research supervisors and/or research students does not contradict the central information and is regularly updated in line with changes made to the University's overarching framework.

However, where there appears to be a conflict between the guidance or regulations contained in these documents, the Regulations for Research Degrees as outlined in Chapter 8 of the Academic Quality Handbook 2018/19 take precedence over all other documents, including this Code of Practice for Research Degrees.

This Code of Practice for Research Degrees takes precedence over any programme handbooks for MRes programmes of study and Professional Doctorates or any Faculty or collaborative partner institution's specific information distributed to research degrees students.

Note on applicability of Research Degree Regulations

The regulations and procedures outlined in the Academic Quality Handbook 2018/19 and the Code of Practice for Research Degrees 2018/19 are applicable to all research degrees students enrolled on UWTSD degrees. For students who are enrolled for University of Wales awards and under the University of Wales' Common Academic Framework for Research Degrees, the University of Wales' Degrees and Academic Awards Board (DAAB) has the final judgement on each stage of candidature.

The regulations as set out in Chapter 8 of the Academic Quality Handbook 2018/19 will apply to all research degrees students with the following exceptions:

- 1) The word count regulations have changed for research degrees students studying for a practice-based PhD / MPhil by Research (e.g. within the Creative and Performing Arts). Students who started their degrees before October 2012 will continue to work towards the word limit and structure of their programme as stipulated by the regulations when they started their degrees. All students who started their degree on or after October 2012 will follow the regulations as set out in the current regulations.
- 2) Current students on either the DMin programme or the PhD in Applied Archaeology will continue to study according to the regulations that were in force when they started their programmes; the current Professional Doctorate regulations do not apply to students on those programmes. For all other UWTSD students, the 2018/19 outcome regulations as outlined in Chapter 8 of the Academic Quality Handbook 2018/19 apply.
- 3) For University of Wales students, the University of Wales outcome regulations will apply.

The unfair practice regulations, suspension, interruption of studies and extensions regulations, appeal and complaints regulations as well as all disciplinary regulations will be applied to all students in accordance with the regulations as they are set out in Chapter 8 of the Academic Quality Handbook 2018/19 and the Code of Practice for Research Degrees 2018/19.

The Academic Quality Handbook can be found on the University website at: <http://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/academic-office/>

Please note that whereas students studying for an MRes degree or a Professional Doctorate are awarded a named degree if successful, students studying for a PhD by Research, an MPhil by Research, or an MA by Research / MSc by Research (including research students working within practice-based areas of research) are not awarded named degrees.

The 2018/19 regulations contain important sections on the protocols relating to the inclusion of non-textual artefacts in a thesis and the examination of such a thesis as well as on the use of published papers within research degrees other than the PhD by Published Works. Please

note also that the pass mark for Part One modules for MRes programmes of study as well as Professional Doctorates is 50%.

1.1 RESEARCH DEGREES STRUCTURE

1.1.1 Committees relating to Research Degrees provision

The regulations and procedures for research degrees are governed by the University's Research Degrees Committee (RDC). For students who are enrolled on degrees awarded by the University of Wales there is additional oversight of every stage of candidature by the University of Wales Degree and Academic Award Board (DAAB).

All applications for admission to the degrees of PhD by Research, MPhil by Research, MA by Research / MSc by Research, and PhD by Published Works are considered by the Research Degrees Admissions Sub-Committee on behalf of RDC (except for applications from current members of staff, which are considered directly by RDC). The terms of reference for the Research Degrees Admission Sub-Committee are presented in Section 1.1.2 of this Code of Practice.

The annual monitoring processes are overseen by the relevant Annual Review Board. The terms of reference for these boards are presented in Section 1.1.4 of this Code of Practice.

All ethics approval processes for research degrees students are handled by the Ethics Committee, the terms of reference of which can be found in Chapter 2 of the Academic Quality Handbook 2018/19.

Requests for recognition of prior learning for Part One of a Professional Doctorate degree and an MRes degree are overseen by the RPEL Board as specified in Chapter 10 of the Academic Quality Handbook 2018/19.

Collaborative partner institutions will normally have their own committees that report to the University's RDC, with the appropriate Faculty partnership link (e.g. Partnership Coordinator, Partnership Team Leader, Faculty Director of Research Degrees Studies) attending as a member.

1.1.2 Research Degrees Admissions Sub-Committee

Admission processes and procedures are outlined in Section 2 of this Code of Practice. The Research Degrees Admissions Sub-Committee is responsible for the consideration of all applications for the PhD by Research, MPhil by Research, MA by Research / MSc by Research, and PhD by Published works degrees. For Professional Doctorate degrees and MRes degrees different processes are followed as specified in Section 2 of this Code of Practice with admission decisions reported to RDC. Recognition of Prior Certificated Learning and Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning for Part One of Professional Doctorate degrees and MRes degrees are considered by the RPCL/RPEL Board.

The Research Degrees Admissions Sub-Committee will consider specifically issues such as the overall composition of supervisory team, supervisory capacity, inclusion of the supervisors on the appropriate Directory, the academic strength of the proposal in the light of comments made by the Faculty, and the assessment of needs and resources on the admission decision form as well as any other issues highlighted as a result of the interview by the Faculty. The Research Degrees Admissions Sub-Committee will also consider the paperwork for non-standard admissions for the degrees specified above.

Terms of Reference of Research Degrees Admission Sub-Committee

- (1) To ensure that the University's procedures for dealing with research degree admissions to the PhD by Research, MPhil by Research, MA by Research / MSc by Research, and PhD by Published Works are appropriate and transparent, and to monitor their effective and consistent implementation;
- (2) To review the admission procedures for those research degrees annually and make recommendations for the Research Degrees Committee for their revision;
- (3) To provide advice and guidance to staff from Faculties and collaborative partner institutions on application and admission procedures for the PhD by Research, MPhil by Research, MA by Research / MSc by Research, and the PhD by Published Works and to contribute to training of staff;
- (4) To consider and provide formal responses to queries from Faculties and collaborative partnership institutions in relation to applications submitted;
- (5) To consider and approve applications for the PhD by Research, MPhil by Research, MA by Research / MSc by Research, and PhD by Published Works;
- (6) To consider and approve applications for transfer from another HE institution;
- (7) To consider and approve non-standard admissions for the PhD by Research, MPhil by Research, MA by Research / MSc by Research, and the PhD by Published Works;
- (8) To report to the Research Degrees Committee decisions made in relation to applications for the PhD by Research, MPhil by Research, MA by Research / MSc by Research, and PhD by Published Works.

Membership of Research Degrees Admission Sub-Committee

A member of Research Degrees Committee (Chair)
One representative from each Faculty
Registry appointment (Secretary)

1.1.3 Research Degrees Committee

The University's RDC oversees all aspects of the University's research degrees provision. This committee, which has representation from all Faculties, reports to the Research Committee (RC) and the Academic Quality and Standards Committee (AQSC) on the effectiveness of the arrangements for maintaining appropriate academic standards and enhancing the quality of postgraduate research programmes.

RDC meets on a regular basis to consider all matters relating to research degrees. It is also charged with developing all procedures that support, monitor, and review all aspects of the University's research degrees provision. Membership and the terms of reference of RDC can be found in Chapter 2 of the Academic Quality Handbook 2018/19.

Each Faculty of the University has representation on RDC. Staff can raise issues at RDC through their Faculty Representative or directly through the Academic Office or the Chair of RDC. Feedback is always very welcome as are suggestions as to how to improve and develop the University's research degrees provision.

Three student representatives attend RDC on behalf of all students enrolled on research degree programmes. Student representatives are normally elected for a period of three years.

Students can ask for issues to be raised with RDC through the student representatives who will feed the comments to RDC and report back. Students can also contact the Students' Union, the Student Experience Department, or discuss any issues they may have with the relevant Faculty, who can then take the issue to RDC through the Faculty representation system. Students can give formal feedback through surveys such as the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) and through annual monitoring forms.

Students associated with collaborative partner institutions are represented on their local committees and any feedback or issues raised by students that need to be considered by the University's RDC will be reported by the Faculty to which the collaborative partner institution programme is linked.

1.1.4 Annual Review Boards

Annual Review Boards are organised centrally and meet at three times during the year. These Boards consider, on behalf of RDC, the annual monitoring reports for all PhD by Research, MPhil by Research, MA by Research / MSc by Research, and PhD by Published Works research degrees students and for all Professional Doctorate and MRes students who are in Part Two of their degree. Outcomes are decided taking into account the recommended outcomes from the supervisory team and the Faculty. With the exception of the outcome of "termination of studies" which needs to be approved by RDC, all other outcomes are reported to RDC. The Annual Review Boards are the University's mechanism for securing institutional oversight of the supervisory process and the progress made by research degrees students ensuring institutional consistency in the treatment of its research degrees students.

Terms of Reference of Annual Review Boards

- (1) To consider the annual review paperwork for each student (and any action plan review paperwork) and assess the progress and performance of each student, taking into account the recommendation of the supervisory team and Faculty and the student's own assessment of their progress;
- (2) To formally make final decisions in relation to the outcome for each student (satisfactory, cause for concern, unsatisfactory) and confirm any associated action plans or remedial action and to report these outcomes to the Research Degrees Committee. Where the outcome is a "termination of studies" this outcome must be approved by the Research Degrees Committee as well;
- (3) To take appropriate action on any concerns raised by either the supervisory team or the student in the annual or review paperwork (or action plan review paperwork);
- (4) To keep minutes of the decisions made by the Board, including relevant comments on the performance of students.

Membership of Annual Review Boards

Chair of the Research Degrees Committee or nominee (Chair)
Minimum of one representative from each Faculty (who is also a member of Research Degrees Committee)
Postgraduate Research Office appointment (Secretary)

1.1.5 Ethics Committee

The University has a central Ethics Committee which is responsible for ensuring that all research activity undertaken by students and staff is ethically responsible and that students and supervisory teams are fully aware of their responsibilities during the period of research. All research projects need ethical approval, but there will be different levels of approval for different research projects depending on the level of risk involved with the research. Formal

ethical approval must be sought after the full research proposal has been approved in principle by RDC by submitting an application to the Ethics Committee. Research activity in areas which require ethical approval should not commence until after written approval has been received from the Ethics Committee. However, a student may commence other aspects of the research (such as a literature review) while awaiting formal approval.

The University's Research Ethics and Integrity Code of Practice can be accessed through the University's website at <http://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/research/research-ethics/>.

1.1.6 Administrative structures for research degrees

A number of professional units look after the University's research degrees provision. The Academic Office is responsible for the support of research degree students throughout their time at the University once they have been admitted, including the submission and examination of theses. The Academic Office also offers support to all academic staff with responsibility for research degree students and liaises closely with the different Faculties, collaborative partner institutions, and a range of professional units. Responsibility for the admission of research degree students lies with the Registry Admission team. Responsibility for the research environment and training of research degrees students lies with the University's Research, Enterprise and Innovation Services (RIES). The Student Experience Department looks after student engagement, which includes student feedback (for example the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) which is a biennial sector-wide survey of research students). The Students' Union looks after the election of student representatives.

1.2 RESPONSIBILITIES

The rights and responsibilities in relation to research degrees are as follows:

1.2.1 Responsibilities of Faculty Directors of Research Degrees

Faculty Directors of Research Degrees represent the Faculty and any collaborative partner institutions linked to the Faculty on RDC. Within this overall remit, specific responsibilities are to ensure that:

- i) the Academic Office is kept informed of any changes in relation to the supervisory teams within the Faculty (e.g. due to prolonged illness or absence of members of staff or students);
- ii) all Faculty's research degrees paperwork is submitted in good time and good order for any research degrees related meetings or boards;
- iii) staff within the Faculty are fully informed about any changes to regulations, processes and procedures;
- iv) agreed research degree processes and procedures are adhered to within their Faculty;
- v) requests from students for interruptions, extensions or change of mode of study are evaluated prior to submission to the Academic Office;
- vi) proposals for Examining Boards are submitted to the Academic Office for approval by RDC in good time.

1.2.2 Responsibilities of Director of Studies

The Director of Studies has both a pastoral role and the responsibility for providing advice and assistance with the necessary administrative processes as and where necessary, e.g. as regards progression, change of mode of study, interruption of studies, extension of the maximum time limit. In particular the Director of Studies is responsible for ensuring that:

- i) the student is provided with pastoral support as and where necessary and/or referred to other sources of support, e.g. Academic Office, Student Services;

- ii) the training needs of the student are identified at commencement and during the programme of research;
- iii) a full research proposal is submitted to RDC for approval within the relevant timescales;
- iv) an application for ethical approval is submitted to Ethics Committee following approval in principle of the full research proposal;
- v) a minimum of three formal meetings are held each year and attended by all members of the supervisory team;
- vi) the discussion and action points arising from each formal meeting are summarised in a formal written record (Record of Formal Meeting Form) which is submitted alongside the formal progression report;
- vii) formal progression reports are completed as required in a timely fashion;
- viii) the student is aware of the University's regulations for research degrees as well as regulations and policies on unfair practice, intellectual property, health and safety, and any ethical issues which may arise during the course of a student's research;
- ix) advice and assistance are provided on the necessary administrative processes as and where necessary, e.g. in the event of seeking an interruption of studies, change of mode study, extension of maximum time limit for submission;
- x) the student is given detailed advice on the expected milestones and dates for successive stages of research. This should include but not be limited to giving information on what criteria must be met in order to progress satisfactorily, upgrade to a higher level research degree, and the dates which these must be achieved by.

1.2.3 Responsibilities of supervisors

Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that they adhere fully to the University's regulations for research degrees and in particular that they:

- i) offer regular supervision. The frequency of supervision will vary during the duration of the research. At a minimum, there must be at least three formal supervisions meetings with all members of the supervisory team each year with the discussion and action points arising summarised in a formal written record;
- ii) are accessible, within reason (e.g. by e-mail contact) outside planned supervision meetings when advice may be required;
- iii) provide guidance on the nature and requirements of the research degree being pursued and standards expected;
- iv) provide guidance and advice to ensure the research can be completed, including the preparation of the thesis, normally by the end of the minimum period of study;
- v) assist students in producing a detailed work-plan and timetable for research and monitor progress in relation to this plan;
- vi) encourage and support students to participate in the UWTSD Researcher Development Programme;
- vii) complete relevant sections of progression reports as required in a timely fashion;
- viii) ensure the student is given sufficient warning at the earliest stage where progress is inadequate or of an unsatisfactory standard;
- ix) request written work as appropriate and in accordance with the agreed work-plan and return such work with constructive feedback within an agreed period of time;
- x) provide guidance and advice on the writing up of the thesis, including reading and giving commentary upon the thesis during the period of composition;
- xi) provide assistance in preparing for the oral examination and explain its role in the overall examination process;
- xii) provide appropriate supervision in the event of any re-submission;
- xiii) maintain the necessary supervisory expertise, including accessing relevant professional development opportunities in order to effectively perform in the role of supervisor;

- xiv) provide advice on how to network within the specialist field and opportunities to achieve this. This may include advice on which learned societies to join and which conferences to attend;
- xv) provide advice on how and where to present work, e.g. in seminars within the School/Faculty and University and/or at external meetings/conferences;
- xvi) give advice on how and where to publish, if appropriate.

1.2.4 Responsibilities of postgraduate research students

Postgraduate research students are responsible for ensuring that they:

- i) familiarise themselves with the University regulations and guidelines, processes and procedures for research degrees;
- ii) enrol with the University on the anniversary of initial enrolment;
- iii) have regular contact with their supervisory teams as per monitoring policy outlined in the Code of Practice for Research Degrees and attend all scheduled formal and informal meetings;
- iv) attend any lectures/seminars/workshops that are part of Part One of an MRes or Professional Doctorate programme;
- v) make the supervisory team aware of any specific needs or circumstances likely to affect their work;
- vi) complete all necessary forms and paperwork used by the University to monitor progress and performance;
- vii) take ownership of their research plan and undertake wider skills training through the University's Researcher Development Programme. A record of training, progress reports, conference contributions etc. are expected to be recorded on the Vitae Online RDF Planning Tool;
- viii) attend the research seminars and training events provided by the University's Researcher Development Programme (RDP), as well as any training offered by Faculty or collaborative partner institutions whether in person or, for distance learning students, electronically;
- ix) ensure that a final version of the thesis is submitted by the maximum submission date;
- x) follow the requirements for submission of the thesis, especially the requirement for referencing according to a consistent and recognised standard.

1.3 KEEPING IN CONTACT

Postgraduate research students are expected to meet their supervisory team on a regular basis throughout their period of study: this is irrespective of whether the student is a residential or distance learning student and irrespective of the stage of candidature.

If a student does not maintain regular contact, supervisory teams may become concerned that satisfactory progress is not being made. These concerns will be raised with the Dean of Faculty, Head of School or the Faculty Director of Research Degrees and the Academic Office, and the student will be asked to contact their supervisory team or submit work. If regular contact does still not continue, this will be reported on the annual review form or directly to RDC and progress may formally be deemed unsatisfactory and re-enrolment onto the next academic year may not be permitted.

Where progress is impeded due to unforeseen personal or professional problems, it is essential that the student contacts both their Director of Studies and the Academic Office to inform them of the situation. Advice will be given on how to proceed with the matter.

1.4 LEAVE OF ABSENCE

All full-time students are expected to be engaged in their research programmes for 35 hours during the normal working week. For part-time students, attendance requirements are reduced; the expectation is that they will be undertaking work related directly to their research for approximately 15 hours during the normal working week, as agreed with the student's Director of Studies.

Full-time students are entitled to take up to 4 weeks holiday per annum in addition to public Holidays and periods when the University is closed. When planning leave, arrangements must be discussed in advance with the Director of Studies to obtain their approval.

Where students are away from the campus without prior notification to the Director of Studies, they should inform their Director of Studies at the earliest opportunity of the duration of the absence and the reasons for it. Students who have a legitimate reason for unplanned absences must produce evidence to explain these. If a student is unable to attend classes or supervisory sessions, for example because of ill health or accident, the student (or, in an emergency, a friend) must contact their tutor or supervisor before the class or supervisory session take place. Authorised absences will not be included when a student's attendance is assessed for disciplinary action.

The University has an obligation under its UKVI Visa Sponsor Licence to monitor and keep records of academic attendance of international students. For international students on Tier 4 visas, all authorised absences and planned periods of leave must be approved through the relevant Faculty Office and/or International Office.

1.5 INDUCTION

All postgraduate research students should complete the central research induction training programme at the appropriate time. This can be done electronically through an electronic platform by external students. If Faculties or collaborative partner institutions run additional induction programmes they need to ensure that students are made fully aware of the requirements for attendance and of any cost associated with the induction.

1.5.1 Induction for PhD by Research, MPhil by Research, and MA by Research / MSc by Research

It is normally a requirement for all students to attend an induction programme as soon as possible after admission, either by attending the programme in person on the campus that they are studying or at the collaborative partner institution or by following the programme electronically through an electronic platform. All students will be clearly informed of their responsibilities at the beginning of their programme.

The induction programme aims to provide information and training as well as introducing students to academic and administrative staff, and helping the development of their networking with other postgraduates. Arrangements are also made for students to be introduced formally to the relevant library and IT staff and for them to receive appropriate library and IT training.

Part of the induction programme will be delivered centrally and part within the Faculty. For collaborative partner institutions some of the programme will be delivered by the Partnership Team Leader, Partnership Coordinator or the link Faculty's Director of Research Degrees and part of the programme by staff from the collaborative partner institution, such as the Collaborative Partner's Director of Research Degrees.

The overall induction process clarifies:

- facilities available to students;
- administrative support available to students;
- rules about the use of facilities, good practice, and, where appropriate, training required for special equipment;
- rules about data management and protection, where appropriate;
- Health and Safety requirements;
- Intellectual Property policy issues;
- the research ethics application and approval processes and requirements as well as an introduction to the research integrity policy;
- requirements for students to attend and give research seminars and undertake other research training through the University's Researcher Development Programme;
- research skills training information;
- opportunities for students to attend conferences and meetings;
- supervisory and review arrangements and available support.

Following confirmation of completion of the induction programme, as part of the University's commitment to the Researcher Development Framework, students are required to participate in the University's Researcher Development Programme (RDP) and use the Vitae Online RDF Planning Tool to complete a training needs analysis.

Following completion of the training needs analysis, students and their supervisor(s) must discuss and agree a plan which will form the basis of the Personal Development Plan (PDP). The plan must be reviewed regularly and revised throughout the duration of the research programme. The plan must contain a full skills assessment and details of any training which may be required to assist in the successful completion of the research project. The PDP can be developed and maintained in the Vitae Online RDF Planning Tool. Students must review, and where necessary revise, the plan throughout the duration of the research programme. Directors of Studies are responsible for ensuring that assessment of the PDP forms part of the annual monitoring report for supervisory teams.

1.5.2 Induction to Part Two of Professional Doctorates and MRes programmes

Students enrolled on Professional Doctorates or MRes programmes will follow an induction programme as soon as possible after they start Part Two of their research degrees programme. Details of the induction programme are the same as for induction for PhD by Research, MPhil by Research, and MA by Research / MSc by Research.

2. ADMISSIONS

An interview (either face-to-face or by electronic means for applicants at a distance) must, wherever possible, be conducted by at least one member of staff of the Faculty or collaborative partner institution, who must have had appropriate training in selection and admissions procedures. Applicants for the PhD by Published Works must be interviewed by two members of staff. An admission decision form must be completed for each applicant, irrespective of the research degree applied for, which reflects on the interview and application form. Additional processes will be followed for any international applicants who will be studying on a Tier 4 visa.

No research degrees students for the PhD by Research, the MPhil by Research, the MA by Research / MSc by Research, or the PhD by Published Works can be admitted directly by the Faculty or collaborative partner institution and it is important that no promises in relation to admission for those programmes of study are made until the admission has been approved by the Research Degrees Admissions Sub-Committee.

Following interview, where the Faculty or collaborative partner institution are recommending admission, all applications for admission to the degrees of PhD by Research, MPhil by Research, MA by Research / MSc by Research, and PhD by Published Works will be considered by the Research Degrees Admissions Sub-Committee on behalf of RDC (except for applications from current members of staff, which are considered directly by RDC). Applications for admission to Professional Doctorates and MRes programmes are co-ordinated through the Registry with admission decisions to those programmes of study reported to RDC. The University's Admission Policy is adhered to in all cases and without exception.

Research degree applicants are expected to submit the names of two referees as part of the formal application process. These referees should normally be an individual from an organisation at which the applicant has studied or at which the applicant was or is employed. The referees must not be a relative or personal friend of the applicant. If the referees are from an institution at which the applicant has studied, then they must be academics who have assessed the student as part of the qualification that is being used to gain entry. If the referees are from an institution at which the applicant has been or currently is employed, then they must have had line management responsibility for the applicant.

2.1 GENERAL ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

In addition to the the normal minimum entry requirements for each degree (as set out in the relevant paragraph of Chapter 8 of the Academic Quality Handbook 2018/19), all applicants must be capable of satisfying the relevant academic authorities with regard to their proficiency in Welsh or English at a level necessary to complete the programme of work in the chosen language and to prepare to defend a thesis in that language. Proficiency in English for students whose first language is not English is normally evidenced by a minimum IELTS score (or equivalent) of 6.5 overall (to include a minimum score of 6.5 in both reading and writing).

Normally students may not concurrently be enrolled on another award bearing programme in this or any other university/institution. However in certain circumstances, a student may be admitted on a research degree while still enrolled on another award bearing programme:

- The student has completed any taught modules of the other award bearing programme and is preparing for submission of a dissertation;
- The student is no longer liable for fees for the other award bearing programme;
- The student's offer of admission did not stipulate completion of the other award bearing programme as a condition of admission.

Where the condition of admission was the submission of a dissertation for the other award bearing programme, then the student must successfully have completed that award bearing programme no later than 3 months after enrolment on the research degree in order to be permitted to continue study on the research degree. Students who are concurrently enrolled will be informed of the date by which the other award bearing programme must be completed at the point of enrolment and will be sent a reminder at least 1 month before the date. If the student does not successfully complete the award bearing programme by the date stated, then the student will be in breach of the regulation concerning concurrent enrolment and candidature for the research degree will be terminated or suspended until such time as the award bearing programme is completed.

Applicants who do not possess the normal minimum entrance requirements may be considered for admission on their merits as outlined in the Section 2.2 of this Code of Practice

to determine the academic attainment and suitability to undertake research of the student, prior to study commencing.

2.2 NON-STANDARD APPLICANTS

Where applicants do not meet the normal minimum entry requirements for each degree and the general entry requirements, the University has the responsibility to ensure that they can demonstrate equivalent academic ability, for example, that they have acquired the requisite skills, knowledge and training from their professional work.

As part of the admission procedures for such non-standard admissions, the features of the applicants' professional work that evidence the acquisition of the skills are highlighted. For example, their professional occupation may use the academic skills developed during an undergraduate degree in a way which develops independent critical assessment of evidence, or formulation of plans, or use of methodologies which would have extended their undergraduate achievement. Clearly, applicants working in non-graduate positions will not easily be able to satisfy this requirement.

2.3 RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT

During the consultation process with applicants prior to entry, Faculties and collaborative partner institutions must ensure that there is adequate expertise available to provide supervisory support for the topic to be pursued within a research-active environment and that appropriate training is available to support the student's specialist needs.

Care should be taken to ensure that potential research students are not isolated within their own project and that they have contact with other researchers both from within and outside the University or collaborative partner institution so that they can share experiences and form networks.

Generally there should be:

- opportunities to link with the wider professional community through, for example conference and seminar attendance;
- ready access to academic colleagues for advice and support;
- availability of adequate learning and research tools;
- the opportunity to develop peer support networks where issues or problems can be discussed informally;
- guidance on research ethics and good practice;
- an emphasis on the need to complete the research programme within the expected period of study;
- opportunities to explore impact and knowledge transfer pathways for their research;
- opportunities to explore career options, both within and outside of academia.

Participation in the University's Researcher Development Programme is encouraged in this regard.

2.4 ENROLMENT

Students of research degrees must complete the appropriate enrolment form and produce such formal identification documents as may be required by the University. Upon enrolment students will be responsible for the payment of fees.

As soon as possible after enrolment students will be provided with an opportunity to complete the University or collaborative partner institution's research degrees students' Induction Programme.

Research students must, to maintain their enrolment, pay all applicable fees and pursue an approved research project for the minimum period required for the appropriate mode of study (see Section 8.8 of this Code of Practice).

Where a thesis contains a collaborative research element, all relevant arrangements, including, for example, the format of the thesis and viva arrangements, must be approved at the admission stage, before a student is enrolled.

3. SUPERVISION

Every student studying for a PhD by Research, an MPhil by Research, Part Two of a Professional Doctorate, and a PhD by Published Works will have a supervisory team of no fewer than two supervisors approved by RDC.

As a minimum each supervisory team will consist of a Lead Supervisor and at least one other supervisor. Further, one member of the supervisory team will be identified as the Director of Studies. In addition to these individuals, a supervisory team may be supplemented by advisers (individuals with relevant specialist expertise who do not qualify as supervisors) as appropriate.

Every student studying for an MA by Research / MSc by Research and Part Two of a Master by Research (MRes) will have a Lead Supervisor approved by RDC.

Normally supervisors should be members of academic staff who are expected to remain in employment at the University or collaborative partnership institution for at least the minimum period of study for which students are being enrolled. All supervisors must be listed on the University's Directory of Directors of Studies and Supervisors.

Individuals with specialist expertise relevant to the research project who do not qualify as supervisors may be appointed as advisers and members of staff from the University may be appointed as advisers for students at collaborative partner institutions to provide additional oversight. All advisers must be approved by RDC and must be added to the appropriate central Directory.

3.1 LEAD SUPERVISOR

The Lead Supervisor will be the student's main academic contact throughout the research student journey and will have overall responsibility for the student's academic supervision. The Lead Supervisor must maintain regular contact with the student and should keep appropriate documentation as evidence of such contact. The Lead Supervisor must attend a minimum of three formal meetings with the student and all other members of the supervisory team in each academic year.

3.2 SUPERVISOR (NOT LEAD SUPERVISOR)

The University recognises that supervision practice may vary between subjects and Schools/Centres and that where a supervisory team is used, the academic input of the other supervisor will vary from case to case. These supervisors should meet with students as

required, but must attend a minimum of three formal meetings with the student and all other members of the supervisory team in each academic year.

3.3 DIRECTOR OF STUDIES

One of the supervisors, normally the Lead Supervisor, will act as Director of Studies, with primary responsibility for supporting the student on a pastoral level and for the administrative oversight of the supervision and the supervisory team. The Director of Studies is responsible for guiding the student in administrative matters and for ensuring that the student's progress is appropriately reported through the formal progress monitoring processes. In a supervisory team, the supervisor who is not identified as Director of Studies will assume secondary administrative/pastoral responsibility.

3.4 ADVISER

Individuals with specialist expertise relevant to the research project who do not meet the general eligibility criteria for supervisors may be appointed as advisers. Advisers may form part of the supervisory team for a defined period of time or for the duration of the student's enrolment. Advisers may not take the role of Lead Supervisor or of Director of Studies and will have no formal responsibility for administrative processes or progress monitoring. Advisers will meet with students as required and should attend any formal meetings which are held during their appointment. All advisers must be approved by RDC and must be added to the appropriate central Directory. The Faculty is responsible for arranging and maintaining appropriate contracts with Human Resources following the approval of the Adviser through RDC.

3.5 GENERAL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR SUPERVISORS

In order to qualify for the Directory of Supervisors and Examiners as a recognised supervisor, an individual must be an academic member of staff and a substantive employee of the University or collaborative partner institution (normally holding a contract equivalent to at least 0.4 of a full-time post). In addition an individual must be able to demonstrate that they fulfil at least two of the following requirements:

- a) possession of a higher degree by research at doctoral level;
- b) have clear research competence and recent research expertise, demonstrated through peer-reviewed publications, regular conference attendance, or research grant income in the past five years;
- c) experience of involvement in the successful supervision of a research degree student to completion in the past five years.

Faculties or collaborative partner institutions may submit to RDC the names of proposed supervisors for inclusion in the Directory of Supervisors and Examiners. An individual who has been approved as a supervisor must attend workshops for new supervisors within 12 months of being approved. Failure to attend such workshops will result in the individual being removed from the Directory. Experienced supervisors should attend training events to maintain and enhance their skills and to ensure they are familiar with the quality framework, requirements and processes of the University especially where new regulations and requirements are introduced.

An individual who is currently a student for a research degree at the University or any other Higher Education institution is not eligible to act as a supervisor, even where all other criteria are met. Where such an individual has previously approved for the Directory of Supervisors

and Examiners, that individual must be withdrawn from the Directory until the individual has completed the research degree.

3.6 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR DIRECTOR OF STUDIES

Faculties or collaborative partner institutions may submit to RDC at any time the names of proposed Directors of Studies for inclusion in the Directory of Supervisors and Examiners. In order to qualify for the Directory of Supervisors and Examiners as a recognised Director of Studies an individual must meet **all** the eligibility criteria to act as a supervisor, that is, must:

- a) hold a higher degree by research at doctoral level; and
- b) demonstrate clear research competence and recent research expertise thorough peer-reviewed publications, regular conference attendance, or research grant income in the last five years; and
- c) have experience of involvement in the successful supervision of a research degree student to completion in the past five years.

In addition, the individual must attend relevant training events to ensure they are familiar with the quality framework, requirements and processes of the University especially where new regulations and requirements are introduced.

3.7 SPECIFIC CRITERIA FOR APPOINTING A SUPERVISORY TEAM

In order to be appointed to a particular supervisory team, an individual must be listed on the University's Directory of Supervisors and Examiners as a recognised supervisor.

All supervisors within a supervisory team should hold a contract of employment as a member of staff of the University or collaborative partnership institution which outlives the minimum period of study for the student to be supervised.

Within a supervisory team, at least one member of the team must have experience of supervising from registration to successful completion of research degrees at or above the level of the student to be supervised.

At least one member of the overall supervisory team for a PhD by Published Works student must have experience in the supervision or examination of the PhD by Published Works. Where no eligible supervisors are available, an additional Adviser must be appointed to the team for the duration of the student's enrolment.

For individuals who are undertaking their first appointment as a supervisor with the University, another member of the supervisory team on which they serve or another experienced member of staff must be assigned formally as their mentor for developing supervisory skills. The Academic Office will be able to advise in relation to possible mentors. New supervisors must meet with their mentor at least once per term formally to discuss progress and any issues. Mentors are expected to write a short annual report to the Faculty's or collaborative partner institution's Director of Research Degrees to reflect on the mentoring which will be used as part of the appraisal process.

3.8 SPECIFIC CRITERIA TO ACT AS LEAD SUPERVISOR WITHIN A SUPERVISORY TEAM

In order to be eligible to act as a Lead Supervisor for a particular student, the supervisor must hold a higher degree by research in a relevant discipline at or above the level at which the

individual to be supervised will study and must fulfil at least **one** of the following **additional** criteria:

- i) authorship of research publications in an area relevant to the proposed research programme in the past five years;
- ii) track-record of research grant awards in an area relevant to the proposed research programme in the past five years;
- iii) practice-based journal publications or published conference presentations, government evaluation reports, technical papers or consultancy reports in an area relevant to the proposed research programme in the past five years;
- iv) demonstration of national standing in an area relevant to the proposed research programme (e.g. keynote speaker at professional conference, election to senior position in national organisation, national award, appointment to national consultancy role such as membership of government committee) in the past five years;
- v) experience of involvement in the successful supervision of a research degree to completion in an area relevant to the proposed research programme at or above the level at which the individual to be supervised will study in the past five years.

Where an individual does not meet any of the criteria i) to v), a case may be made for them to act as the Lead Supervisor; for example, an individual may possess a combination of elements from different criteria which are slightly outside the time-limits set above.

3.9 USE OF EXTERNAL SUPERVISORS

Where an approved supervisor no longer meets the general eligibility criteria for supervisors, consideration should be given to replacing them with an eligible supervisor. Where this has arisen for a Lead Supervisor because of a move in employment to another institution, and where the student is less than two thirds through the minimum period of study, the expectation would be that the student would transfer to the Lead Supervisor's new institution and the University would assist in facilitating this. In all other cases, the expectation would be that the student would continue research with the University and that a new supervisor would be appointed. In exceptional cases, where a student is near to completion, a former Lead Supervisor may be appointed as an "external" supervisor and act as a Lead Supervisor, but not as a Director of Studies.

In particular cases, a Faculty or collaborative partner institution may present a formal request to RDC for the approval of the use of pools of "external" supervisors. The formal request should present a strategic case for the use of an external pool detailing why the Faculty or collaborative partner institution is unable to provide sufficient supervisory capacity from within the University or collaborative partner institution and what steps are being taken to remedy the situation. The Research Degrees Committee will review approved requests every four years to ensure that the strategic case remains relevant. All members of the pool must meet all general criteria (except holding a substantive contract of employment with the University or collaborative partnership institution) and all specific criteria for the role adopted within the supervisory team. In such cases the role of Lead Supervisor may be assumed by an approved "external" supervisor, but a member of academic staff of the University or collaborative partner institution should normally be appointed as Director of Studies.

In all other cases, external supervisors should not be used, although individuals external to the University or the collaborative partner institution may be appointed as Advisers to supplement a supervisory team.

The Faculty is responsible for arranging and maintaining appropriate contracts with Human Resources following the approval of any external supervisor by RDC.

3.10 SUPERVISORY LOAD

The University supervisory workload for any individual supervisor, irrespective of the role within a supervisory team, should not exceed a total of ten full-time equivalent students. Within this overall limit, an individual supervisor should not act as Director of Studies for more than six full-time equivalent students at PhD, MPhil, Professional Doctorate level and should not exceed a total of ten full-time equivalent students at MRes (Part II), MA by Research or MSc by Research level. However, in specific cases RDC will consider requests from a Faculty or collaborative partner institution for these limits to be increased for individual supervisors, for example for research intensive staff and especially where research supervision is the exclusive role of the post holder or where the member of staff's activity profile is adjusted accordingly.

4. METHODS, MODES AND PERIODS OF STUDY

4.1 METHODS AND MODES OF STUDY

Students either study full-time or part-time, and are either based at the University / collaborative partner institution or externally to the University / collaborative partner institution.

Research students study over the full calendar year. Full-time students are entitled to take up to four weeks holiday per annum in addition to Public Holidays and periods when the University is closed.

Full-time students will spend a minimum of 35 hours a week on research and study during the period of supervised study for the degree.

Part-time students are expected to spend approximately 15 hours a week on research and study during the period of supervised study for the degree.

The University permits students to follow one of four methods of study for research degrees:

- Method A: full-time at the University or a collaborative partner institution;
- Method B: full-time externally in circumstances approved by the University;
- Method C: part-time at the University or a collaborative partner institution;
- Method D: part-time externally in circumstances approved by the University.

All full-time students under Method A should live within easy commuting distance of the relevant University campus or collaborative partner institution. Full-time students for whom the University acts as student visa sponsor must be resident in the United Kingdom and live within easy commuting distance of the relevant University campus for the total duration of candidature. Normally, "easy commuting distance" is taken to mean that a student should not have to undertake a journey in excess of one hour to attend the relevant University campus or collaborative partner institution. Part-time students under Method C are not required to live within easy commuting distance of the relevant University campus or collaborative partner institution, but where the distance to place of residence is considered excessive, such students may be reclassified as Method D.

Notwithstanding the requirements for students under Method A noted above, full-time students may be permitted to spend a period of time away from the relevant University campus or collaborative partner institution on research-related activities. Requests to undertake research-related activities away from the relevant University campus or collaborative partner institution

should be made on the relevant form and submitted to the Academic Office. Normally the maximum period of time that a student may spend away from the relevant University campus or collaborative partner institution for any award is 12 months for a full-time student and 24 months for a part-time student.

In order for students to study under Method B or Method D (external or “distance learning”), the University must seek assurances that the student will be able to access appropriate facilities and resources and will be able to attend the minimum required three formal meetings with the supervisory team either in person or via video-conference or by telephone. It is expected that students will have at least one meeting in person each academic year.

4.2 PERIODS OF STUDY

Each research degree has a normal period of supervised study – the minimum period of study – at the end of which a student is expected to submit. There is also a maximum submission date after which a student will be deemed to have run out of time and will not be permitted to submit a thesis.

Submission before the end of the minimum period of study will only be allowed in exceptional circumstances and only if all required fees have been paid. Students who wish to submit their thesis before the end of the minimum submission period must follow the procedures as outlined in Section 9.1.1 of this Code of Practice.

The required periods of study for students pursuing research degrees are given below with reference to the modes of study. These periods of study are applicable to any student who first enrolled from October 2016 onwards. For students first enrolled prior to October 2016, the periods of study are those as defined in the relevant section of the Academic Quality Handbook current at the time of initial enrolment and as stated in the formal Offer Letter.

a) PhD by Research (both MPhil/PhD by Research and direct entry PhD by Research)

Mode of study	Minimum period of study	Maximum submission
Full-time	3 years	4 years
Part-time	6 years	8 years

b) MPhil by Research

Mode of study	Minimum period of study	Maximum submission
Full-time	2 years	3 years
Part-time	4 years	6 years

c) MA by Research / MSc by Research

Mode of study	Minimum period of study	Maximum submission
Full-time	1 year	2 years
Part-time	2 years	4 years

d) Professional Doctorates

Mode of study	Minimum period of study	Maximum submission
Full-time	3 years	4 years
Part-time	6 years	8 years

e) Master by Research (MRes)

Mode of study	Minimum period of study	Maximum submission
Full-time	1 year	2 years
Part-time	2 years	4 years

f) PhD by Published Work

Mode of study	Minimum period of study	Maximum submission
Full-time	1 year	1 year
Part-time	2 years	2 years

During the minimum period of study the student will be liable for fees at the appropriate level based on the type of research degree and the method and mode of study.

The minimum period of study does not include periods when study has been interrupted in accordance with Section 6 of this Code of Practice.

5. CHANGE OF MODE, TRANSFER AND WITHDRAWAL

5.1 CHANGE OF MODE OF STUDY

Change of mode of study (full-time to part-time or part-time to full-time) is only permitted for students who have not completed the minimum period of study as set out in Section 4.2 of this Code of Practice. A change of mode of study will normally only be actioned on the student's enrolment anniversary. Changes from part-time to full-time will normally only be permitted at the end of even years of part-time study (after 2 or 4 years). Exceptional circumstances may be considered as a special case by RDC on a case by case basis.

The student must discuss the proposed change of mode with the Director of Studies and/or other relevant members of staff in the Faculty or collaborative partner institution. The student should seek approval from any sponsor (if appropriate) before requesting a change. If all parties agree to the change in principle, then the student should complete all relevant sections of the relevant form. The Director of Studies should provide a statement indicating whether or not the change is supported. The student will also need to provide written consent from any sponsor (if appropriate).

The completed form must be sent to the Academic Office and will then be considered by the next meeting of RDC. Applications which are not fully completed or which are not supported by the Director of Studies or collaborative partner institution or the student's sponsor (if appropriate) will not be able to be considered by RDC. Requests to retrospectively change mode of study will not normally be considered.

In order to ensure a timely response to requests for change of mode of study, in cases where requests clearly meet the criteria for approval, the Chair of RDC and staff of the Academic Office may approve such requests on behalf of RDC.

Review of decision not to approve change of mode of study

The procedures for requesting a change of mode of study ensure that all requests are scrutinised at Faculty and University level. Requests are judged against clearly defined criteria and the process is clear and transparent. In exceptional cases, such as the existence of compelling new evidence, the student may request that the Dean of Quality and Standards reviews the decision of RDC in accordance with the procedures set out in Section 14 of this Code of Practice.

Required to change mode of study

Under exceptional circumstances a student may be required to change mode of study due to academic, disciplinary, or financial reasons. In such cases the student will be informed that the mode of study has been changed and will be notified of the reasons for the change. All such cases are approved by RDC.

In all cases where a student has been required to change mode of study, the student will have the right to request that the Dean of Quality and Standards reviews the decision of RDC in accordance with the procedures set out in Section 14 of this Code of Practice.

5.2 TRANSFER OF CANDIDATURE

5.2.1 Transfer in from another institution

A student may transfer in from another institution by submitting an application for admission in the normal way. A student transferring in from another institution may have some of the period of study at the other institution recognised and the period of study will be adjusted accordingly. Irrespective of any prior period of study, a student who transfers in from another institution will be required to complete at least one year (full-time equivalent) of supervised research as the minimum period of study and will be liable for fees accordingly. The University will seek written confirmation from the original institution that there are no objections to the transfer of the student.

5.2.2 Transfer out to another institution

Before a student considers transferring to another institution it is important that the student discusses this with the Director of Studies and/or other relevant members of staff in the Faculty or collaborative partner institution, so that possible alternatives are considered before a final decision is made. International students are strongly encouraged to consult the International Office before making a final decision, as this may have implications with regards to immigration status. Students are prohibited from transferring candidature to another institution after the minimum period of study has been completed.

In order to transfer to another institution, a student is first required to withdraw from the University (see Section 5.3 of the Code of Practice for Research Degrees). However, students should be advised not to withdraw until a firm offer has been made by the new institution. Students should contact the destination institution and find out whether any period of study at the University will be counted towards the candidature period at the new institution. The destination institutions may request an academic reference and formal permission from the University to permit the transfer of candidature the student. The student should make sure that any Intellectual Property Rights issues are clarified before transferring to another institution.

5.2.3 Transfer to higher award (excluding MRes programme)

- ***From MA by Research / MSc by Research to MPhil by Research***
- ***From MA by Research / MSc by Research to PhD by Research***
- ***From MPhil by Research to PhD by Research***

Students must still be within the minimum period of study of the current research degree in order to be considered for a transfer. The student should discuss the intention to transfer to a higher award from the supervisory team and obtain the support of the supervisory team. The student should complete a Request to Transfer Degree Scheme Form (Appendix PG26) which incorporates a revised Full Research Proposal. Students must show how the original research proposal can be expanded to become appropriate for the higher award and present a revised timetable. The supervisory team must comment on the revised Full Research Proposal and on the student's progress to date. The relevant Faculty or collaborative partner institution must indicate whether or not the Faculty supports the request. The completed form must be sent to the Academic Office. Applications which are not fully completed or which are not supported by the Faculty or collaborative partner institution will not be able to be considered.

RDC will consider the request and the statement from the supervisory team, and where the request is approved in principle will then consider the revised Full Research Proposal in accordance with the procedures outlined in section 7.1 below. Where RDC is unable to approve transfer or is unable to approve the revised Full Research Proposal after a second submission, the student will be given the option of completing the original award.

Where a student is approved to transfer to a PhD by Research, the student will be required to undergo a Probation Panel as set out in in section 7.4.

5.2.4 Transfer to a lower award (excluding MRes programme)

- ***From PhD by Research to MPhil by Research***
- ***From PhD by Research to MA by Research / MSc by Research***
- ***From MPhil by Research to MA by Research / MSc by Research***

Students must be within no less than 6 months (full-time) or 1 year (part-time) of the maximum submission date of the lower award in order to be considered for a transfer. The student should discuss the intention to transfer to a lower award from the supervisory team and obtain the support of the supervisory team. The student should complete a Request to Transfer Degree Scheme Form (Appendix PG26) which incorporates a revised Full Research Proposal. Students must show how the original research proposal can be reduced to become appropriate for the lower award and present a revised timetable. The supervisory team must comment on the revised Full Research Proposal and on the student's progress to date. The relevant Faculty or collaborative partner institution must indicate whether or not the Faculty supports the request. The completed form must be sent to the Academic Office. Applications which are not fully completed or which are not supported by the Faculty or collaborative partner institution will not be able to be considered.

RDC will consider the request and the statement from the supervisory team, and where the request is approved in principle will then consider the revised Full Research Proposal in accordance with the procedures outlined in section 7.1 below. Where RDC is unable to approve transfer or is unable to approve the revised Full Research Proposal after a second submission, the student will be given the option of completing the original award.

5.3 VOLUNTARY WITHDRAWAL

Before a student considers withdrawing from the University it is important that the student discusses this with the Director of Studies and/or other relevant members of staff in the Faculty or collaborative partner institution, so that possible alternatives are considered before a final decision is made. International students are strongly encouraged to consult the International Office before making a final decision, as this may have implications with regards to immigration status. The student should also consult Student Services and any sponsor (if applicable).

Formal notification of withdrawal has to be on the appropriate form. The form must be signed by the student and by the student's Director of Studies and Head of School or nominee to confirm that the School is aware of the student's decision. The University must be notified of the reasons why the student has decided to withdraw, and the date of withdrawal will be noted as the 1st day of the month of receipt of the Notification of Withdrawal Form.

6. INTERRUPTION OF STUDIES AND EXTENSION OF TIME LIMIT

6.1 INTERRUPTION OF STUDIES

These regulations only apply for students undertaking the research element of a research degree. MRes and Professional Doctorate students in Part One of their studies who wish to interrupt their studies should refer to Section 13.3 of the Academic Quality Handbook 2018/19.

Students do not have the automatic right to interrupt their studies; a request to interrupt studies must be made on the approved form. Students are also eligible to apply for an interruption of studies during the correction or re-submission period.

Grounds for interruption

The grounds on which a student can request an interruption of studies are as follows:

- Health or Medical;
- Maternity, paternity or adoption leave;
- Compassionate (including bereavement and serious domestic difficulties);
- Financial;
- Exceptional Professional Commitments;
- Opportunities which contribute to academic development;
- Exceptional circumstances outside the control of the student that seriously compromises the student's ability to continue with studies.

All applications must be supported by appropriate independent evidence. Incomplete applications will not be approved.

Application procedure

The student must discuss the intention to interrupt studies with the Director of Studies and/or other relevant members of staff in the Faculty or collaborative partner institution. International students are strongly encouraged to consult the International Office before making a final decision, as this may have implications with regards to immigration status. The student should complete a Request for Interruption of Studies Form (Appendix PG18). The student must complete all relevant sections of the form and make sure that the grounds for interruption of studies are clearly marked and that independent supporting evidence is provided.

In consultation with the Director of Studies, the relevant Faculty or collaborative partner institution must provide a statement indicating whether or not the Faculty supports the request

and provide details of the plans and any conditions for return to studies. The completed form must be sent to the Academic Office. Applications which are not fully completed or which are not supported by the Faculty or collaborative partner institution will not be able to be considered. Applications for interruption of studies will not normally be considered unless they have been made in a timely manner.

Normally requests for interruption of studies are considered by Academic Office. Where the Academic Office is unable to make a decision, the request will be referred to a meeting of RDC.

The Academic Office will inform the student of the final decision by means of an Interruption of Studies letter (which may take the form of an electronic communication).

Review of decision not to approve interruption of studies request

The procedures for requesting an interruption of studies ensure that all requests are scrutinised at Faculty and University level. Requests are judged against clearly defined criteria and the process is clear and transparent. In exceptional cases, such as the existence of compelling new evidence, the student may request that the Dean of Quality and Standards reviews the decision not to approve an application in accordance with the procedures set out in Section 14 of this Code of Practice.

Timing and period of interruption of studies

The interruption of studies should normally commence from the beginning of a month so that there is a clearly identifiable point at which a return to studies can be made. In exceptional circumstances an interruption may commence immediately in situations where the student's absence from the University is unavoidable or urgently required.

Normally the interruption of studies should be for a definite period and a date for return to studies must be agreed at the time the interruption of studies is approved.

In supporting a request for interruption of studies, the Faculty or collaborative partner institution must give consideration to an appropriate plan for a return to studies and consider whether any conditions should be set for the return to studies.

A student who interrupts studies should be aware that it may not be possible to continue to work with exactly the same supervisory team once studies are continued again (e.g. for example as the result of staff retirement or changes in staffing). In such cases, the University will work with the student and seek to identify a suitable alternative member for the supervisory team.

If a student is unable to return on the agreed date, the student must seek further approval to extend the period of interruption. If a student fails to return to studies by the date specified and approval for an extension to the interruption has not been sought, the University shall assume that the student has withdrawn from the University. The student shall be informed in writing that the student has been withdrawn and the record amended. The student shall have the right to appeal against the decision in accordance with the Research Degrees Academic Appeal regulations.

Normally the total maximum period for interruption of studies for a research award is 12 months for a full-time student and 24 months for a part-time student. If a period of interruption of studies of greater than this is required, the student should normally withdraw from studies. The student can reapply when able to commit to study again and the University will take previous periods of study into consideration when scrutinising applications.

Where a second period of interruption is applied for, this will only be granted if the exceptional circumstances are likely to be sufficiently resolved before the end of the second period of

interruption for the student to complete the research programme without further application for interruption of studies.

When an interruption of studies is approved, then the student's maximum period of candidature will be extended to reflect the period of approved interruption of studies.

Funding Issues

A student must consult any sponsor to obtain a clear understanding of the funding implications before interrupting studies; the University is not able to guarantee the resumption of any external grant or loan.

If the interruption of studies takes place during a year for which tuition fees have already been paid, the Finance Department will recalculate the amount due pro rata to the period of study up to the time of interruption of studies.

Changes in a student's status may affect funding/benefits for which the student can apply and students who have interrupted studies may not be entitled to Council Tax exemption. Students who have interrupted studies are **not** entitled to use the following services:

- University Computing Service / Network System
- University Library services
- Students' Union

Implications for the immigration status of overseas students

If a student is from overseas and has student leave to remain in the UK, an interruption of studies will have serious implications for the student's immigration status and the student will not be permitted to remain in the UK for the duration of the interruption of studies.

6.2 REQUIRED TO SUSPEND

Under exceptional circumstances a student may be required to interrupt studies due to academic, disciplinary, or financial reasons. In such cases the period of interruption will be classified as a suspension of studies and the student will be informed that studies have been suspended and will be notified of the reasons for the suspension. The student will be given a return to studies date and informed of any conditions that must be met before the student can resume studies. All such cases are approved by RDC.

A student may also be required to suspend studies where the University deems that on health grounds it is not appropriate for a student to continue with studies, whether in exercising its duty of care to others or where it is deemed not to be in the interest of the particular student. In such cases, it will be made clear to the student that the requirement to suspend studies is separate from the University's Disciplinary procedures.

In all cases where a student has been required to suspend studies, the student will have the right to request that the Dean of Quality and Standards reviews the decision of RDC in accordance with the procedures set out in Section 14 of the Code of Practice for Research Degrees.

6.3 EXTENSIONS TO THE MAXIMUM TIME LIMIT FOR COMPLETING A RESEARCH DEGREE

Details of the maximum time limits for the completion of each research award are provided in Section 4.2 of this Code of Practice. These time limits may be extended in exceptional cases by submitting a request to the Academic Office. The maximum time limit for completing a

research award will automatically be adjusted to take into consideration time spent on an approved interruption of studies.

Students are eligible to apply for an extension during the correction or re-submission period.

Grounds for extension

The grounds on which a student can request an extension to the maximum time limit for an award are as follows:

- Health or Medical;
- Compassionate (including serious domestic difficulties);
- Exceptional Professional Commitments.

All applications must be supported by appropriate independent evidence. Incomplete applications will not be considered and the form will be returned to the student and / or Faculty or collaborative partner institution.

Application procedure

The student should complete a Request for Extension to Candidature Form (Appendix PG17). The student must complete all relevant sections of the form and make sure that the grounds for the application are clearly marked, the period of extension is identified, and that appropriate independent supporting evidence is provided:

- requests on specific or recurring health or medical grounds must supply independent medical evidence, including a clear indication of the nature of the illness and its duration;
- requests on compassionate grounds must supply independent evidence in support of the case which clearly explains the situation and indicates how long the circumstances have impeded the student's ability to engage with study;
- requests on the grounds of exceptional professional commitments must be accompanied by written confirmation from the employer which provides a description of the exceptional workload borne by the student and for how long this was the case.

The student's application must be accompanied by a statement from the Director of Studies and Faculty or collaborative partner institution, showing that they have evaluated the situation and indicating whether or not they consider the requested extension to be appropriate. They must provide clear evidence of the work completed, the work to be completed, and an assessment of whether the period requested is feasible to achieve this.

Normally the Academic Office will consider the evidence provided and the statement from the Director of Studies and Faculty or collaborative partner institution and reach a decision on whether the extension request is to be granted or not and the exact length of the extension in cases where the extension request is granted. Where the Academic Office is unable to make a decision, the request will be referred to a meeting of RDC.

The Academic Office will inform the student of the final decision by means of an Extension Outcome letter (which may take the form of an electronic communication).

Review of decision not to approve extension requests

The procedures for requesting an extension ensure that all requests are scrutinised at both Faculty or collaborative partner institution and University level. Requests are judged against

clearly defined criteria and the process is clear and transparent, therefore the decisions are final. In exceptional cases, such as the existence of compelling new evidence, the student may request that the Dean of Quality and Standards reviews the decision of RDC in accordance with the procedures set out in Section 14 of this Code of Practice.

7. PROGRESS MONITORING

Students should meet regularly with members of the supervisory team and must attend a minimum of **three** formal meeting with all members of the supervisory team (including any current Advisers) each year. A record of each formal meeting is made (on Appendix PG4 – Record of Formal Meeting Form) and a copy of each record is attached to the annual monitoring report which is completed jointly by the student and the supervisory team.

The formal stages at which a student's progress is assessed are outlined below for the different research degrees (note: for part-time students timescales are doubled):

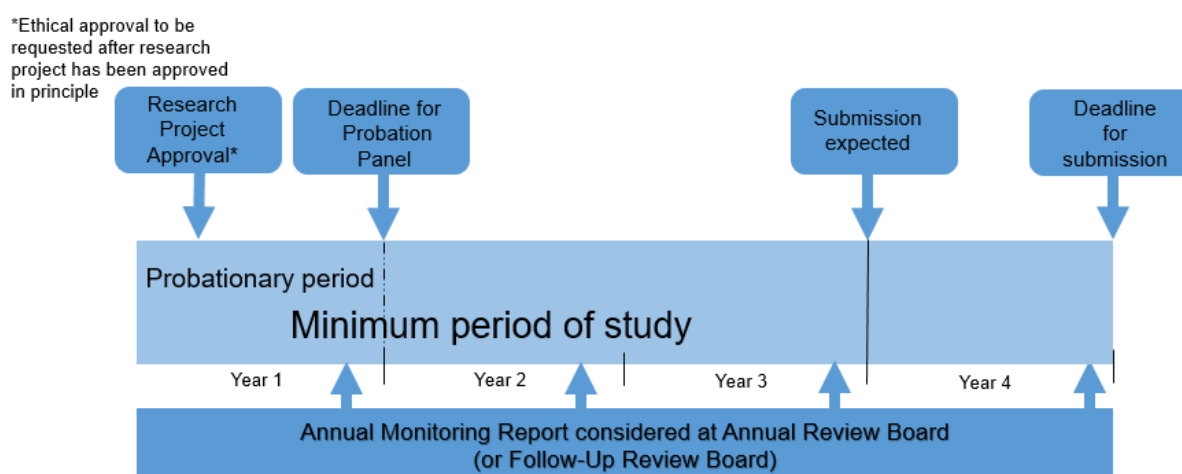


Figure 1: Full-time PhD by Research

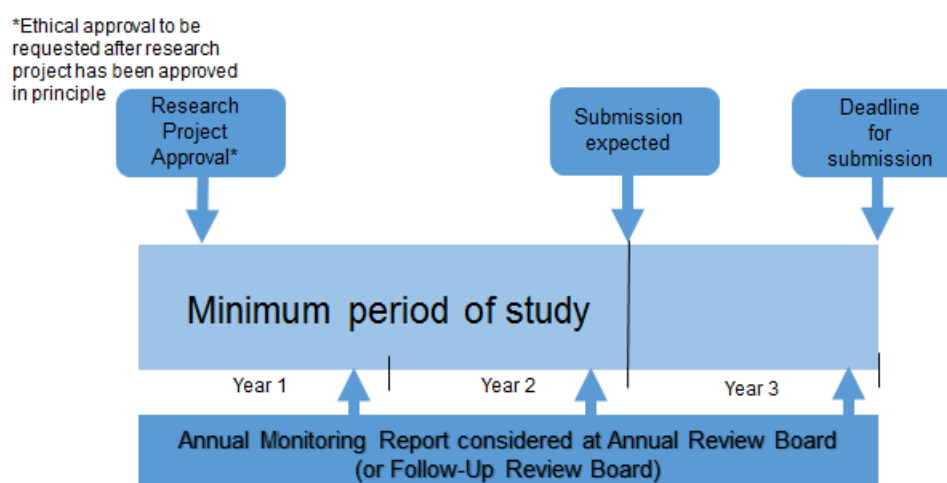


Figure 2: Full-time MPhil by Research

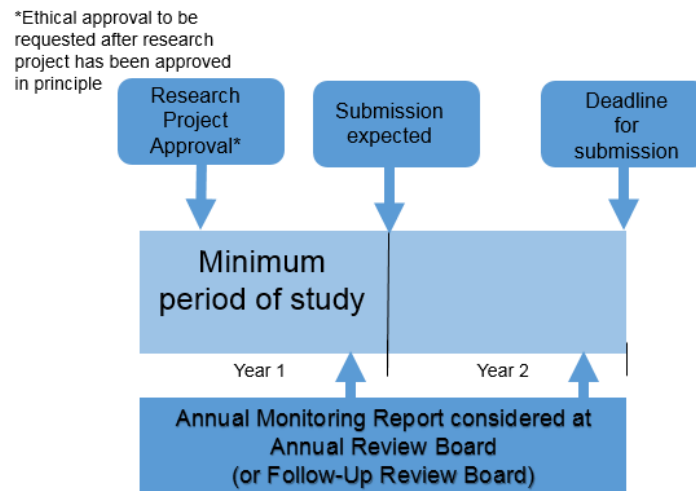


Figure 3: Full-time MA by Research / MSc by Research

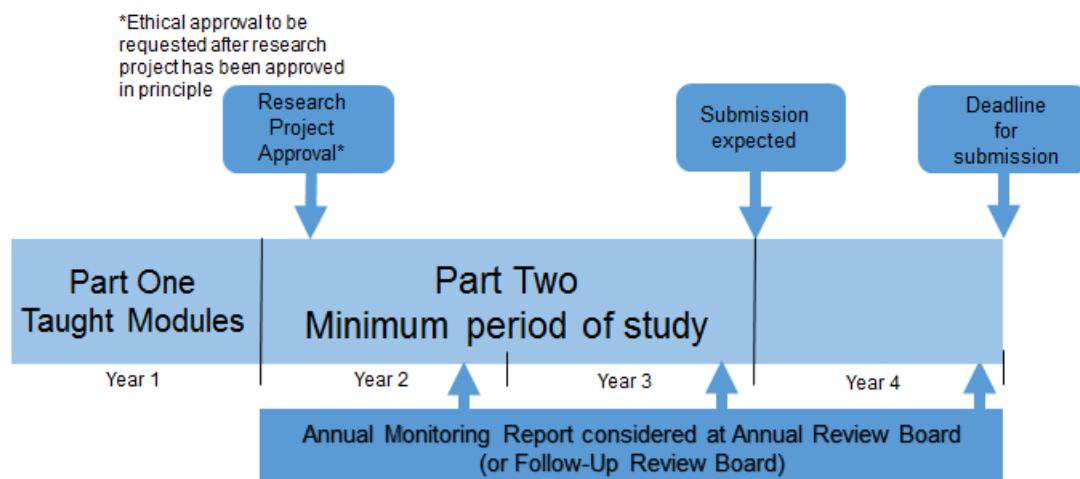


Figure 4: Full-time Professional Doctorate

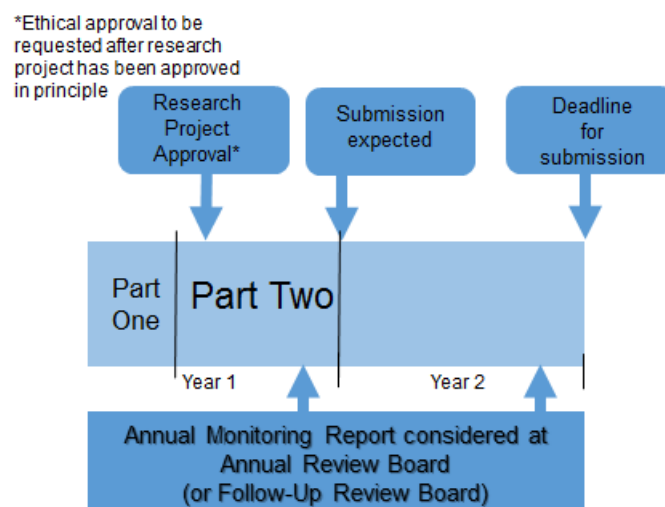


Figure 5: Full-time Master by Research (MRes)

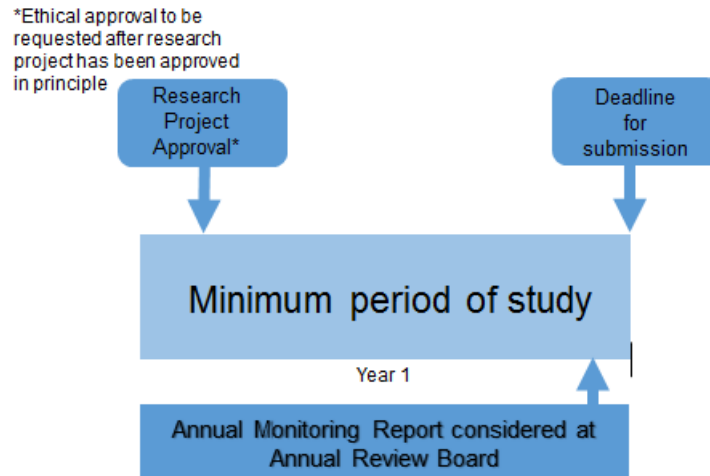


Figure 6: Full-time PhD by Published Works

7.1 RESEARCH PROJECT APPROVAL

All research students must complete and submit a Full Research Proposal Form (Appendix PG1) to RDC no more than 3 months after the commencement of the research degree (or commencement of Part Two) for full-time students and no more than 6 months after the commencement of the research degree (or commencement of Part Two) for part-time students.

RDC may approve research degree projects in principle or may withhold approval on academic grounds including inadequate or inappropriate research methodology or facilities. If approval is withheld, an amended proposal should be re-submitted within 4 weeks. Where approval is withheld for a re-submitted proposal, RDC may determine that it is appropriate to terminate studies. Students may appeal against a decision to terminate their studies in accordance with the procedures set out in Section 8.9 of Chapter 8 of the Academic Quality Handbook 2017/18.

After a research project has received approval in principle, a student must apply for ethical approval (see Section 7.2 of this Code of Practice).

7.2 ETHICAL APPROVAL

After a research project has been approved by RDC in principle, a student must complete and submit an Application for Ethical Approval Form (Appendix PG2) to the Ethics Committee no more than 3 months after approval in principle of the research project for full-time students and no more than 6 months after approval in principle of the research project for part-time students. The Ethics Committee may give full ethical approval or may withhold approval pending clarification of any points raised. If approval is withheld, an amended proposal should be re-submitted as soon as possible. No research activity should be undertaken until full ethical approval has been obtained.

7.3 ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT

All students are expected to meet regularly with members of the supervisory team and it is expected that a student's progress will be monitored in an informal manner. A minimum of three formal meetings with all members of the supervisory team is compulsory each year.

During these formal meetings the student's progress must be discussed and formally recorded on a Record of Formal Meeting Form (Appendix PG4).

An Annual Progress Report (Appendix PG5) must be completed for every research student (including MRes and Professional Doctorate students in Part Two) which comments on progress and achievements during the year, together with plans for the completion of the research programme. The Director of Studies is responsible for ensuring that the report is completed by all relevant parties. The supervisory team fills in the detailed form first; students then see the comments made about their progress and performance and are required to fill in the student feedback part of the form, again completing a detailed set of questions. All students are required to fill in this form and to sign it to indicate that they have read and understood the supervisory team's assessment. A copy of each Record of Formal Meeting Form (Appendix PG4) must be attached to the annual monitoring report. The completed annual monitoring report is submitted to the appropriate Annual Review Board.

Annual Review Boards are held at three times during the academic year, in late September, late January, and late May. A student's first Annual Progress Report will normally be considered at the Annual Review Board held approximately 8 months after initial enrolment (students starting in October will be considered at the May Annual Review Board; students starting in February will be considered at the September Annual Review Board; students starting in June will be considered at the January Annual Review Board).

Each Annual Progress Report must contain an assessment of the student's progress (either "satisfactory", "cause for concern" or "unsatisfactory"). Where progress has been deemed "cause for concern" or "unsatisfactory", there must be a recommended action for the student (either "3 month action plan", "3 month emergency action plan" or "termination"). The central Annual Review Board makes the final decision on the appropriate outcome for a student's progress. This may mean that, based on the evidence provided, recommended outcome decisions from supervisory teams and Faculties are amended.

Where a student's progress is deemed "satisfactory", the next Annual Progress Report will be considered at the Annual Review Board held twelve months after the current Annual review Board. Where a student has been required to follow 3 month action plan or 3 month emergency action plan, then a Follow-Up Progress Report (Appendix PG6) must be completed which comments on progress and achievements since the Annual Progress Review in line with the action plan. The Follow-Up Progress Report will normally be considered by the Annual Review Board held 4 months after the initial Annual Review Board. The Follow-Up Progress Report must contain an assessment of the student's progress in the same manner as the Annual Progress Report.

A student's progress will normally be deemed **satisfactory** where the student has maintained regular and frequent contact with the supervisory team, has successfully completed all relevant milestones (such as obtaining approval for a full research proposal and obtaining ethical approval), is actively engaged on the research project, and, in the opinion of the supervisory team, is making appropriate progress and so is likely to be able to write up the research project in an appropriate academic format for it to be critically assessed by examiners.

A student's progress will normally be deemed **cause for concern** where the student is not maintaining regular and frequent contact with the supervisory team, or has not completed all relevant milestones, or is not fully engaged on the research project, or, in the opinion of the supervisory team, is not making appropriate progress and so is not likely to be able to write up the research project in an appropriate academic format for it to be critically assessed by examiners without remedial action.

A student's progress will normally be deemed **unsatisfactory** where the student has not been in contact with the supervisory team for a period in excess of 3 months, or is not engaged on the research project, or, in the opinion of the supervisory team, is not making any tangible progress and so would not be able to write up the research project in an appropriate academic format for it to be critically assessed by examiners without drastic intervention.

Initially satisfactory

Where a student's progress is classified as "satisfactory", the student will be permitted to re-enrol for the next year.

Initially cause for concern

Where a student's progress is classified as "cause for concern", the student will be provided with a 3 month action plan drawn up by the supervisory team. If the action plan (or any subsequent action plans) takes the student over the re-enrolment date, then the student will be provisionally re-enrolled pending the outcome of the action plan. At the end of the action plan a follow-up progress report will be submitted to a Follow-Up Review Board. If the student's progress is now deemed to be "satisfactory", then the student will be permitted to re-enrol for the next year (or the provisional re-enrolment will be confirmed).

Still cause for concern

If the student's progress is still deemed "cause for concern", then the student will be provided with a second 3 month action plan. At the end of the second action plan a second follow-up progress report will be submitted to a Follow-Up Review Board. If the student's progress is deemed to be "satisfactory", then the student will be permitted to re-enrol for the next year (or the provisional re-enrolment will be confirmed). If, however the student's progress is not satisfactory (either still "cause for concern" or now "unsatisfactory"), then the student will be provided with a final 3 month emergency action plan. At the end of the emergency action plan a third (and final) follow-up progress report will be submitted to a Follow-Up Review Board. If the student's progress is now deemed to be "satisfactory", then the student will be permitted to re-enrol for the next year (or the provisional re-enrolment will be confirmed). If the however the student's progress is not satisfactory (either still "cause for concern" or now "unsatisfactory"), then the student's candidature will be terminated.

Becomes unsatisfactory

If, after the second action plan, the student's progress is now deemed "unsatisfactory", then the student will be provided with a 3 month emergency action plan. At the end of the emergency action plan a second follow-up progress report will be submitted to a Follow-Up Review Board. If the student's progress is deemed to be "satisfactory", then the student will be permitted to re-enrol for the next year (or the provisional re-enrolment will be confirmed). If, however the student's progress is not satisfactory (either still "cause for concern" or now "unsatisfactory"), then the student's candidature will be terminated.

Initially unsatisfactory

Where a student's progress is classified as "unsatisfactory", the student will be provided with a 3 month emergency action plan drawn up by the supervisory team. If the action plan (or any subsequent action plans) takes the student over the re-enrolment date, then the student will be provisionally re-enrolled pending the outcome of the action plan. At the end of the emergency action plan a follow-up progress report will be submitted to a Follow-Up Review Board. If the student's progress is now deemed to be "satisfactory", then the student will be permitted to re-enrol for the next year (or the provisional re-enrolment will be confirmed).

If the student's progress is still deemed "unsatisfactory", then the student's candidature will be terminated. If the student's progress is deemed "cause for concern", then the student will be provided with a second 3 month emergency action plan. At the end of the second

emergency action plan a second follow-up progress report will be submitted to a Follow-Up Review Board. If the student's progress is deemed to be "satisfactory", then the student will be permitted to re-enrol for the next year (or the provisional re-enrolment will be confirmed). If however the student's progress is not satisfactory (either still "cause for concern" or now "unsatisfactory"), then the student's candidature will be terminated.

Summary of assessments and recommendations

APR	Action	FUPR-1	Action	FUPR-2	Action	FUPR-3	Action
Sat	Pass						
CC	3m AP	Sat	Pass				
		CC	3m AP	Sat	Pass		
				CC/Un	3m EAP	Sat	Pass
						CC/Un	Terminate
		Un	3m EAP	Sat	Pass		
				CC/Un	Terminate		
Un	3m EAP	Sat	Pass				
		CC	3m EAP	Sat	Pass		
				CC/Un	Terminate		
		Un	Terminate				

Key

APR = Annual Progress Report; FUPR = Follow-up Progress Report (first, second or third)

Assessment: Sat = Satisfactory; CC = Cause for concern; Un = Unsatisfactory

Actions: Pass = re-enrol; 3m AP = 3 month action plan; 3m EAP = 3 month emergency action plan

Although students and supervisory teams are required to file a joint report annually, students or supervisory teams may decide that independent reports will be submitted or that it is necessary to submit an additional report directly to RDC if they experience problems which are not being resolved satisfactorily by their supervisory teams or student respectively. All reports coming directly from students will be considered confidentially and additional measures will be put in place if the student is an employee of the University.

7.4 PROBATIONARY PERIOD OF STUDY (PHD BY RESEARCH ONLY)

Students enrolling on the degree of PhD by Research will be registered in the first instance on a probationary period of study.

During the probationary period, the student will be expected to demonstrate the ability to proceed with further research and will be expected to meet the following general criteria:

- The student shows a good knowledge and understanding of their subject and associated methods and techniques;
- The student has carried out a comprehensive literature review;
- The student has demonstrated potential to make an original contribution to the relevant field of study;
- The student can present and communicate work orally, and in writing, in a successful manner;
- The student has satisfactorily completed the training modules or courses which were identified at the start of studies;
- The student can evidence competency, both written and spoken, in the language of submission (English or Welsh).

The supervisory team may set additional criteria to measure the performance of the student during the probationary period. Any additional criteria must be made clear to the student at the point of enrolment.

A Probation Panel must be established no later than 12 months after initial enrolment for full-time students, and no later than 24 months after initial enrolment for part-time students.

RDC will approve a Probation Panel consisting of the supervisory team, an assessor, and a Chair, both of which should be independent of the supervisory team.

Students must complete the appropriate form prior to the meeting of the Probation Panel. This form includes information for the Panel on the progress to date, an assessment of training needs and any issues (e.g. in relation to resources, facilities, or ethics approval) that need to be addressed, and a clear proposal for the next stage of study. Students should add a sample chapter to this written report in order to provide the Panel with further detailed evidence of the progress made to date.

The Probation Panel will recommend one of the following outcomes:

- (i) Pass probation and continue with studies;
- (ii) Conditionally pass probation: the Panel must stipulate the conditions and give an indicative timeframe within which these conditions must be addressed;
- (iii) Probation extended for up to 6 months for full-time students or by up to 12 months for part-time students: at the end of the extended period of probation, the Probation Panel will meet again. This option is not available for students whose probation has been already been extended;
- (iv) Transfer to a lower award (either to an MPhil by Research or to an MA by Research / MSc by Research) – see 5.2.4;
- (v) Required to withdraw.

Students have the right to appeal all decisions as set out in Section 8.9 of Chapter 8 of the Academic Quality handbook 2018/19.

8. EMPLOYMENT FOR POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH STUDENTS

The University is unable to control employment undertaken by a student outside the University but the student is advised to consider carefully the effects that such employment may have on the timely completion of their studies.

Where students undertake placements that are embedded and assessed as part of their Professional Doctorate programme the conditions governing the placement, including any remuneration, should be clearly specified and agreed in writing and in advance by the student, the University, and the placement provider.

For any other paid, unpaid, voluntary, or charitable work; although engaging in additional academic or other work may be helpful to the career development of students, it is important that this does not interfere with the progress of their research. It is strongly recommended that full-time students undertake no more than six hours of paid or unpaid work during the normal working week. International students must also ensure that they meet any requirements stipulated by their visa. Where students are sponsored by research councils or other sponsors, they must comply at all times with any stipulations with regard to employment as laid down by such sponsors.

If full-time students should decide to work for more than the recommended six hours per week, academic progress will be very closely monitored and, if progress is unsatisfactory in any way, the student may be required to reduce the number of hours worked or, where permitted by status or visa conditions, to change study mode and study part-time for their degree. Full-time students who ignore the University's guidance and work for more than six hours per week will not be permitted to request an extension to the maximum time limit for completing their degree on these grounds.

8.1 GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANTS

If Faculties would like to employ Graduate Teaching Assistants in order to provide their students with a valuable opportunity to gain teaching skills, they need to ensure the following:

- (a) that they report their list of graduate teaching assistants annually to RDC;
- (b) that all graduate teaching assistants have either completed or are enrolled on the University's accredited programme for graduate teaching assistants;
- (c) that an appropriate selection procedure is followed and that a contract is set up with the Human Resources Department.

9. SUBMISSION AND PRESENTATION OF THESIS

9.1 SUBMISSION OF THESIS

A thesis presents a student's research results, describing the research with reference to relevant work in the field. It will include a description of the methods of research considered, and those actually employed, and present the student's conclusions. It is essential that any use of another author's work is properly acknowledged. The thesis is the student's own work and must be written by the student.

It is essential that the student discusses general layout and referencing conventions with the supervisory team to ensure that subject or discipline-specific requirements or rules are followed right from the start (see the section 9.3 "Presentation of thesis" below). The supervisory team is expected to provide constructive criticism and feedback on the thesis during candidature. However, supervisors should not be requested to provide English language training or undertake proof-reading.

Prior to completion of the minimum period of study a student will be sent an Intention to Submit form by the Academic Office. The Intention to Submit form should be completed and submitted to the Academic Office no less than 3 months prior to the expected date of submission. On submission of the Intention to Submit form, the Academic Office and the supervisory team will start arrangements for appointing an Examining Board (see section 10 "Examination" below).

On the completion of the minimum period of study and prior to the maximum submission date, a student must submit to the Academic Office two copies of the temporarily bound or permanently bound thesis and any additional separate material, as well as an additional loose copy of the abstract transcribed onto the appropriate form. In addition, an electronic copy must be provided.

A student may not amend, add to, or delete from the thesis after it has been submitted and prior to examination save with the consent of the Chair of the Examining Board. If a student finds that material has been left out of the copies of the thesis sent to the examiners, it is the decision of the Chair of the Examining Board on whether to permit the missing material to be sent to the examiners. A student can withdraw the thesis after it has been submitted and prior

to the examination, but once a thesis has been withdrawn it cannot be submitted again for the same degree.

9.1.1 Note on early submission

In some cases, a student may wish to submit their thesis before the end of the minimum period of study. The student will still be required to pay the full fees for the minimum required period of study even if the thesis is submitted before the end of this period. If a student is considering submitting a thesis early, the student must discuss the matter with the supervisory team as early submission may affect the academic quality of the work. In addition, the supervisory team are responsible for arranging the Examining Board and will need reasonable time to put the Examining Board in place.

If a student does decide to submit early, after consultation with the supervisory team, the student must inform the Academic Office who will then send the student an Intention to Submit form. The Academic Office will also seek written confirmation from the Director of Studies that the supervisory team is aware of the student's intention to submit early. If the supervisory team does not agree with the student's intention to submit early, they will write to the student formally, outlining the potential consequences of such an action.

An international student who holds a Tier 4 (General) visa should be aware that an early thesis submission may impact on the duration of the student's visa and should consult the International Office before making any decision on early submission.

9.2 ACCESS TO A THESIS

The default position for any research degree thesis is that it will be openly available and subject to no security or restriction of access. However, it is recognised that sometimes the results of research may be commercially valuable or sensitive in other ways (for example in the use of material that is restricted by agreements or other contracts). To protect this confidentiality the University permits a bar on photocopying and/or access to be placed on the thesis for a specified period of up to 5 years. Any request for a bar on photocopying and/or access should normally be made as part of the full research proposal, but in exceptional circumstances a request may be made up to the point that the Intention to Submit form is completed. A request for a bar on photocopying and/or access which is received after the thesis has been submitted will not be considered.

9.3 PRESENTATION OF THESIS

There is no specification for the internal structure of the thesis, but the structure should be discussed with the supervisors and is to be the structure most appropriate to the subject area. Examiners will expect a thesis to be well presented with a consistent system of indexing and referencing throughout the work that is appropriate to the specific discipline. Guidelines in relation to the format and binding of a thesis are provided in Appendix 1 of the Code of Practice for Research Degrees.

9.3.1 Maximum word length

In all cases the length of the thesis must be appropriate to the subject area covered.

For an MRes the word length is not to exceed 30,000 words excluding footnotes and references.

For an MA by Research / MSc by Research the word length is not to exceed 40,000 words excluding footnotes and references.

For an MPhil by Research the word length is not to exceed 60,000 words excluding footnotes

and references.

For a Professional Doctorate the word length is not to exceed 60,000 words excluding footnotes and references.

For a PhD by Research the word length is not to exceed 100,000 words excluding footnotes and references.

The reflective written element of practice-based PhDs should be no less than 20,000 and no more than 50,000 words. The reflective written element of practice-based MPhils should be no less than 10,000 and no more than 25,000 words. The reflective written element of practice-based MA by research / MSc by Research should be no less than 10,000 and no more than 15,000 words. The balance between reflective written and practical elements will be determined by individual students, in consultation with their supervisors. In practice-based research the student is expected to present a substantial body of creative, curatorial or published work in the form of an exhibition/media output/performance or its appropriate documentation for the final examination. An aspect of the written element of a practice-based PhD should provide the creative work with a relevant historical, theoretical, critical and/or design context. The format of the thesis must be approved by RDC as part of the approval of the formal research proposal.

A thesis of greater length than provided above may be submitted only with the approval of RDC. A request to exceed the specified maximum must be made to RDC at least 6 months in advance of submission of the thesis. Where a thesis exceeds the word length and no approval has been granted by RDC in advance of submission, the Examining Board will only consider the thesis up to the maximum word length stated.

There are no set minimum word lengths for each degree (except where noted above for practice-based degrees), however, for the PhD by Research the maximum word length of the MPhil by Research may be taken as a guide, for the MPhil by Research the maximum word length of the MA by Research / MSc by Research may be taken as a guide, and for the Professional Doctorate and MPhil by Research, the maximum word length of the MRes may be taken as a guide. The maximum word length for a Taught Master's dissertation may be taken as a guide for the MRes.

9.3.2 Inclusion of artefacts within a thesis

Where a thesis includes artefacts, permission for their inclusion needs to be given by RDC when the full research proposal is submitted to RDC. Students will need to be able to demonstrate how any such artefacts relate to the thesis and its defence.

9.3.3 Inclusion of published papers in a thesis

The inclusion of published material as an integral part of the body of work submitted for examination is acceptable, as long as any such material is appropriately integrated and referenced within the thesis. The thesis presented must be a coherent piece of work and must demonstrate explicitly the student's individual contribution to knowledge. A copy of all published papers contributing to the thesis must be included as appendices. In addition, an explicit statement of the ownership of the student is required in relation to any published papers that are included as part of the submission. In relation to multi-author papers, a clear identification of collaborative content is required for each published paper included in the submission, and must identify the elements of the published work authored by the student. Co-authors will be asked to verify the extent of the contribution made by student. A student needs to indicate that published papers will be included when the full research proposal is submitted to RDC.

Students are encouraged to publish papers derived from their thesis. Where papers are published prior to submission, students should include the papers with the submitted thesis as appendices and following the requirements set out above with the exception of the need to note this in the research proposal.

10. EXAMINATION

The regulations and procedures given below cover Part Two of the MRes and Professional Doctorates programmes, MA by Research / MSc by Research, MPhil by Research, PhD by Research, and the PhD by Published Works.

External examiners for Part One of the MRes programme of study and for Part One of Professional Doctorates are selected in accordance with the regulations set out in Section 7.14 of Chapter 7 of the Academic Quality Handbook 2017/18. Nomination and approval processes are followed as for taught degrees and the names of the external examiner(s) used for each programme must be reported to RDC.

10.1 CONSTITUTION OF EXAMINING BOARD

Normally an Examining Board will comprise of the following individuals:

- An independent Chair;
- An Internal Examiner;
- An External Examiner.

Where the student is a member of staff of the University or of a collaborative partner institution, or where it proves impossible to appoint an internal examiner (either from within the University or a collaborative partner institution), or where a special case is made to (or by) RDC, the Examining Board shall comprise of the following individuals:

- An independent Chair;
- Two External Examiners.

Nominations for the composition of the Examining Board must be made by the Faculty to RDC. For re-submissions the Examining Board must be re-confirmed and any changes to the composition of the original Examining Board must be approved. RDC is responsible for considering all nominations and for the approval of all Examining Boards.

10.1.1 Chair of Examining Board

The Chair of the Board shall be independent in the examining process and shall be responsible to RDC for the conduct of the examination. The Chair of the Examining Board is required to chair the oral examination and any meeting of the examiners.

The Chair must be a suitably experienced current member of staff of the University, who is approved by RDC. In cases where the independence of the chair becomes problematic a Chair may be appointed from another Faculty within the University.

Any member of staff involved in the supervision of the candidate may not act as a Chair of Examining Board.

Person specification for chairs of examination boards:

- i) knowledge and understanding of UK sector agreed reference points for the maintenance of academic standards and assurance and enhancement of quality;
- ii) relevant academic and/or professional qualifications to at least the level of the qualification being examined, and, where appropriate, extensive practitioner experience;
- iii) competence and experience in examining research degrees, at the level covered by the programme of study, with mentoring and training being provided for inexperienced chairs;
- iv) a thorough knowledge and understanding of the standards to be expected of students in order to achieve the award that is to be examined.

If the Chair of the Examination Board has little or no experience of acting as a Chair of an Examining Board for research degrees, then mentoring and training must be put in place and the internal and external examiners must have extensive experience. A Chair must always have sufficient seniority and be well acquainted with the University's Research Degrees Regulations and the University's approach to research degrees. In order to be appointed as a Chair of an Examining Board, an individual must be listed on the University's Directory of Supervisors and Examiners as a recognised Chair of Examining Board.

10.1.2 Nomination, Selection and Appointment of Examiners

Research degrees examiners must show appropriate evidence of the following:

- i) knowledge and understanding of UK sector agreed reference points for the maintenance of academic standards and assurance and enhancement of quality;
- ii) specialist experience and expertise in the subject of research with evidence of recent advanced scholarship and research;
- iii) competence and experience in examining research degrees, at the level covered by the programme of study. If the proposed external examiner has not acted as an external examiner before, there must be evidence of experience of acting as an internal examiner of a higher degree and the proposed internal examiner must have experience of acting as both an internal examiner and as an external examiner;
- iv) relevant academic and/or professional qualifications to at least the level of the qualification being examined, and, where appropriate, extensive practitioner experience;
- v) sufficient standing, credibility and breadth of experience within the discipline to be able to command the respect of academic peers and, where appropriate, professional peers;
- vi) a thorough knowledge and understanding of the standards to be expected of students in order to achieve the award that is to be examined;
- vii) fluency in English, and where thesis is presented and assessed in Welsh, fluency in Welsh.

In addition, all examiners must be prepared to examine the whole thesis. It is not acceptable to appoint a person as an examiner who is not prepared to make a judgement on the whole thesis, even if that person's particular expertise is more relevant to some parts of the work than to others.

RDC will carefully consider the overall composition of the Examining Board. Lack of previous experience of examining a research degree on the part of one of the examiners must be compensated for by extensive experience on the part of the other examiner. For instance, where a proposed external examiner has little or no experience of acting as an external examiner, then the proposed internal examiner must have extensive experience of acting as an examiner. Where the proposed internal examiner is relatively inexperienced, the proposed external examiner must have extensive experience of acting as an examiner. In all such cases the Chair of the Examining Board must have sufficient seniority and experience and must be

well acquainted with the University's Research Degree Regulations and the University's approach to research degrees.

Conflicts of interest and impartiality

The University requires that examiners must be able to exercise impartial judgement and requires that they must not therefore have any potential conflicts of interest (either professional or personal) which might compromise objectivity.

For all research degrees, apart from MRes programmes of study, an external examiner can be appointed to a research degree Examining Board no more than three times in a calendar year. For MRes programmes of study, an external examiner can be appointed to an Examining Board no more than ten times in a calendar year.

To avoid potential conflicts of interest an individual shall not be appointed as an external examiner if:

- i) the individual is a member of the governing body or of one of the committees of the University or one of its collaborative partners, or a current employee of the University or one of its collaborative partners;
- ii) the individual has a close professional, contractual or personal relationship with a member of the supervisory team or the proposed chair of the Examining Board (a close relationship is one where there is a degree of relationship beyond intermittent association; examples of a professional relationship are: co-authorship of publication, co-investigator on project, joint supervision of research student, graduate advisee/advisor relationship - including former research degree supervisor where such supervision ended less than three years previously; an example of a contractual relationship is co-owner of outside business interest; examples of a personal relationship are: family relationship - by marriage or blood, current or former intimate relationship - including marital, sexual, romantic, emotional whether heterosexual or same sex relationship, close friendship/social relationship, personal animosity);
- iii) the individual is significantly involved in recent (within the last 5 years) or current substantive collaborative research activities with a member of the supervisory team or the proposed chair of the Examining Board;
- iv) the individual is a former member of staff or student of the University or a (former) collaborative partner institution unless a period of 5 years has elapsed;
- v) the appointment would create a reciprocal arrangement;
- vi) the individual has retired and is no longer active within the field.

Where a member of the supervisory team also has a contract of employment at another institution, then no external examiner of the Examining Board for this candidate can be appointed from that institution.

Where a researcher has had substantial co-authoring or collaborative involvement in the student's work or whose own work is the focus of the research project, the researcher can only exceptionally be appointed as an external examiner.

In relation to the appointment of internal examiners:

- (i) where an internal examiner has a managerial relationship with the Director of Studies, care must be taken to ensure the complete independence of the examiner or Chair;
- (ii) where an individual has had substantial co-authoring or collaborative involvement in the student's work or whose own work is the focus of the research project, the individual can only exceptionally be appointed as an internal examiner;

- (iii) a member of staff cannot be appointed as an internal examiner if, at any stage of the candidature, they have been part of the supervisory team.

Where there are changes in the circumstances of an examiner or where circumstances which were previously unknown become known which may lead to conflicts of interest, the University should be notified as soon as possible so that RDC can make a decision on the individual's suitability to continue as an external examiner on the Examining Board.

Where an individual is deemed to meet the criteria for appointment as an examiner as set out above, but cannot be appointed as an external examiner due to being a former member of staff of the University or a (former) collaborative partner institution within the last 5 years, then that individual may be considered for appointment as an internal examiner.

In order to be appointed as an internal examiner, an individual must be listed on the University's Directory of Supervisors and Examiners as a recognised internal examiner.

In order to avoid unnecessary delays in the examination process, the Nomination of Examining Board form should be submitted to the Academic Office no less than 2 months prior to the expected date of submission of a student's thesis.

External Examiners are paid a fee for examining a thesis (covering the preliminary independent examination of the thesis with interim report, the oral examination, the production of a final report, and scrutiny of any corrections and amendments where appropriate). A separate fee is paid in the case of a student being required to re-submit a thesis for examination (covering the preliminary independent examination of the resubmitted thesis with interim report, the oral examination, the production of a final report, and scrutiny of any corrections and amendments where appropriate). The Academic Office will cover genuine receipted expenses incurred by the external examiner (for travel and subsistence) up to a maximum of £350.00. Faculties may wish to cover expenses in excess of this amount. There is no fee or allowance for expenses for Chairs or internal examiners (although Faculties may wish to contribute to expenses incurred where the oral examination is held at a location which is not the Chair's or internal examiner's normal work location).

Termination of an examiner appointment

The contribution of the examiner to the research degrees assessment process is a crucial element of the University's quality assurance processes. It is sometimes the case that, for a variety of reasons, an examiner is no longer able to provide the commitment necessary to fulfil the requirements of the role. In such an event, the matter will be referred to the Chair of RDC who will advise the examiner on the remedial action(s) considered necessary.

Exceptionally the Chair of the Examining Board may consider the actions or reporting of an examiner to be unreasonable, unfair, not in line with the requirements for the examining of research degrees, or contrary to the regulations of the University. In such cases they may refer their concerns to the Chair of RDC in writing. The Chair should then review the matter and make every effort to resolve the concerns in consultation with the external examiner, Chair of the Examining Board, and appropriate staff from the University.

Should it become apparent that, despite the remedial action(s) suggested by the Chair of RDC, the position is unlikely to change, or should it become evident that concerns, which have been raised cannot be resolved, then the matter shall be referred to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) who may make the decision that the examiner's appointment must be terminated.

The University also reserves the right to terminate an examiner appointment at any time if a conflict of interest arises that cannot be satisfactorily resolved. A new Examining Board must then be approved by RDC.

10.2 TIMEFRAME AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR EXAMINATION

A submitted thesis will be forwarded to appointed examiners as soon as is reasonably possible. Where an oral examination is required, this should normally be held within 12 working weeks of the examiners' receipt of the thesis.

MA by Research / MSc by Research and MRes

After the thesis has been forwarded to the examiners, the Chair of the Examining Board is responsible for ensuring that the independent reports are received in a reasonable timeframe (usually no more than 6 working weeks of the examiners' receipt of the thesis). Where it is determined that an oral examination is required, then the procedures and timeframes set out below should be followed.

MPhil by Research, PhD by Research, PhD by Published Works, and Professional Doctorate

After the thesis has been forwarded to the examiners, the Chair of the Examining Board is responsible for setting a date for the oral examination which is mutually acceptable for all the examiners (the Chair may request that this responsibility is discharged by the Academic Office). Once a date has been agreed, the Academic Office will confirm the date and location with the Chair, the examiners, the student, and the supervisory team (all parties should be given at least 2 weeks' notice of the date for the oral examination). In exceptional circumstances (and where relevant independent evidence is provided), a student may request a postponement of the oral examination. If any party becomes unavailable due to exceptional circumstances, the oral examination should be postponed. The oral examination may not be postponed for a period exceeding 12 months from the date of submission of the thesis.

A student may invite up to two members of the supervisory team (including former members of the team) to be present during the oral examination. Any member of the supervisory team is present as a silent observer and must not participate in the examination process. Towards the end of the oral examination any members of the supervisory team may be asked to leave to allow the student the opportunity to discuss their supervision in confidence if they so wish. Where a member of a supervisory team expresses a desire to attend the oral examination, but this has not been directly requested by the student, the student must be asked, in confidence, whether they agree to the attendance of that member of the supervisory team.

If a student fails to attend the oral examination without prior notification, the student will be deemed to have failed and the Examining Board should return a recommendation that the student be not approved for the award of a degree.

External examiners are not allowed to communicate with each other prior to the submission of their independent reports to the Academic Office. Students must not communicate with any members of the Examining Board either prior to or following the oral examination until such time as the examination process is completed (including any period for corrections and amendments or resubmission).

Any member of a student's supervisory team shall have the right to convey to the Chair of the Examining Board any concerns relevant to the student's research project, the resulting thesis or its examination which the member of the supervisory team consider the Board should be aware of prior to reaching a decision. The member of the supervisory team should convey these concerns, in writing, both to the Chair and to the student as soon as practicable after

the submission of the thesis to allow the student sufficient time prior to the examination of the thesis (including any oral examination) to consider the points made and prepare a response.

10.3 REQUEST FOR EXAMINATION BY ELECTRONIC MEANS (VIDEO LINK)

In very exceptional circumstances, RDC will allow the oral examination to take place by video link.

Such exceptional circumstances can include the following:

1. Where conditions have arisen under which it would not be possible otherwise to proceed with the oral examination (e.g. where a student cannot return to the UK because of visa or other restrictions) or
2. Where agreed arrangements for a face-to-face oral examination have had to be terminated because of unexpected circumstances (e.g. severe weather; illness of one of the participants).

Where such circumstances arise, the University would expect that, normally, the oral examination should be postponed, rather than be held through electronic means, but it is accepted that it will occasionally be necessary for electronic means to be used instead (eg. where the student would suffer disproportionately as a result of postponement).

A Request for Examination by Electronic Means Form must be completed by the student and submitted to the Academic Office prior to the examination date. This request must be approved by the full Examining Board as well as RDC before the oral examination by electronic means can take place. Because of the additional operational arrangements involved such a request must normally be made before a student has submitted the thesis.

The Examination by electronic means can only take place by video-link at an established or recognised institution such as a University, the United Nations office or an embassy and not from home or at an internet café. There must be an official independent representative with the student. Approval will not be given to the use of a telephone link alone for the purpose of examination.

The following will be expected to form part of the case made for the request which should be accompanied by relevant evidence:

- Written confirmation from the intended participants (including the student) that they have no objection to the examination being held, at an agreed time; through electronic means
- A written statement from the student waiving any right to appeal against the outcome of the examination on the grounds of the use of the electronic medium or consequences arising from the use of such medium;
- Confirmation that sufficient time has been allotted for the oral examination itself, and that necessary technical support will be available before and during the oral examination;
- Confirmation that additional time has been made available before the start of the formal examination to enable the participants to familiarise themselves with the scope and limitations of the medium in use;
- Confirmation of the locations used for the oral examination;
- Confirmation of how the student's identity will be verified.

If such a request is approved, normally, any costs associated with the holding of an oral examination by electronic means will be borne by the student. In addition, the student is normally responsible for identifying a suitable location to be approved as part of the request by RDC.

10.4 DUTIES OF MEMBERS OF THE EXAMINING BOARD

The principal purposes of the University's external examiner system are to ensure that:

- the standard of each award is maintained at the appropriate level;
- the processes for assessment and the determination of awards are sound and fairly conducted.

10.4.1 Particular role of internal examiner

The internal examiner must decide whether the student's research work and knowledge meet the standard which would normally be expected of a student in the School/Faculty submitting for that degree.

10.4.2 Particular role of the external examiner

The external examiner must decide whether the student's research work and knowledge are of a standard which are comparable to those of students being examined at other institutions for the same degree.

10.4.3 Particular role of Chair of Examining Board

The Chair is present to ensure that process is rigorous, fair, reliable and consistent with University regulations and procedures. In the event of a review of an examination decision or an appeal, the Chair is required to provide a written report on the conduct of the examination as necessary.

10.5 EXAMINERS' REPORTS

The Examiners' Result and Report forms are intended as instruments for the reports of the examiners and the Chair of the Examining Board, and are used by the Examining Board to make a formal recommendation to the University on the outcome of the examination process. Examiners are advised that under the terms of the 1998 Data Protection Act and the subsequent Freedom of Information Act, students have the right to request access to any comments made about them in these reports.

Prior to any oral examination, both examiners will write and submit an independent report to the Academic Office on the thesis.

10.5.1 Content of the Report

The report must provide clear and informative feedback to the University on whether or not:

- the University is maintaining the threshold academic standards set for the award in accordance with the frameworks for Higher Education qualifications and applicable subject and other benchmark statements;
- the assessment process measures the student's achievement rigorously and fairly against the intended outcomes of the programme and is conducted in line with the University's policies and regulations;
- and in the case of external examiners, the academic standard and the achievement of the student is comparable with those in other UK Higher Education Institutions of which the external examiner has experience.

Where an oral examination is held, the independent pre-viva report from each examiner must be submitted to the Academic Office at least 1 week before the date of the viva. The post-viva reports must be submitted to the Academic Office within a maximum period of 2 weeks after the date of the viva. Failure to submit the required reports within these timescales is considered a breach of the contract of the examiner.

10.5.2 Procedures for Reporting Serious Concerns

If examiners have a concern about standards and performance, particularly if it is considered that the assessment is being conducted in a way that jeopardises either the fair treatment of the student or the standard of the award, they should raise such concerns with the Chair of RDC and / or the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic).

Where an external examiner has a serious concern relating to systemic failings with the academic standards of the assessment of a research award and has exhausted all applicable internal procedures, including the submission of a confidential report to the Vice-Chancellor, the external examiner may invoke QAA's concerns scheme or inform the relevant professional, statutory or regulatory body.

10.5.3 Responding to Research Degrees Examining reports

Research Degrees Examining reports are considered in detail at different levels within the institution. All Research Degrees Examining Board decisions are approved by RDC and all reports are scrutinised by RDC. Copies are distributed to the supervisory team and the Faculty. Faculties are responsible for scrutinising all examining reports and for taking appropriate action where issues are identified.

An annual overview report on Examining Board Reports is prepared, summarising the findings of all the research degrees reports and identifying themes and issues that require an institutional response. This report is prepared for RDC and AQSC.

10.6 CONDUCT OF THE EXAMINATION

MPhil by Research, PhD by Research, and Professional Doctorate

10.6.1 Preliminary examination of the thesis: MPhil by Research, PhD by Research, PhD by Published Works, and Professional Doctorate

Both examiners will write and submit an independent report to the Academic Office on the thesis. For the MPhil by Research, the PhD by Research, the PhD by Published Works, and the Professional Doctorate, the independent report represents a pre-viva report which must be submitted at least 1 week before the date of the oral examination. These reports will form part of the examination report which will also consist of a joint report from the oral examination. For the MA by Research / MSc by Research, and the MRes, the independent report represents an initial report which determines whether or not an oral examination is required.

Where the submission includes non-textual artefacts, a protocol to allow examiners to have appropriate access to the artefacts prior to completion of their independent reports must have been approved by RDC when the Examining Board is nominated.

Examiners are not allowed to communicate directly between themselves prior to their independent reports being received by the Academic Office, but they may raise any concerns about the thesis before the submission of the independent reports with the Chair of the Examining Board.

The Chair should read both independent reports and make a note of any differences between the reports. The Chair should also be alert of any serious problems highlighted in the reports. The Chair may consider the reporting of an examiner to be unreasonable, unfair, not in line with the requirements for the examining of research degrees, or contrary to the regulations of the University. In such cases it is recommended that the Chair refer any concerns to the Chair of RDC in writing. Similarly, if the Chair becomes aware of any conflict of interest in relation to the composition of the Examining Board, the Chair needs to contact as soon as possible the Chair of RDC. Guidelines for Chairs are available as Appendix 2 to the Code of Practice for Research Degrees.

For the MA by Research / MSc by Research, and the MRes, the Chair should determine whether an oral examination is required, based on the recommendations of the examiners in the independent reports. Where one or both examiners recommends that an oral examination is required, then an oral examination shall be arranged (see section 10.6.2 below). If an oral examination is not required, but at least one examiner has indicated that corrections and amendments must be made, then the Chair must identify which examiner will be responsible for scrutinizing the corrections.

10.6.2 The oral examination

The oral examination will normally be conducted at one of the campuses of the University or at the collaborative partner institution. Exceptionally, and with the approval of RDC, the oral examination may be conducted at another place or by video-link (see section 10.3 “Request for Examination by Electronic Means (Video Link)” above). In the latter case the Chair must ensure that the student is able to communicate only with the Examining Board during the examination.

When the Examining Board assembles on the day of the examination, the independent written reports of each examiner must be available to all members of the Board. A preliminary meeting of the Examining Board should take place prior to the oral examination to consider the structure of the questioning, to confirm the initial opinion of the examiners and to decide upon the main points to be raised during the examination. Students should be given an opportunity to comment on any adverse points and on any amendments of substance that the examiners are intending to recommend.

Even where both examiners are of the view that the thesis is of the required standard prior to the oral examination, there must be no suggestion that the oral examination is a formality. Examiners are required to satisfy themselves at the oral examination that the thesis is the student’s original work and that the student completely understands the contents of the thesis.

Just prior to the start of the oral examination, the Chair should meet the student in private to ask the student whether there are any health or other personal circumstances, not previously notified via the supervisory team, which may impact on the student’s performance in the oral examination. It is the responsibility of the student to make the Examining Board aware of extenuating circumstances which may affect the student’s performance in the oral examination. Academic appeals based on extenuating circumstances which could have been brought to the attention of the Examining Board prior to oral examination shall not be considered.

A student is allowed to bring to the oral examination an unannotated copy of the thesis and any other material which was submitted with the thesis and blank paper and writing implements to make notes during the oral examination. However, no other written material, including questions, notes, books or dictionaries or any electronic devices may be taken in.

At the start of the examination, the Chair should ensure that student is introduced to the examiners, and that the atmosphere is reasonably relaxed so that the student is not intimidated

by the event. The Chair should explain the purpose of the oral examination to the examiners and the student. The Chair should ensure that the examiners and the student are aware of the University regulations and guides dealing with the examination of a research thesis. The Chair should explain the structure of the oral examination and clarify the roles of the examiners and any other individuals present. If any other individuals are present, the Chair should confirm that the student and, if appropriate, the examiners have no objections to the presence of those individuals.

The Chair may ask the student to give a short overview of the research at the beginning of the examination. During the following examination by the examiners the Chair should take notes of the examination.

At the end of the oral examination, the student and any members of the supervisory team will be asked to leave the room whilst the examiners decide on their recommendation. The student will then be asked to return to the room for feedback on the oral examination and to be informed of the recommended outcome that will be sent to RDC. The Chair should make it clear that the recommendation of the Examining Board is provisional and that final decision is taken by the appropriate RDC. The Chair should inform the student of the approximate timescale for receiving the formal notification of the outcome.

If no recommended outcome can be agreed by the examiners, the student should be informed that there is a difference of opinion between the examiners (but not what the differing recommendations are) and that the matter will be referred to an additional external examiner in accordance with the procedures described below.

The Chair of RDC must be informed and an additional external examiner must be appointed by RDC.

The additional external examiner acts as an arbitrator whose role it is to examine the thesis, review the separate examiner reports, and review the process of examination.

The additional external examiner has the following options:

- i) to endorse one of the two recommendations proposed by the Examining Board;
- ii) to conclude that the substance of the dispute is located in the student's performance in the oral examination and conduct a second oral examination of the student, with the arbitrating examiner and the Chair of the Examining Board present with a recommended outcome decided on for approval by RDC;
- iii) to recommend to RDC that the entire examination process needs to be started again with a new Examining Board. This second Examining Board must decide on a recommended outcome for approval by RDC.

The additional external examiner will be required to submit a report explaining the reason behind the decision reached.

10.7 AFTER THE EXAMINATION

At the end of the examination, where an oral examination has been held, the examiners are required to submit a joint report setting out their reasons for the recommendation. In the joint report examiners should explain in detail how the student's work meets the requirements for originality and scholarship, or how it failed to do so. Full instructions must be included of any changes required to the thesis, and these requirements must be made available to the student. For the MA by Research / MSc by Research, and the MRes, where no oral examination was

required, there is no requirement for a joint report, but if either examiner requires corrections and amendments to be made, that examiner must provide full instructions of the corrections and amendments required and the Chair must indicate the overall recommendation of the Examining Board.

The recommendation must include an outcome selected from those available in the regulations; it is not possible to adapt an outcome (e.g. the time period associated with a particular outcome). In the case of a requirement for corrections or re-submission, this should include minimum time periods before such re-submission may take place. There must also be clear indications of what students must complete before re-submission, and of the form of the re-submission.

The recommendation from the Examining Board is presented to RDC which has the following options:

- to approve the recommended outcome;
- to ask for further clarification
 - in relation to a discrepancy between outcome and report, and/or
 - in relation to the work to be done by the student (e.g. to request a more detailed report) and/or
 - confirmation that the changes can be completed within the time period set by the regulations.
- to ask the Examining Board to consider the outcome again (e.g. when it seems to members of RDC that it will not be possible for the student to complete the required changes within the time period specified by the outcome);
- to reject the recommended outcome of the Examining Board.

10.7.1 Notes on possible outcomes

Outcome A for all degrees

The student be approved for the degree

The thesis is deemed to meet the criteria for the degree without any further work needed. The student should prepare appropriate numbers of the final permanently bound thesis.

Outcome B for all degrees

The student be approved for the degree subject to the satisfactory completion of such corrections and amendments as may be required by the Examining Board

The student will be provided with a list of corrections and amendments by the examiners which may take the form of an annotated copy of the thesis from one or both of the examiners and/or a short document detailing corrections prepared by one or both examiners. The student must complete the corrections and amendments requested by the examiners and submit these to the Academic Office within the specified timeframe of receiving the list of corrections and amendments (6 months for PhD by Research, MPhil by Research and Professional Doctorate; 12 weeks for MA by Research / MSc by Research, MRes and PhD by Published Works). The student is not permitted to make any amendments other than those specified by the Examining Board.

The corrections and amendments may be presented in electronic format by prior agreement of all parties and must be accompanied by a document outlining both the suggested corrections and amendments and the steps taken by the student to implement those corrections and amendments. The corrections and amendments will be sent to the examiner who was appointed by the Examining Board to check the work done (usually the internal examiner). If the examiner is content that the corrections and amendments have been completed satisfactorily, then a Confirmation of Corrections form is completed. In some cases, if the examiners are not satisfied

that all the required work is done, they may require a further period of 4 weeks to complete the corrections and amendments before they are approved. If the examiners are still not satisfied with corrections and amendments or the corrections and amendments are not received within the timescale agreed, then the student will be judged to have not met the conditions set by the Examining Board and an outcome of Not Approved will be recorded. The Confirmation of Corrections form is submitted to RDC for final approval.

Outcome C for all degrees

The student be not approved for the degree at this stage, but that the student is allowed to modify the thesis and re-submit it for examination for the same degree on one further occasion

This outcome is not available in the case of a student who has already re-submitted a thesis for examination.

The student will be provided with an indication of the areas of the thesis that will require substantial re-working by the examiners and will be informed that the student will be given a period of 12 months (for PhD by Research, MPhil by Research and Professional Doctorate) or 6 months (for MA by Research / MSc by Research, MRes and PhD by Published Works) in which to resubmit the thesis. Following receipt of the official outcome, the student will become a registered student who is entitled to supervision from their supervisory team and will have full access to the University resources and facilities. The student will be expected to maintain close contact with the supervisory team throughout this process and have the required number of formal meetings as per the section 7 “Progress Monitoring” above. In some circumstances there will be a change of supervisory team for the resubmission process; students will be informed of such a change by the Academic Office.

The student should submit the thesis following the same procedures as a first submission and will be required to pay a re-submission fee. The expectation is that the thesis will be examined by the same Examining Board, but in very exceptional cases a new or amended Examining Board may need to be appointed. Where a new or amended Examining Board is appointed, examiners will be provided with a copy of the original submission and the previous reports as well as the re-submitted thesis and instructed to consider the re-submitted thesis in light of the comments made by the original Examining Board.

The re-submission Examining Board is required to conduct an oral examination for the re-submitted thesis, although, in exceptional cases the requirement for an oral examination may be waived at the discretion of the re-submission Examining Board and only where both examiners’ preliminary independent reports clearly recommend that the student should be approved for the degree sought. The final decision of whether or not to waive the oral examination is taken by the Chair of the Examining Board.

If the student fails to resubmit the thesis within the timescale agreed, then the student will be judged to have not met the conditions set by the Examining Board and an outcome of Not Approved will be recorded.

Outcome D for the MPhil by Research, MA by Research / MSc by Research, Professional Doctorate, MRes and PhD by Published Works

Outcome F for PhD by Research only

The student be not approved for the award of a degree

The thesis is deemed not to meet the criteria for the degree and for the deficiencies to be such that it would not be able to be represented for the degree (or any other degree). For the Professional Doctorate and the MRes, the student may be eligible for an exit award.

There are two further outcomes specific for the PhD by Research:

Outcome D for PhD by Research only

The student be not approved for the degree of PhD by Research, but be approved instead for the degree of MPhil by Research subject, where appropriate, to the satisfactory completion of such corrections and amendments as may be required by the Examining Board

This outcome is similar to outcome B for PhD by Research above, except the corrections and amendments are made for the degree of MPhil by Research.

Outcome E for PhD by Research only

The student be not approved for the degree of PhD by Research, but be allowed to modify the thesis and re-submit it for examination for the degree of MPhil by Research on one further occasion

This outcome is similar to outcome C for PhD by Research above, except the re-submission is made for of the degree of MPhil by Research. This outcome is not available in the case of a student who has already re-submitted a thesis for examination.

10.8 FORMAL NOTIFICATION OF OUTCOME

After RDC has approved an outcome, the student will be contacted by the Academic office (usually electronically) to confirm the outcome of the examination and will be provided with a copy of the examination reports.

10.9 FINAL SUBMISSION OF THESIS

Where a student has been approved for a degree (either directly, or on successfully meeting the conditions set by the Examining Board, the student will be asked to submit the thesis in permanent binding. Following official confirmation of the award, the student must send two copies of the thesis in permanent binding as well as an electronic copy to the Academic Office. One copy will be stored in the University Library and one will be sent to the National Library of Wales. Instructions on the final binding of a thesis can be found in Appendix 1 of the Code of Practice for Research Degrees.

2018/19

11. ACADEMIC APPEALS, AND COMPLAINTS ABOUT SUPERVISION

Details of the regulations and procedures for making an academic appeal are set out in Section 8.8 of the Academic Quality Handbook 2018/19. Details of the regulations and procedures for making a complaint about supervision are set out in Section 8.9 of the Academic Quality Handbook 2018/19.

12. UNFAIR PRACTICE IN RESEARCH DEGREES

Details of the regulations and procedures for unfair practice are set out in 2018/19 Appendix PG29.

13. REVIEW OF POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH DEGREE CANDIDATURE DECISIONS BY DEAN OF QUALITY AND STANDARDS

- (1) If a student is not satisfied with a decision regarding change of mode of study (Section 5.1 of this Code of Practice), or interruption of studies (Section 6.1 of this Code of Practice) or suspension of studies (Section 6.2 of this Code of Practice), or extension of maximum time limit (Section 6.3 of this Code of Practice), the student may request that the decision be reviewed by the Dean of Quality and Standards or nominee.
- (2) A request for a review may only be made on one or more of the following grounds:

- a) irregularities in the conduct of the relevant procedure, which are of such a nature as to cause reasonable doubt whether the same decision would have been reached had they not occurred;
 - b) the existence of relevant evidence and there are compelling reasons why this evidence was not provided earlier in the procedure;
 - c) the decision was not reasonable given the circumstances of the case.
- (3) A request for review of the decision shall be sent to the Academic Office on the Review of Postgraduate Research Degree Candidature Decisions Form (Appendix GA33) and must be received not later than 15 clear working days after the notification of the decision. Simple notice of a desire to request a review by a student within the above deadline shall not be deemed to constitute a formal request for review and shall not be accepted. The student shall provide full details of the grounds on which the request for a review is being made. A request for review received after the above deadline will be deemed to be out of time and will not be considered unless there is independent evidence to show compelling reasons as to why the request for review was not submitted in a timely manner. Where a request for review is deemed out of time, the University will issue a Completion of Procedures Letter on request, noting the reason why the request for review was not considered and advising the student that the student may be able to take the complaint to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) for Higher Education (see paragraph 13 (12)).
- (4) Receipt of the request for review shall be acknowledged normally within 5 clear working days. If a student submits a request for review which is not acknowledged within 5 clear working days, the student should contact the Academic Office to ensure that the request for review was actually received.
- (5) The Dean of Quality and Standards or nominee shall review the request to ascertain if the request has been made on permissible grounds and if a clear case has been made. The Dean of Quality and Standards or nominee may refuse any request which is not based on the grounds stated above or in which it is apparent that no clear case to review the decision has been made. The student shall be informed by means of a Completion of Procedures Letter that the request for review has been rejected and that the original decision stands. The student will be advised that he/she may be able to take his/her complaint to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) for Higher Education (see paragraph 13 (12)).
- (6) If it is determined that the request has been made on permissible grounds and that a clear case for reviewing the decision has been made, the Dean of Quality and Standards or nominee shall consider the request on the grounds indicated by the student.
- (7) In reaching a decision on the request, the Dean of Quality and Standards or nominee shall base a decision on the evidence of the student's submission together with any further evidence which is considered relevant.
- (8) The Dean of Quality and Standards or nominee shall be empowered to take one of the following decisions:
 - a) to uphold the original decision;
 - b) to overturn the original decision and issue an alternative decision.
- (9) The decision of the Dean of Quality and Standards or nominee shall be final, and the matter shall, therefore, be regarded as closed. There shall be no discussion of the

decision of the Dean of Quality and Standards or nominee with the student or any other person.

- (10) In the case of paragraph 13 (8) a), the decision of the Dean of Quality and Standards or nominee shall be communicated to the student by means of a Completion of Procedures Letter, normally within 15 clear working days of receipt of the request for review and the student will be advised that he/she may be able to take his/her complaint to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) for Higher Education (see paragraph.
- (11) In the case of paragraph 13 (8) b), the student shall be informed of the decision by means of a revised outcome letter (which may take the form of an electronic communication). There shall be no right to request a further review of the decision as set out in the revised outcome letter. On receipt of the revised outcome letter, the student may request a Completion of Procedures Letter be issued which will advise the student that he/she may be able to take his/her complaint to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) for Higher Education (see paragraph 13 (12)).
- (12) Complaints to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) for Higher Education must be made within 12 months of the effective date of the Completion of Procedures Letter. The effective date of a Completion of Procedures Letter will normally be the date on which it is issued. Where a request for review is deemed out of time or where a Completion of Procedures Letter is requested more than 25 clear working days after the notification of the final decision, the effective date of any Completion of Procedures Letter will normally be the date upon which the final decision was made. Full details of the procedure will be available from the Academic Office or from the OIA website: www.oiahe.org.uk.