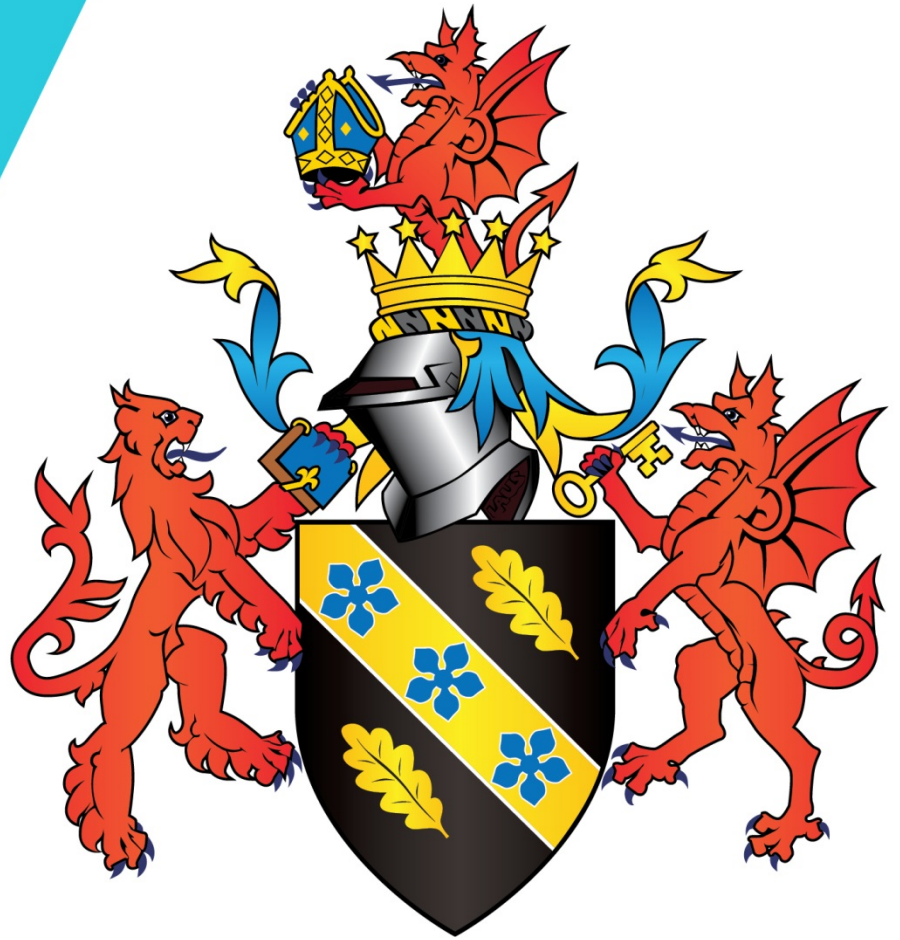




Prifysgol Cymru  
Y Drindod Dewi Sant  
University of Wales  
Trinity Saint David



# Code of Practice for Research Degrees 2019/20

(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)

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# 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:

- PhD by Research,
- MPhil by Research,
- MA by Research / MSc by Research,
- Professional Doctorates (DBA, DProf, Ed D, DMin),
- MRes,
- PhD by Published Works.

This Code of Practice for Research Degrees applies to all research degrees students registered for UWTSD awards.

The Code of Practice for Research Degrees also applies to collaborative partner institutions with research degrees provision.

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 2019/20 (see Chapters 6, 7, 8 and 9), 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 2019/20.

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

- QAA Quality Code
- QAA Quality Code: Advice and Guidance: Research Degrees;
- 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;
- League of European Research Universities, Maintaining a Quality Culture in Doctoral Education 2016;
- VITAE Exploring wellbeing and mental health and associated support services for postgraduate researchers 2018.

This document should be read in conjunction with the:

- Research Degrees Regulations in Chapter 8 of the Academic Quality Handbook 2019/20;

- Procedural Framework for Collaborative Provision in Chapter 9 of the Academic Quality Handbook 2019/20;
- Assessment and progression regulations in Chapters 6 and 7 of the Academic Quality Handbook 2019/20 for Part One of the MRes and Professional Doctorates programmes of study;
- Recognition of prior learning regulations in Chapter 6 of the Academic Quality Handbook 2019/20;
- 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 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. Institutes 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 2019/20 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 and Professional Doctorates or any Institute 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 2019/20 and the Code of Practice for Research Degrees 2019/20 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' Awards Board has the final judgement on each stage of candidature.

The regulations as set out in Chapter 8 of the Academic Quality Handbook 2019/20 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 2019/20 outcome regulations as outlined in Chapter 8 of the Academic Quality Handbook 2019/20 apply.
- 3) For University of Wales students, the University of Wales outcome regulations will apply.

The academic misconduct, mitigating circumstances, appeal and complaint, as well as all disciplinary regulations will be applied to all students in accordance with the appropriate policies.

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

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 2019/20 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 as well as Professional Doctorates is 50%.

## **1.1 Research Degrees Committees 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 Awards Board.

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.

The monitoring processes are overseen by the relevant Progress Review Board.

All ethics approval processes for research degrees students are handled by the Research Ethics Committee.

Requests for recognition of prior learning for Part One of a Professional Doctorate degree and an MRes degree are overseen by the RPEL Board.

Collaborative partner institutions may attend as a member.

### ***1.1.2 Research Degrees Committee.***

The University's RDC oversees all aspects of the University's research degrees provision. This committee, which has representation from all Institutes, reports to the Research Committee (RC) and the Academic Standards Committee (ASC) on the effectiveness of the arrangements for maintaining appropriate academic standards and enhancing the quality of postgraduate research programmes. The terms of reference of RDC are provided in Section 2.5.3 of Chapter 2 of the Academic Quality Handbook 2019/20.

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.

Each Institute of the University has representation on RDC. Staff can raise issues at RDC through their Institute 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.

Student representatives attend RDC (unreserved items) 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, Hwb, or discuss any issues they may have with the relevant Institute, who can then take the issue to RDC through the Institute representation system.

Students can give formal feedback through surveys such as the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) and through progress review 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 Institute to which the collaborative partner institution programme is linked.



## 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 Institute 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 Institute 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 Institute 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. 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.

There are three entry points for Research Degree Programmes (excluding those with taught elements):

- 1 October
- 1 February
- 1 June

### 2.1 General Entry Requirements

In addition to the normal minimum entry requirements for each degree, 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 be concurrently enrolled on another award bearing programme in this or any other university/institution.

Any conditions set in the offer, must be met prior to enrolment. If the conditions are not met, their enrolment may be deferred to the next enrolment period.

Applicants who do not possess the normal minimum entrance requirements may be considered for admission on their merits 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 Collaborative Research Projects**

Where a thesis will contain 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.

## **2.4 Research Environment**

During the consultation process with applicants prior to entry, Institutes 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;
- availability of adequate learning space;
- 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.

## **2.5 Research Degrees Admission Sub-Committee**

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. For Part One of Professional Doctorate degrees and MRes degrees, Recognition of Prior Certificated Learning claims are processed by the Registry and Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning claims are considered by the 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 Institute, 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 Institute. The Research Degrees Admissions Sub-Committee will also consider the paperwork for non-standard admissions for the degrees specified above.

### **2.5.1 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 Institutes 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 Institutes 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 Institute  
Registry appointment (Secretary)

## **3. SUPERVISION**

### **3.1 Supervisory Team**

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 one 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 are not listed on the University's Directory of Directors of Studies and Supervisors may be exceptionally approved as supervisors by RDC but not added to the appropriate central directory. Further, individuals with relevant specialist expertise 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.

#### **3.1.1 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 or approved specifically by RDC.

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 enrolment 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.

## **3.2 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.

### **3.2.1 Eligibility Criteria for Director of Studies**

Institutes 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 equivalent level; and
- b) demonstrate clear research competence and recent research expertise through peer-reviewed publications, regular conference attendance, or research grant income in the last five years; and
- c) have at least 12 months of experience as supervisor for at least a single student who successfully completed 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.

### **3.2.2 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 the Research Ethics Committee following approval in principle of the full research proposal;
- v) a minimum of three meetings are held each year and attended by appropriate members of the supervisory team;
- vi) the discussion and action points arising from each formal meeting are summarised in a formal written record 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 academic misconduct, 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.

### **3.3 Supervisors**

The University recognises that supervision practice may vary between subjects and disciplines 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, and attend appropriate formal supervision meetings.

#### **3.3.1 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 equivalent 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.

Institutes 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 been 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.

#### **3.3.2 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;
- 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 Institute and University and/or at external meetings/conferences;
- xvi) give advice on how and where to publish, if appropriate

### **3.4 Lead Supervisors**

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.

#### **3.4.1 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.

### **3.5 Adviser**

Advisers may form part of the supervisory team for a defined period of time or for the duration of the student's enrolment. Advisors 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 appropriate 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 Institute is responsible for arranging and maintaining appropriate contracts with Human Resources following the approval of external Advisers through RDC.

### **3.6 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 a student is near to completion, a former Lead Supervisor who has left the university may be appointed as an "external" supervisor and act as a Lead Supervisor, but not as a Director of Studies.

In particular cases, an Institute 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 Institute 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 Institute is responsible for confirming the contract and eligibility to work of an external advisor/supervisor with Human Resources prior to RDC approval of any external supervisor.

### **3.7 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 eight full-time equivalent students at PhD, MPhil, Professional Doctorate level and should not exceed a total of fifteen 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 Institute 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.



### **3.8 Supervision Entitlement**

The normal expectation is that:

- 1) Full-time students would meet with one or more of their supervisory team at least ten times per academic year.
- 2) Part-students would meet with one or more of their supervisory team at least five times per academic year.
- 3) These meetings must be documented.

A record of three of these meetings must be included as part of the progress review process.

### **3.9 Replacement of Supervisor**

Where an Institute finds it necessary to replace a supervisor who is a member of University staff it must first ensure that it has considered all appropriate and reasonable internal institutional options for ensuring that the supervisory team contains the necessary expertise before looking further afield. Where an external supervisor has been appointed because of their particular expertise or perspective (e.g. industry-based), it would normally be appropriate to replace such a supervisor with an equivalent appointment, where this is reasonably possible.

- **Access to Resources**

On the departure of a member of the supervisory team, Institutes should also give consideration as to whether this would affect the student's access to resources where, for example, resources had been provided at the University by a research grant which had moved with the lead supervisor. This need only be a consideration were the resources were an intrinsic requirement for the student's studies, and which had been specified as such at the beginning of their programme. If the Institute cannot provide these resources directly this may also involve reasonable endeavours to provide these resources from an alternative source.

- **Making Alternative Arrangements**

If it is necessary for alternative provision to be made, responsibility would sit with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and Dean of the Institute to determine the arrangements. The student will be consulted on the proposed arrangements to be made but responsibility for them must remain with the University (exercised through the Institute) and cannot be delegated to the student concerned. Where the proposed arrangements would entail a change to the registration of the student this must be discussed with the student at an early stage in the process and approval of the student must be sought before the arrangements are finalised.

- **External supervision**

Provision of appropriate supervision may involve the appointment of an external supervisor with the necessary specialist knowledge from outside the University. Where the Institute deems it appropriate, they may approach the supervisor who is leaving to continue supervising as a supervisor. There is no obligation on the part of a Institute to enter into such an arrangement with a member of staff when they leave in preference to making other alternative arrangements, nor for the supervisor in question to feel obligated to consider continuing supervision and they should only do so of their own volition and if their new employer is happy with the arrangement. In all cases lead supervisor duties must be retained by an appropriate member of staff within the Institute in question.

- **Transfer to another Institution**

Where there are no reasonable alternative arrangements, the Institute will take reasonable steps to look for a place for the student at another eligible institution and to take reasonable steps to negotiate a transfer.

- **Minimum Period of Study or Post-Submission**

Changes to supervision once a student has reached the end of the minimum period of study or has submitted their thesis should only be made in exceptional circumstances and approved by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic).

- **Where it is not possible to provide supervision**

There may still be some circumstances, despite the University's reasonable endeavours, where it is no longer possible to identify appropriate supervision for a student. Where this is the case, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and Dean of Institute must consult with the Institute Director of Research Degrees before making the student aware, as soon as possible that this is the case, and of any further options open to them.

## **4. METHODS, MODES AND PERIODS OF STUDY**

### **4.1 Methods and Modes of Study**

Students either study full-time or part-time, either as residential or distance learning students.

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

- Full-Time Residential
- Part-Time Residential
- Full-Time Distance Learning
- Part-Time Distance Learning

Full-time students are expected to spend a minimum of 35 hours a week on research and study during the period of supervised study for the degree. Full-time students should not normally be in full-time employment.

Part-time students are expected to spend approximately 17.5 hours a week on research and study during the period of supervised study for the degree.

All full-time residential students 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 residential students 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 part-time distance learning students.

Full-time residential 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 approved by the student’s supervisory team. For students for whom the University acts as student visa sponsor, regulations related to their visa conditions will apply.

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 to study as a distance learning student, 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.

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.

## 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.

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)

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

- b) MPhil by Research

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

- c) MA by Research / MSc by Research

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

- d) Professional Doctorates

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

e) Master by Research (MRes)

<b>Mode of study</b>	<b>Minimum period of study</b>	<b>Maximum submission</b>
Full-time	18 months	36 months
Part-time	36 months	72 months

f) PhD by Published Work

<b>Mode of study</b>	<b>Minimum period of study</b>	<b>Maximum submission</b>
Full-time	12 months	12 months
Part-time	24 months	24 months

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.

### **4.3 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. 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 Institute 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 at 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.

#### **4.3.1 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 Institute 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 appeal the decision through the Academic Appeal Policy.

### **4.3.2 Required to change mode of study**

Under exceptional circumstances a student may be required to change mode of study due to academic, student cases policies, 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 appeal the decision as set out in the Academic Appeal Policy.

## **4.4 Transfer of Candidature**

### **4.4.1 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.

### **4.4.2 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 Institute 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. 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.

### **4.4.3 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 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 Institute or collaborative partner institution must

indicate whether or not the Institute 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 Institute 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. 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.

#### **4.4.4 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 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 Institute or collaborative partner institution must indicate whether or not the Institute 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 Institute 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. 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. PROJECT MILESTONES AND MONITORING**

### **5.1 Enrolment**

Students of research degrees must complete the enrolment process. 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.

Students must re-enrol on an annual basis. If students do not re-enrol on their programme, they will have been deemed to have withdrawn after 3 attempts to contact them concerning their enrolment.

### **5.2 Transferring from Part I (Taught) to Part II (MRes, Professional Doctorate, Education Doctorate)**

Upon the successful completion of the Part I of their studies, students will be transferred to Part II.

Normally, the Programme Manager for Part I will provide a list of students who are likely to progress to Part II at the 3 months prior to the Examining Board.

The Nomination form needs to be approved by the Programme Manager for Research Degrees and Line Manager of the proposed Supervisor. The approved supervisory team will be noted at the next meeting of the RDC.

#### **5.2.1 Induction**

All postgraduate research students should complete the University's research induction training programme at the appropriate time. If Institutes 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.

#### **5.2.2 Induction Requirements**

It is normally a requirement for all students to attend, either in person or online, an induction programme as soon as possible after admission or transfer to Part II. 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 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 Institute. For collaborative partner institutions some of the programme will be delivered by the Partnership Team Leader, Partnership Coordinator or the link Institute'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;
- the required milestones to complete the programme of study.

As part of the University's commitment to the Researcher Development Framework, students should participate in the University's Researcher Development Programme (RDP) and use Vitae Online RDF Planning Tool to complete a training needs analysis. Some sponsors may require students to participate in these programmes.

Following completion of the training needs analysis, students and their supervisor(s) should discuss and agree a plan which normally forms the basis of the Personal Development Plan (PDP). The plan should be reviewed regularly and revised throughout the duration of the research programme. The plan should 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 should normally be developed and maintained in the Vitae Online RDF Planning Tool. Students should review, and where necessary revise, the plan throughout the duration of their research programme.

### **5.3 Responsibilities of Students**

Postgraduate research students are responsible for ensuring that they:

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

## 5.4 Progress Monitoring

Students should meet regularly with members of the supervisory team and must attend a minimum of **three** formal meetings every twelve months: **one** with all members of the supervisory team (including any current Advisers) and **two** with at least two members of their supervisory team. A record of each formal meeting is made (on the Record of Formal Meeting Form) and a copy of each record is attached to the progress 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):

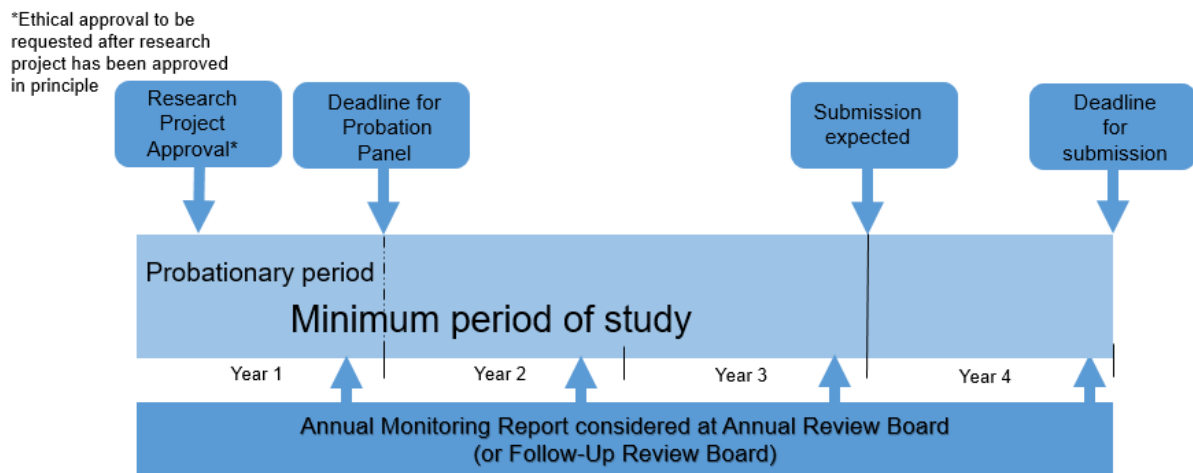


Figure 1: Full-time PhD by Research

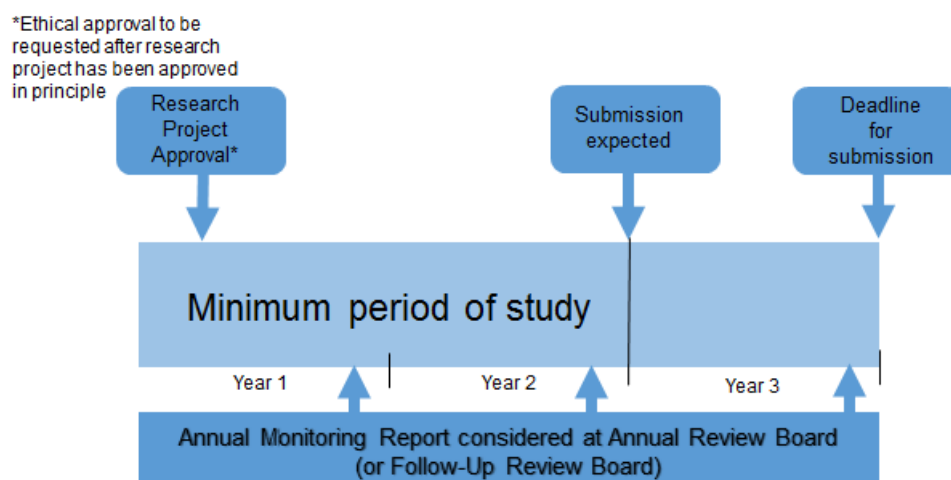


Figure 2: Full-time MPhil by Research

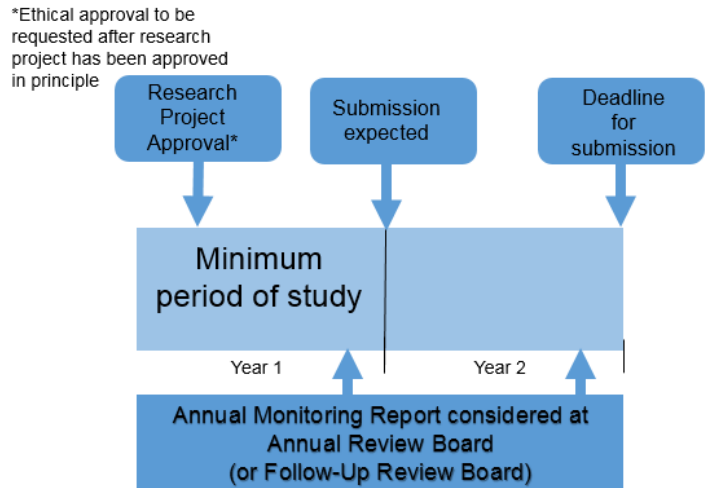


Figure 3: Full-time MA by Research / MSc by Research

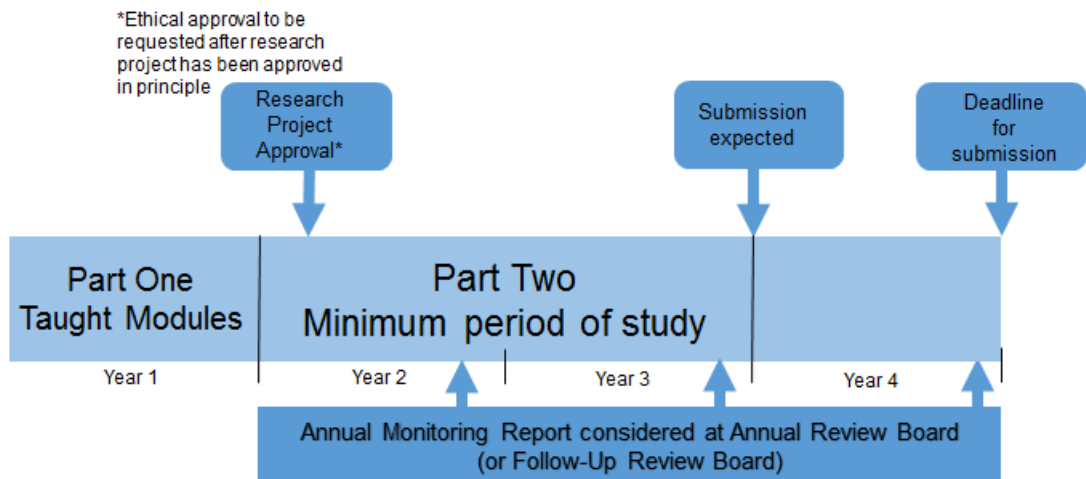


Figure 4: Full-time Professional Doctorate

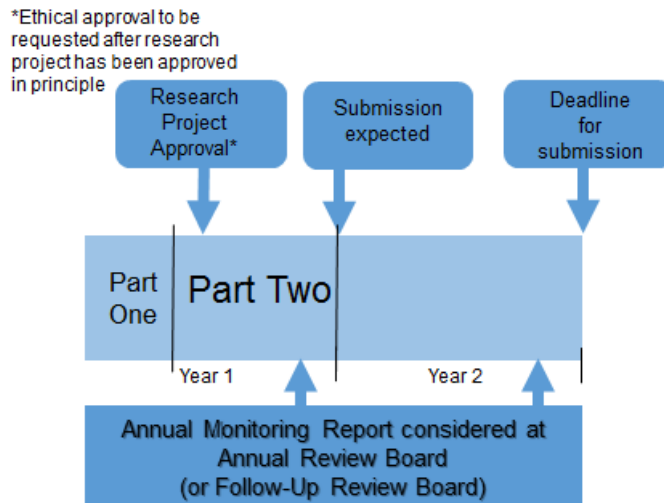


Figure 5: Full-time Master by Research (MRes)

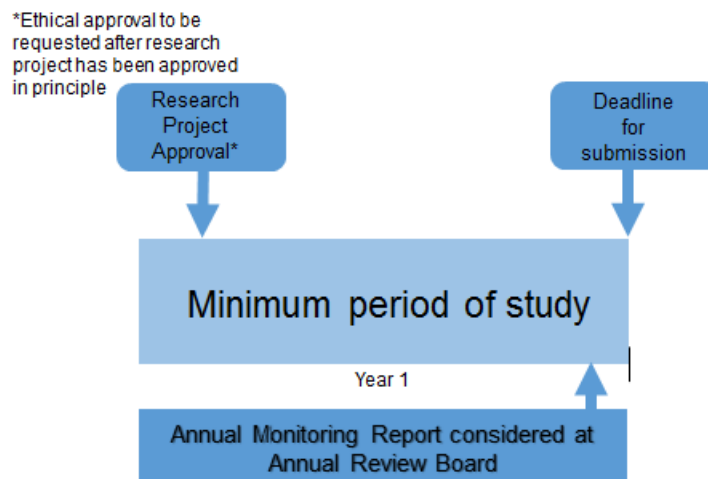


Figure 6: Full-time PhD by Published Works

### 5.5 Research Project Approval

All research students must complete and submit a Full Research Proposal Form 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 Academic Appeal Policy.

After a research project has received approval in principle, a student must apply for ethical approval.

## 5.6 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 to the Research 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 Research 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. Research activity in areas which require ethical approval should not commence until after written approval has been received from the Research Ethics Committee. However, a student may commence other aspects of the research (such as a literature review) while awaiting formal approval.

### 5.6.1 Research Ethics Committee

The University has a central Research 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.

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/>.

## 5.7 Progress Review Boards

Progress Review Boards are normally held at three times during the academic year. A student's first Progress Report will normally be completed approximately 8 months after initial enrolment, and then, normally, every 12 months subject to satisfactory progress.

Each Progress Report must contain an assessment of the student's engagement with and progress on their research project, their contact with their supervisory team, their likelihood of completing within the permissible timeframe, and if they have met the appropriate research milestones.

The Progress Review Board will determine on the basis of the report, if progress on the project is deemed "**satisfactory**", "**cause for concern**" or "**unsatisfactory**".

### **Terms of Reference of Progress Review Boards**

- (1) To consider the progress review paperwork for each student (and any action plan review paperwork) and assess the progress and performance of each student, taking into account the comments of the supervisory team and Institute 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 also be approved by the Research Degrees Committee;
- (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 Progress Review Boards**

Chair of the Research Degrees Committee or nominee (Chair)  
Minimum of one representative from each Institute (who is also a member of Research Degrees Committee)  
Academic Office representative  
Secretary (normally Academic Office Appointment)

#### **5.7.1 Progress Review Outcomes**

##### **Satisfactory Progress**

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. Where a student's progress is deemed "satisfactory", the next Progress Report will be considered at the Progress Review Board held 12 months later.

##### **Cause for concern**

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.

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. At the end of the action plan a follow-up progress report will be submitted to the next Progress Review Board.

If, a student is considered as "cause for concern" at two consecutive Progress Review Boards, the student's progress will be classified as unsatisfactory.

##### **Unsatisfactory**

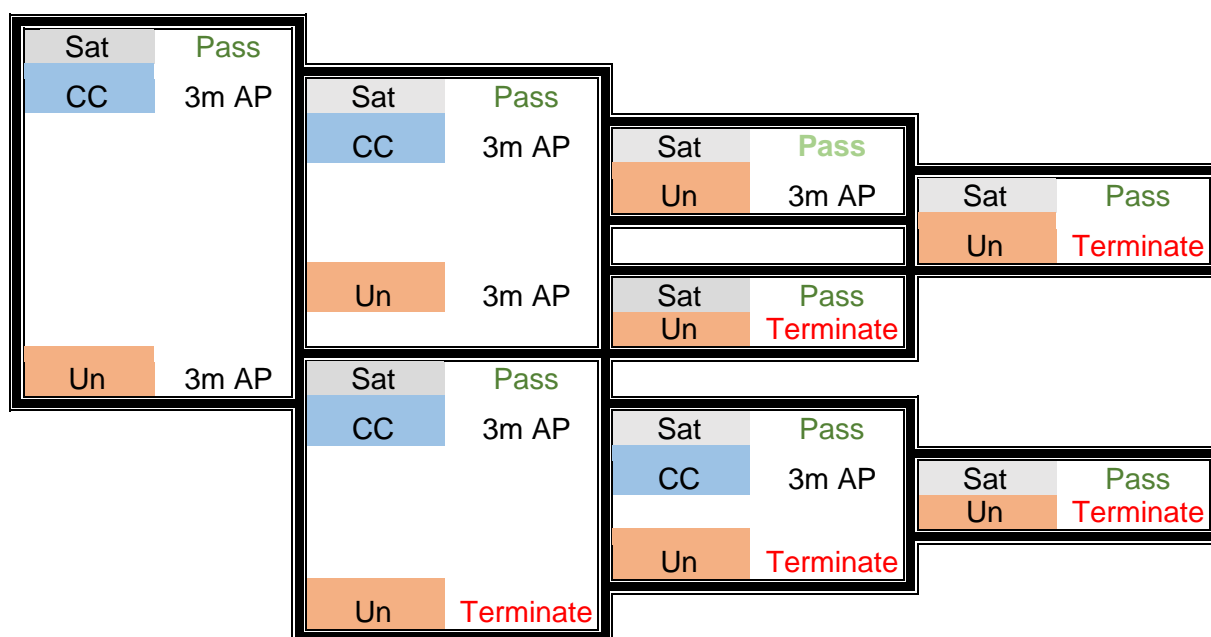
A student's progress will normally be deemed "**unsatisfactory**" where the student has not been in contact with the supervisory team for a period in excess of 3 months, or is not engaged on the research project, or, in the opinion of the supervisory team, is not making any tangible progress and so would 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.

Where a student's progress is classified as "unsatisfactory", the student will be provided with a 3 month action plan drawn up by the supervisory team. A follow-up progress report will be submitted to the next Progress Review Board to consider the progress to date.

If, a student is considered as "unsatisfactory" at two Progress Review Boards within a 12 month period, the student's candidature will be terminated.

### Summary of assessments and recommendations

PR-1	Action	PR-2	Action	PR-3	Action	PR-4	Action
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### Key

Assessment: Sat = Satisfactory; CC = Cause for concern; Un = Unsatisfactory  
 Actions: Pass = go into 12-month review cycle; 3m AP = 3-month 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.

### 5.8 Probationary Period of Study (PhD by Research Only)

Students enrolling on the degree of PhD by Research will be enrolled 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;

- (d) The student can present and communicate work orally, and in writing, in a successful manner;
- (e) The student has satisfactorily completed the training modules or courses which were identified at the start of studies;
- (f) 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.

### **5.8.1 Probation Panel**

A Probation Panel must be established no later than 18 months after initial enrolment for full-time students, and no later than 36 months after initial enrolment for part-time students.

RDC will approve a Probation Panel consisting of the supervisory team together with an assessor and a Chair, both of whom 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) Probation extended for up to 3 months for full-time student and by up to 6 months for part-time students: the Panel must stipulate the conditions which must be addressed. If the conditions are not met, the Probation Panel must meet again.
- (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 4.4.4:
- (v) Required to withdraw.

Students have the right to appeal all decisions as set out in the Student Academic Appeal Policy.



## **6. PRESENTATION AND SUBMISSION OF THE THESIS**

### **6.1 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.

#### **6.1.1 *Maximum word length***

In all cases the length of the thesis must be appropriate to the subject area covered, and should normally conform to the limits set below:

- For an MRes the word length is not to exceed 30,000 words excluding references.
- For an MA by Research / MSc by Research the word length is not to exceed 40,000 words excluding references.
- For an MPhil by Research the word length is not to exceed 60,000 words excluding references.
- For a Professional Doctorate the word length is not to exceed 60,000 words excluding 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.

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.

#### **6.1.2 *Inclusion of artefacts within a thesis***

Where a thesis includes artefacts, it will need to be reported when a student notifies the University of their intention to submit. Students will need to be able to demonstrate how any such artefacts relate to the thesis and its defence.

### **6.1.3 Inclusion of published papers in a thesis**

The inclusion of published material written by the student 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.

To demonstrate the student's individual contribution to knowledge, a copy of all published papers by the student 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.

## **6.2 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. 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.

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.

On the completion of the minimum period of study and prior to the maximum submission date, a student must submit to the Academic Office an electronic copy of the thesis and any additional material, as well as two copies of the temporarily bound or permanently bound thesis.

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.

Upon receipt of the electronic submission, the thesis will be submitted to Turnitin and the report will be passed to the examiners.

### **6.2.1 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 complete and return the 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, the Academic Office 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 Registry before making any decision on early submission.

### **6.3 Access to the 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.

## **7. EXAMINATION OF THE THESIS**

### **7.1 Constitution of Examining Board**

Normally an Examining Board will comprise of the following individuals:

- A 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:

- A Chair;
- Two External Examiners.

Nominations for the composition of the Examining Board must be made by the Institute to RDC, following the External Expertise Protocol. 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.

#### **7.1.1 Chair of Examining Board**

The Chair of the Board 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 Institute 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.

## **7.2 Timeframe and Arrangements for Examination**

A submitted thesis will be forwarded to appointed examiners as soon as is reasonably possible.

### **7.2.1 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.

Where an oral examination is required, this should normally be held within 6 working weeks from the date that RDC confirms that an oral examination is required.

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.

### **7.2.2 MPhil by Research, PhD by Research, PhD by Published Works, and Professional Doctorate (and MRes where a viva has been required)**

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. This should normally be held within 12 working weeks of the examiners' receipt of the thesis.

An independent pre-viva report from each examiner must be submitted to the Chair at least 1 week before the date of the viva. The completed post-viva report 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.

Once a date has been agreed, the Chair will confirm the date and location with the Academic Office, 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.

The 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 the examiners prior to or following the oral examination concerning the thesis until such time as the examination process is completed (including any period for corrections and amendments or resubmission). All communication should be through the Chair.

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.

### **7.3 Request for Examination by Electronic Means (Video Link)**

RDC may allow the oral examination to take place by video link. The University would expect that, normally, the oral examination would be held in person, and that should it be necessary to postpone the meeting, that it is preferable to one held through electronic means, but it is accepted that it will occasionally be necessary for electronic means to be used instead (e.g. 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 or the Director of Studies 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 should 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.

#### **7.4 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.

##### **7.4.1 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 Institute submitting for that degree.

##### **7.4.2 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.

##### **7.4.3 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.

#### **7.5 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 General Data Protection Regulation, 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.

##### **7.5.1 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.

The completed post-viva report 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.

### **7.5.2 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.

### **7.5.3 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 Institute. Institutes 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.

## **7.6 Conduct of the Examination**

### **7.6.1 Preliminary examination of the thesis**

Both examiners will write and submit an independent report to the Chair 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, the examination process must have been approved by RDC as part of the nomination of the Examining Board.

Examiners are not allowed to communicate directly about the thesis between themselves prior to their independent reports being received by the Chair. 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 to 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. 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.

### **7.6.2 The oral examination (Viva Voce)**

The oral examination will normally be conducted at one of the campuses of the University or at the collaborative partner institution. With the approval of RDC, the oral examination may be conducted at another place or by video-link. 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.

It is the responsibility of the student to make the Chair aware of mitigating circumstances which may affect the student's performance in the oral examination prior to the start of the examination. It is responsibility of Chair to confirm any appropriate accommodations that are necessary as a result. Academic appeals based on mitigating 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. 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.

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.

## **7.7 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 to the chair. 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.

The recommendation must include an outcome available in the regulations. These outcomes cannot be adapted (e.g. the time period associated with a particular outcome cannot be changed).

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

- i) to approve the recommended outcome;
- ii) 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.

- iii) 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);
- iv) to reject the recommended outcome of the Examining Board and to restart the examining process with a new Examining Board.

### **7.7.1 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 an enrolled 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 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.

## **7.8 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.

## **7.9 Final Submission of Thesis**

Following official confirmation of the award, the student must send one copy of the thesis in permanent binding as well as an electronic copy to the Academic Office. An electronic copy will be stored in the University Library and the permanently bound copy 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 2019/20.

## **8. ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT IN RESEARCH DEGREES**

Details of the regulations and procedures for unfair practice are set out in the Academic Misconduct Policy.

## **9. APPEALS AND REVIEW OF DECISIONS**

Details of the regulations and procedures for appeals are set out in Academic Appeal Policy.

## **10. INTERRUPTION OF STUDY, SUSPENSION AND WITHDRAWAL**

Details of the regulations and procedures for Interruption of Study and Suspension are set out in the Mitigating Circumstances Policy.

### **10.1 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 Institute 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 Registry 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 Notification of Withdrawal Form. The form must be signed by the student. The Academic Office will notify the Institute of the student's decision. The date of withdrawal will be noted as the date of receipt of the form.

## **11. EMPLOYMENT WHILE STUDYING**

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.

### **11.1 Graduate Teaching Assistants**

If Institutes 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 all graduate teaching assistants have either completed or are enrolled on the University's accredited programme for graduate teaching assistants;
- (b) that an appropriate selection procedure is followed and that a contract is set up with the Human Resources Department.

