

## CODE OF PRACTICE FOR POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Purpose of Code of Practice

The purpose of this Code of Practice is to provide information for postgraduate research students and supervisors of Teesside University in the following areas:

- the nature and scope of research degrees
- admission, enrolment and registration procedures, and academic progress
- the framework for supervision
- progress and completion
- monitoring, review and evaluation
- complaints and appeals
- student support
- finance

All research, and particularly research aimed at producing an original contribution to knowledge, is an exciting, creative and rewarding activity, requiring hard work, dedication and consummate interpersonal skills. It is also likely to involve frustration, self-doubt and disappointment, though usually only of a temporary nature. A number of aspects of research may fall outside a student's previous experience, such as the extent of individual study required, the close and extensive working relationship with a small supervisory team and the extent of self-management required. But in most cases these new experiences merely add to the challenge of research and, on obtaining a higher degree, an extra sense of fulfillment. Named Professional Doctorates, are not covered by this Code.

This *Code of Practice* has been reviewed to ensure (in conjunction with the University's *Framework and Regulations for the Award of Higher Degrees by Research*) compatibility with the *QAA Quality Code Chapter B11 Research Degrees* and reviews are undertaken annually of the *Code* and the *Framework and Regulations*.

This *Code of Practice* should be read alongside *Framework and Regulations for the Award of Higher Degrees by Research (RDC-A through RDC-E)*, which provides the regulatory framework for research degrees; and *Research Degree Student Handbook*, which provides a simpler series of guidelines and FAQs for students about essential aspects of the research degree at the University.

## 1.2 Data Protection, Confidentiality & Publicity

It should be noted that all personal information is provided in the strictest confidence and for authorized purposes only, in accordance with the terms of the University's registration under the current Data Protection Act. Internally, information will be known only to those members of Academic Staff, Committee or Board Members or Officers, Advisors, Examiners or Referees, who need to know at each particular stage. Externally, this will include the Higher Education Statistics Agency, and any Research Council/Funding Body to which an enrolled Research student is connected. Additionally, at Enrolment, Students will be asked to indicate if they wish their name to be excluded from the Awards Ceremony Brochure or other publicity that the University may seek to generate in relation to its awards and research.

## **2 THE NATURE AND SCOPE OF RESEARCH DEGREES**

*Six research degrees are awarded by the University: Master of Philosophy (MPhil); Doctor of Philosophy (PhD); Master in Professional Studies (M.Prof); Doctor in Professional Studies (D.Prof); Master of Philosophy by Completed Work (MPhilCW); and Doctor of Philosophy by Completed Work (PhDCW).*

*Named professional doctorates, D.Clin.Psy, D.Coun.Psy, DBA, DHSC, DEd are not covered by this Code. The DProf and MProf programmes by the University are research degrees with a professional focus and are not professional doctorates with a taught component plus independent research component as offered in named professional doctorates.*

*The award of MPhil or PhD by Completed Work is for research work already undertaken prior to registration with the University, but not submitted for examination previously, and is offered only to staff members of the University and not to external candidates.*

*Some projects will evolve from prospective students, who are looking for potential supervisors – this will be particularly so in the Masters and Doctorate of Professional Studies programmes; other projects will already have been formulated by prospective supervisory staff, who are looking for potential students.*

*The requirements for the six research degrees are given below, although their interpretation may differ from discipline to discipline and should be discussed with the candidate's supervisory team.*

### **2.1 Master of Philosophy (MPhil); Master in Professional Studies (M.Prof)**

The degree of MPhil is awarded to a candidate who, having critically investigated and evaluated an approved topic and demonstrated an understanding of research methods appropriate to the chosen field, has presented and defended a thesis in oral examination to the satisfaction of the examiners. In the case of M.Prof, the work is based upon professional practice and investigative or creative work.

### **2.2 Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)**

The degree of PhD is awarded to a candidate who, having critically investigated and evaluated an approved topic, resulting in an independent and original contribution to knowledge, and having demonstrated an understanding of research methods appropriate to the chosen field, has presented and defended a thesis in oral examination to the satisfaction of the examiners.

### **2.3 Doctor in Professional Studies (D.Prof)**

The degree of D.Prof is awarded to candidates who have successfully completed an approved programme of study, which is based upon professional practice and investigative and creative work, culminating in the submission of an individual thesis, and if appropriate, other media formats. The outcome of the programme must represent an original contribution to knowledge in the area of professional practice in question and must be of an equivalent standard to that required of a candidate for the award of PhD. The work must be communicable, and the method open to rigorous critique.

## **2.4 MPhil by Completed Work (MPhilCW); PhD by Completed Work (PhDCW)**

### **a) MPhil by Completed Work**

The degree of MPhil by Completed Work is awarded to a candidate who is a member of staff of Teesside University at the time of application and whose previously completed submitted work has demonstrated an understanding of research methods appropriate to the overall theme, to the satisfaction of the examiners, and an assessment of its context in relation to the developing state of the art in the subject concerned. Candidates wishing to follow this route should contact the Doctoral Training Team in Research and Innovation Services for a copy of the relevant regulations and to discuss the process of application.

The candidate must present and defend the thesis in oral examination to the satisfaction of examiners, the conduct of which will be in accordance with the regulations for the award of MPhil and the academic standard associated with the degree will be the same as a conventional MPhil.

### **b) PhD by Completed Work**

The degree of PhD by Completed Work is awarded to a candidate who is a member of staff of Teesside University at the time of application and whose submitted work has demonstrated an independent and original contribution to knowledge, to the satisfaction of the examiners. This specialized route to a PhD is a retrospective assessment of the work submitted, of the research methodology employed in its creation, and assessment of its context in relation to the developing state of the art in the subject concerned. Candidates wishing to follow this route should contact the Doctoral Training Team in Research and Innovation Services for a copy of the relevant regulations and to discuss the process of application.

The candidate must present and defend the thesis in oral examination to the satisfaction of examiners, the conduct of which will be in accordance with the regulations for the award of PhD. The academic standard will be the same as for a conventional PhD.

## **2.5 “M” and “D” Level Descriptors**

In addition to the above, in framing their programmes of work, candidates and their Supervisory teams will give consideration to “M” and “D” level descriptors of the outcomes of study as set out RDC-A *General Framework for the Award of Higher Degrees by Research*, Sections A2.1 and A2.2.

### **3 ADMISSIONS AND ENROLMENT**

#### **3.1 Admissions Policy**

Applicants will be admitted onto programmes of study on the basis of academic merit and the ability to benefit from such study, and the availability of the appropriate research supervisory expertise. Admissions decisions will be taken in light of University policies on access, equal opportunities and at the discretion of Schools Admissions staff in accordance with the current Admissions policy.

#### **3.2 Entry Requirements**

The normal entry requirement for enrolment on a postgraduate research degree at Teesside University is an undergraduate degree in a cognate field of study with at least an upper second class honours (a “2:1”) from a British university, Institute of Higher Education, CNAAB, or recognized overseas equivalent. Exceptionally, consideration will be given to candidates with an alternative academic profile, for example if they have obtained appropriate professional qualifications, or obtained a Master’s degree, in a cognate field.

Except with specific permission, candidates will be required to write and defend their thesis in the English language and for admission, candidates will be expected to have achieved an acceptable level of proficiency in the English language which may be evidenced by a specific grade in one of a number of approved English language tests and examinations, or by having undertaken a degree programme in which the medium of teaching had been the English language. Exceptions may be considered, and where necessary, facilities for English Language tuition identified for all identified as being in need of additional training.

#### **3.3 Admission and Offers**

##### **3.3.1 Admission**

It will be the responsibility of the academic School to ensure that all formal applications for admission, in the designated form, will be treated on their merits, through approved procedures in the School. Before any formal offer of admission can be made, it will be necessary for prospective students to have provided a full project proposal and for a supervisory team to have been agreed. An Unconditional Offer can only be made once the School has formally agreed to register the applicant on the degree for which application has been made. Registration is agreed once all authorised signatories have completed the approved Registration form. Schools must be sure that adequate resources exist for the entire period of a student’s programme, before making a formal offer, which is agreed as part of the Registration.

##### **3.3.2 Offer**

Verbal offers of admission are not valid, a formal written offer of admission is required to enrol on a postgraduate research degree at Teesside University. Such a written offer may only be made by the School in which the student wishes to enrol, in accordance with the procedures for admission approved by the University.

The written Unconditional Offer must be accompanied by conditions of acceptance, mode of study, fees, funding if relevant including the annual amount of studentship and method of payment, the names of all members of the supervisory team, start date, mandatory induction and training dates, and date by which Application for

Annual Review must be made. The Offer must be accompanied by copies of the current regulations and Student Terms and Conditions, and other matters relevant to the individual case, such as terms of scholarship.

### **3.3.3 Inward Transfers of existing research students to the University**

Applicants wishing to transfer their existing research study from another university to Teesside University must be aware that Teesside University will need to take action in accordance with section 4.7. However, such applicants who are doing so on the basis that their current registration has expired will not be considered.

### **3.3.4 Offers and visa requirements**

Certificates of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) which are used to obtain entry visas can only be issued to international students once an Unconditional Offer has been accepted. Some applicants requiring a CAS and visa will also be required to apply for an Academic Technology Approval Scheme certificate (ATAS). If an applicant requires an ATAS, then they must only be issued with a Conditional Offer initially with application and evidence of ATAS certificate specified as a condition prior to an Unconditional Offer being made. Other requirements relating to the issuing of a CAS may be applied.

## **3.4 Research effort and workloads**

Before embarking on a research degree, applicants should consider their current and potential commitments at home and work, and whether or not they can commit the time required to study for a research degree over a continuous and prolonged period, taking into account the minimum and maximum registration periods. Full-time students should devote on average 35 hours per week to their research. Part-time students should devote on average 12 hours per week to their research. This will include requirements to attend Induction, research training, and seminars, as well as supervisory sessions. These amounts will vary from time-to-time according to the stage of the research. However, changes in family circumstances or employment may impinge upon study time and applicants need to discuss these issues with their families and employers where relevant, (whether they are employed outside or within the University) before committing to a research degree.

Within the University, Deans and line managers must ensure that once given permission to study a research degree, this commitment is taken into account within the employee's workload. Consideration should be given by Deans to requesting a deferral by new staff taking required training if the new staff member is still in the process of undertaking a research degree, to facilitate completion of this first. Similarly, students entering full-time employment or changing employment before they have completed their degree should ensure that their employers are made aware of the fact that they have still to complete their degree, that the employers understand the demands of undertaking a part-time research degree and that they have their support to continue the thesis to completion.

Students should also be aware that because of workloads, and with the exception of taking modules to underpin the research programme, the University may not approve simultaneous enrolment on more than one degree or postgraduate level programme.

Students should not register with another university for a degree or postgraduate level programme simultaneously with their research degree.

### **3.5 Students working at a distance**

Research study on a distance learning basis is possible only in a few cases, especially when the distance study is undertaken internationally. Each application will be judged on individual conditions, access to adequate facilities (including journals, laboratories etc), mechanisms for frequency of contact with supervisory team and local support where deemed necessary. In addition to tuition fees students will be responsible for paying traveling expenses if it is necessary for travel for supervision or training purposes. Additionally, students are normally expected to attend the University for some periods during their first year, which should coincide with Induction training and Annual Review meeting attendance. In subsequent years, distance students should aim to visit the University in person at least once per year, to coincide with their Annual Review meeting.

Students admitted to full-time programmes of study and, in particular, those on University funded scholarships, are normally expected to live within a reasonable travelling distance of the University campus in order for them to engage fully with supervision and training and to make a contribution to the research culture of the University.

### **3.6 Admissions Appeals Procedure**

An applicant may appeal a decision not to offer admission to a research degree, via the University's Admissions Appeals Procedure.

### **3.7 Response times**

The University will seek to issue information relating to admissions within 5 working days of a request being received, and to acknowledge receipt of an application within 5 working days of receipt. Furthermore, it undertakes to give an application full and fair consideration and to provide a speedy response. However, since the University admits students using a number of set entry points throughout the year, applicants should check specifically about periods of response to an application since Schools will screen and consider applications linked to each entry point, rather than on an individual basis.

### **3.8 Start Dates, enrolment and re-enrolment**

#### a) Cohort entry start dates

The start date of a student's study will also be the enrolment date and fees will be charged from the start date. The start date should be agreed by the School, in consultation with Research and Innovation Services, for official confirmation in the offer letter, and will be one of the following entry dates during the academic year. Students may have a start date in the first week of:

- October, December; March, or May

Students are normally not permitted to commence at other times.

Newly admitted students will be invited to attend a short meeting to complete the enrolment process on a date specified in their offer letter. Students who, for any reason, cannot arrive at the University in order to complete the enrolment process on the date and time stated in their offer letter will normally be required to defer their entry to the next entry point, usually the next month. Students whose entry point date is in the first week of June may be offered a re-arranged enrolment date and time at the discretion of staff in Research and Innovation Services.

Students seeking to defer entry after being given an offer and a starting date will be permitted to defer entry to a subsequent start date as long as the deferred entry date is defined. Deferrals of entry will not be permitted with a range of dates.

b) Enrolment / Re-Enrolment / Fees

Students may enrol on either a full-time or part-time basis. The appropriate fee will be stated in the offer letter, including the period for which the tuition fee applies and the terms upon which a reduced writing-up fee applies.

Newly admitted students cannot be enrolled until they have been through a formal application and offer process and the data required to enroll them has been entered on the University's student record system.

All students are required to enrol on their entry date.

Subject to satisfactory completion of Annual Review, all continuing students are required to re-enrol on an annual basis, based on their original entry date, until completion of their studies including the period of examination. Student records must be kept up to date until final awards have been made.

Being currently enrolled ensures that students have access to the full range of University facilities, access to restricted buildings and study areas, e-mail and shared drive storage and are covered by the University's insurance arrangements. The University will terminate continuing students' Library borrowing rights and close down e-mail accounts if a student has not re-enrolled following academic progress to the following academic year. Failure to re-enrol after repeated formal requests to do so may result in the withdrawal of a student's Registration entirely.

After enrolment or re-enrolment, the appropriate enrolment fee will be required for payment, or confirmation required that a sponsor or funding body has paid or will pay the fee on their behalf, or, in the case of part-time students, provide evidence of eligibility for receipt of one of the approved list of means-tested benefits.

Fees are paid up to the date of submission of the thesis.

### **3.9 Change of School**

It should be noted that if a student, accepted for study or already enrolled in one school, wishes to transfer to another school after acceptance or enrolment, they may be required to re-apply for entry, and any subsequent offer must be formalized in writing by the accepting school.

## **4 REGISTRATION**

### **4.1 Initial Registration**

Students apply for formal registration of their degree proposal, whether for MPhil, M.Prof, PhD or D.Prof, at the time of admission. Once agreed by the School, a registration form is completed so that each student's formal programme of research can be recorded.

Students commencing study by full-time mode have a maximum Registration period of 48 months. Maximum Registration period for all part-time students is 84 months.

### **4.2 Confirmation of academic progress each year**

Where a student has registered for the degree of MPhil, PhD or M.Prof, D.Prof, he/she must submit an Application for Annual Review around the anniversary of their Registration date in order that academic progress can be determined and progression to the next year of the degree can be confirmed. The required content and format of Application for Annual Review and the associated process is set out in Section B.3 of RDC-B and Section RDC-C of *Regulations*.

It is the responsibility of academic Schools to consider all Applications for Annual Review on their merits in accordance with approved procedures. This will take the form of a review of the project at an appropriate meeting. The procedure for holding Annual Review meetings is set out Section B.3 of RDC-B and Section RDC-C of *Regulations*.

As a result of determining academic progress each year at an Annual Review meeting, Schools may take action such as requiring a Follow-Up Review or Special Review.

### **4.3 Interruption or Extension of Registration**

Students may apply to the Postgraduate Research Assessment Board to interrupt their Registration period if they are unable to study for a period of between three and 12 months. In such cases, the period of the interruption is added to the original Registration period so that students do not lose time that was originally agreed for their submission.

Registration period expiry dates may also be extended by application to the Postgraduate Research Assessment Board in cases where a student is unable to make a submission within the originally agreed period.

### **4.4 Extenuating Circumstances**

Extenuating Circumstances Regulations (Research Degrees Programmes) also permit defined time-based assessment points to be deferred as an Extension of Assessment, within specified conditions and with appropriate evidence. In certain

cases, these Regulations also provide an opportunity to apply for Mitigating Circumstances.

#### **4.5 Withdrawal from study or Registration**

If a student wishes to withdraw from study notification must be made on the appropriate Withdrawal form to the Postgraduate Research Assessment Board and notification to other University departments as appropriate. In cases of withdrawal, students holding scholarships or studentships may be held responsible for refunding any overpaid awards. At the same time, self-financing students and student sponsors may be eligible for full or partial refund of tuition fees, depending on the time of withdrawal. Students are advised to consult their supervisors, relevant School staff, Student Services Advisors, or Students' Union Advisers before making a final decision to withdraw.

Unless the appropriate University authority for fees and charges agrees otherwise, a student who fails to pay any fees, charges or other debt to the University by the requisite date becomes automatically excluded from the University as prescribed in the currently applicable fees and charges policy and/or regulations.

#### **4.6 Change of Mode of Study**

Students may change their mode of study from part-time to full-time (or *vice versa*) and on payment of any appropriate fee. Application or notification of such a change should be made by submission of the appropriate form. However, students should be aware that except in exceptional circumstances changes of mode of study will not make a difference to the maximum Registration period for the mode of study for which they were originally registered, and those in receipt of University or external funding must make themselves aware of any requirements of the sponsors.

Frequent changes of mode of study are also not advisable. Changes of mode of study to part-time may lead to reduced access to facilities that are guaranteed for full-time study, such as desk space and computer facilities.

#### **4.7 Inward Transfer of Registration (Advanced Standing)**

Should an applicant seek to transfer their registration from another university to Teesside University, the relevant School must:

- a) ensure that an appropriate supervisory team is available;
- b) obtain assurance that the existing supervisory team and the previous university are content for a transfer to be made;
- c) ensure that appropriate funding and other resources are available – including, if appropriate, approval of external sponsors for a transfer to be made;
- d) obtain confirmation of the official date of registration at the previous university and of the progress of the applicant made to date;
- e) consider whether the applicant may be permitted to transfer to the same year of study applicable had they not transferred institutions, and if accepting the applicant, provide a formal written offer as for any applicant, with any conditions concerning advanced standing.

All applications for Inward Transfer must be approved by the Postgraduate Research Assessment Board on an individual basis. This approval must specify the period of Registration agreed for the transferring student and any conditions for progress review once the student has been transferred.

Students who are seeking an Inward Transfer on the basis that their registration at their current university has expired, or who have been subject to a negative assessment resulting in them being recommended for withdrawal by their current university, will not be considered.

#### **4.8 Lapse of Registration**

Registration will lapse at the expiry of the maximum Registration period for the level of research at which a student is studying in case where an Extension of Registration has not been approved; when a student fails to re-enrol and pay the appropriate fee, whichever is sooner; or when the University deems the student to have been withdrawn. Students whose Registration lapses will be informed formally.

#### **4.9 Research ethics Clearance**

*The University subscribes to an ethic of personal responsibility by which individual researchers, and, in the case of students, their supervisors should have some degree of autonomy and take personal responsibility for their research.*

Supervisors will bring to the attention of their students the ethical guidelines of relevant professional associations and the University's documents on research governance.

Ethical Clearance must normally have been obtained at the time of Annual Review in the first year.

Changes to research project methodology may result in the need to reapply for ethical Clearance. Such considerations may be revisited at Annual Review and/or through the annual audit process undertaken by the University Research Ethics and Integrity Committee. Failure to revisit ethical issues that occur through significant changes to methodology is potentially a serious matter and may be considered a form of research misconduct to be referred to the *Regulations Relating to Research Misconduct on Research Degree Programmes*.

## 5 THE FRAMEWORK FOR SUPERVISION, INDUCTION AND TRAINING

*From the beginning of their studies, research students will have a supervisory team consisting of a Director of Studies and second supervisor as a minimum. Some students will also have a third supervisor and/or additional advisors. In the case of M.Prof and D.Prof students this advisor will be a professional advisor. The successful completion of the research is critically dependent on the skill of this team, its relationship with the student, and their expectations of each other, and also upon appropriate Induction, research and other relevant training, and monitoring.*

### 5.1 The Structure

It is the responsibility of the Dean of School, acting through the Associate Dean (R&I), Principal Lecturer (R&I) and/or Postgraduate Tutor, to ensure that, before formal Registration, each student has a Director of Studies designate. Similarly, after enrolment, it is the responsibility of the Dean of School, acting through approved School procedures, to ensure that a Supervisory team is appointed, and that adequate continuous supervision is provided until completion of study. Appointment of all supervisors should be agreed between the named posts above and the relevant supervisor's Head of Department to ensure that workload is properly assigned for supervision duties according to the current policy for research degree supervision workloads.

#### a) The supervisory team

The supervisory team will consist of a Director of Studies and second supervisor as a minimum. Some students will also have a third supervisor and/or additional advisors. The Director of Studies will come from within the University and usually from within the School in which the student is enrolled. The Director of Studies must be suitably qualified for the proposed research and normally have personal expertise in the student's field of study and/or theoretical approaches to be applied. The second supervisor(s) may be from within the University or outside, depending on the expertise available. In the temporary absence of a Director of Studies (for example illness or sabbatical leave), an acting Director of Studies will be appointed, normally from within the existing supervisory team. Students will have a minimum of two and normally a maximum of three supervisors.

Academic staff themselves registered for a research degree at this or any other institution may not be a supervisor for any research student at the University.

In the case of the M.Prof or D.Prof, an additional advisor must be appointed to contribute professional practice in the chosen field. This advisor may be from the candidate's employing company.

There will be at least two successful UK research degree supervisions across the Supervisory Team; or one supervisor will have had one successful completion and have completed the research supervisor training programme offered internal to the University. In the case of PhD or D.Prof registrations, the successful supervisory experience must be at doctoral level.

All staff who are new to research supervision must complete the research supervisor training course either before undertaking supervision, or within the first year of taking up such duties.

b) Workload of Director of Studies

Schools will monitor individual supervisor workloads so that normally a Director of Studies is not responsible for supervising more than six students as Director of Studies at any one time.

c) Workload of 2<sup>nd</sup> and/or 3<sup>rd</sup> Supervisors

Given the variance across the institution in the allocation of 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> supervisors, Schools should use discretion in monitoring the overall work loads of staff who supervise at 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> supervisor. Students must be adequately supervised but staff should not be over allocated with students. Supervisory duties as Director of Studies for research degree students and on professional doctorate programmes should also be considered when monitoring 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> supervisory allocations.

d) Processes for monitoring of supervision workloads

Monitoring of workloads will be done in accordance with the current policy for research supervision workloads. Two processes are in place for Schools to monitor the supervision workloads of staff. At admission, when supervisors are approved for new Registrations, the AD(R&I) and Dean of School must authorise the proposed supervision arrangements for each Registration. Any proposal to change the composition of a Supervisory Team for a current student must be formally approved by the Board, but such changes may only be considered by the Board if the proposed change has been previously agreed by the relevant School Associate Dean (R&I).

e) Change of supervisors

Normally, students will have the same supervisory team throughout their period of study, but for a variety of reasons a supervisor or student may wish to change the approved arrangements. In such cases, either the supervisor or student should discuss this with the Postgraduate Tutor. In cases where the Postgraduate Tutor is the student's supervisor, discussion should take place with the Associate Dean (R&I). If a change is agreed to be necessary, the appropriate form should be endorsed by members of the prospective Supervisory team, by the student, by the Associate Dean (R&I) and should be submitted to the Board for final approval.

If a Director of Studies or other supervisor leaves the University, through retirement or taking up another appointment, the supervisory arrangements will be reviewed according to School procedures, and in consultation with the student, a new Director of Studies or other Supervisor appointed. Such changes must be approved by the Associate Dean (R&I) prior to final approval by the Board.

## 5.2 Responsibilities of the Supervisory team

The responsibilities of the Director of Studies, acting on behalf of the Dean of School include:

- establishing a clear understanding of the mutual expectations between himself/herself and the student, including frequency of contact,
- normally, it is expected that over the course of an academic year an average of at least one supervisory meeting per month will be taking place between the Director of Studies and the student,
- giving general guidance to the student about the nature of research and the standard expected,
- familiarizing him/herself with the regulations for enrolment and registration, and giving specific guidance to the student regarding School and University procedures,
- ensuring that Applications for Annual Review, Follow-Up Review, or Special Review, are made by the date specified,
- nominating the Examination Team for approval within the appropriate timescale and prior to the student's submission, but taking no part in the organization of the viva or exchange of Examiners' Reports,
- liaising with the School's Postgraduate Tutor, Principal Lecturer (R&I) and Associate Dean (R&I),
- giving specific guidance to the student about the planning of the research programme, literature and sources, attendance at mandatory and optional research training, about requisite techniques (including arranging for instruction where necessary), about ethical issues, appropriate referencing and citation, and about research misconduct,
- making known to researchers any concerns that a researcher may be dyslexic, so that the researcher may obtain official assessment of the suspected condition and obtain appropriate assistance,
- keeping records of supervisory meetings using the student's E-Vision record,
- being accessible to the student at other appropriate times when he/she may reasonably need advice,
- giving detailed advice to the student on the necessary completion dates of successive stages of the work,
- requesting written work, as appropriate, and returning such work to the student with constructive criticism and within a reasonable period,
- arranging, as appropriate, for the student to talk about his/her work to staff or graduate seminars, and to have practice in oral examinations,
- ensuring that the student is fully aware of regulations which affect his/her conduct and/or work,
- ensuring that the supervisory team as a whole is working together and that each member is aware of his/her responsibilities,
- agreeing holiday absences for full-time students,
- providing guidance to students required to make amendments or revisions to their submitted and examined theses.

The responsibilities of the second supervisor(s) and any advisers are to be worked out in consultation with the Director of Studies and the student. The detailed arrangements of supervision will differ from discipline to discipline, and even within

disciplines, but in general it is considered good practice to keep a written record of expectations and of supervisory session outcomes.

### **5.3 Responsibilities of the Student**

The responsibilities of the student include:

- establishing a clear understanding of the mutual expectations between himself/herself and the Supervisory team, in particular the Director of Studies,
- discussing with the Supervisory team the type of guidance which is found most helpful, and to agree a schedule of meetings,
- taking the initiative in raising problems and difficulties, however elementary they may seem,
- attending such research training and seminars as are identified as beneficial and making presentations,
- completing records of supervisory meetings,
- ensuring that Applications for Annual Review, Follow-Up Review, and Special Review are made by the date specified,
- participating in an Annual Review Meeting of his/her work, according to procedures approved by the School in which he/she is enrolled,
- in consultation with the Director of Studies, ensuring that an Exam Team is in place prior to submission of the thesis,
- preparing topics for discussion with the Director of Studies or members of the Supervisory team,
- submitting written work, as appropriate, within an agreed timescale, to members of the Supervisory team,
- consulting Student Services Disability Coordinator about obtaining official assessment of suspected Dyslexia so that appropriate facilities may be sought for proof-reading the thesis, and/or reasonable adjustments may be made for the conduct of the viva voce examination,
- informing the Director of Studies, or other supervisor if not available, of any period of sickness as soon as is practicable, and obtaining medical certification for periods of sickness of 14 days or more.
- taking note of the guidance and feedback from the Supervisory team,
- informing the Supervisory team of any other people with whom his/her work is being discussed, and of any intention to make a presentation or publication arising from the research programme,
- ensuring that the thesis content is properly referenced,
- ensuring that the thesis is submitted for examination before the expiry date of the registration period,
- ensuring that the final copy of the thesis is bound in accordance with the regulations, and
- informing the University, of any change of address or telephone number, to ensure that contact is maintained with the Director of Studies and Supervisory team,
- adhering to formal processes for dealing with Extenuating Circumstances which may affect submission dates, or attendance at assessment or examination, including the requirement to notify the University in advance of a submission or attendance at assessment or examination being missed, or otherwise using an Application for Mitigating Circumstances.

If changes occur in a student's circumstances after enrolment, he/she must inform the University in writing, so that records can be updated.

## 5.4 Formal records of supervisory meetings

### a) Framework

Records will be used to formally capture structured interactions between students and supervisors. A **minimum of three** structured interactions must be recorded annually for all students. This is in addition to completion of the Annual Review process. Records will be kept **using the student's online E-Vision record**.

If not recording all interaction with their students using E-Vision, supervisors must determine with each student which of the supervisory meetings will be designated as formal interaction for recording purposes. For part-time or distance learning students, formal interaction may include e-mail contact. E-vision records permit meeting notes to be added to the dated event either in free-text or by the uploading of documents or scanned paper records.

The system will be implemented for all students.

### b) Completion

The supervisory record should contain sufficient detail to provide a useful record of the topics discussed and actions agreed. The record should not act as a constraint to academic discussions and should not attempt to be a verbatim record.

### c) International students holding a Tier 4 visa: extra monitoring requirements

Research students classified as "international students" who require a visa for entry and stay within the UK under the Tier-4 classification of UKVI, in addition to keeping records with their supervisors as at a) and b) above, must also complete a record of regular attendance at the University. This will take the form of a record of attendance maintained by the designated member of staff in each School. The international student monitoring procedure in force for this monitoring requirement provides the applicable requirements for such monitoring in each academic year. Directors of Study are responsible for recording every meeting with a Tier 4 student using the E-Vision record.

## 5.5 Disciplinary Misconduct

In cases where a student may have committed serious misconduct, his/her registration may be terminated in accordance with the University's Student Disciplinary regulations.

## 5.6 Research and academic misconduct

The University regards research and academic misconduct on research degrees as serious offences. Alleged occurrences of academic misconduct in the course of research leading to or published in the research thesis will be dealt with under the

University's *Regulations Relating to Research Misconduct on Research Degree Programmes*.

Allegations of academic misconduct in non-research course work elements or taught course components will be dealt with under the University's *Regulations Relating to Academic Misconduct (Taught Components and Programmes)* and the outcome notified to the Postgraduate Research Assessment Board. Allegations of infraction of examination regulations involving academic misconduct in an examination in a taught course which forms part of a programme of related studies will be referred to the appropriate University authority for examination and the outcome notified to the Postgraduate Research Assessment Board. Alleged occurrences of research misconduct in published papers or conference papers will be dealt with under the terms set-out in the *Regulations Relating to Research Misconduct on Research Degree Programmes* and the *Framework and Code of Practice for Ensuring Research Integrity*.

Students who are proven to have engaged in any form of research misconduct may be withdrawn. Students for whom research misconduct is discovered and proven subsequent to submission or examination may result in automatic failure with no opportunity for re-examination.

## **5.7 Induction, research skills and other training**

### a) Induction and research skills training

A central programme of Induction will be provided for all newly-enrolled research students in the first year of their enrolment. The programme of generic research training is offered by the Researcher Development Team of Research and Innovation Services.

Schools will also provide specific programmes of research training. Certain components of the research training is mandatory. These components, including dates and times of required attendance, are specified in each student's offer letter. Failure to complete mandatory training in the first year of enrolment will result in academic progress being found unsatisfactory at Annual Review.

### b) Additional modules and short courses

Students are permitted to apply for central funding to undertake academic modules/short courses at Teesside University which are directly relevant to their area of study.

## 6 PROGRESS AND COMPLETION

*Any research programme must be completed and examined within a reasonable timescale, and progress towards this must be planned.*

### 6.1 Academic Progress

#### a) Timescales

It is the day to-day responsibility of the Director of Studies to make students aware of their progress – or lack of progress – and to set appropriate targets for the various stages of research. Students should refer to the University's *Framework and Regulations for the Award of Higher Degrees by Research* for an indication of the *minimum* and *maximum* timescales for the submission of theses.

#### b) Funding body target submissions/completions

Research Councils and other funding bodies have target times within which they expect the students they have funded to have submitted and completed their degrees. Students should refer to their particular funding body's targets. They will be expected to submit annual reports to their funding body to secure continued funding, and final reports within the target times.

#### c) Annual Review

With the exception of students who are expected to submit their thesis within 3 months or less and have an examination team in place, all students must apply for and undergo an Annual Review in each year of Registration to ensure that adequate academic progress is being made and that there are no issues that are hindering successful study.

Each School will handle the assessment of Applications for Annual Review in a way appropriate for the disciplines represented in the School. However, the basic form of Annual Review will be as follows:

- Each student will be asked to apply for Annual Review around the anniversary date of their first enrolment;
- Each student will submit an Application for Annual Review which requires a statement on their work during the previous year and plans for the following year in response to specified questions;
- Each student will be asked to give an oral presentation of maximum duration 15 minutes at an Annual Review meeting in which the content of the Application and the presentation will be reviewed, questions asked, and a decision made on the progress made; oral presentations are not permitted to use electronic support;
- Each student will attend the Annual Review meeting with staff external to the supervisory team, but least one member of the supervisory team will take part in the meeting.

Students will not be permitted to progress formally to the next year of study until satisfactory completion of Annual Review has taken place.

## **6.2 Follow-Up Review and Special Review Meetings**

In cases where progress is deemed to be unsatisfactory at Annual Review, students will be required to make an Application for Follow-Up Review and to attend a Follow-Up Review Meeting. Follow-Up Review will be scheduled for 3 months after an Annual Review.

In cases where progress is still deemed to be unsatisfactory at Follow-Up Review, students will be required to make an Application for Special Review and to attend a Special Review Meeting. Special Review will be scheduled for 3 months after a Follow-Up Review.

Such Follow-Up and Special Review Meetings will have the same composition as the Annual Review that preceded them.

Students should be advised that failure to meet the requirements of a Follow-Up Review at the Special Review Meeting will normally lead to a recommendation to the Postgraduate Research Assessment Board for either a change of Registration from doctoral to master level registration; or to withdrawal of registration. A student may request the review of such a decision under the University's Academic Appeal Regulations.

Schools may also invoke a Special Review meeting independently of the standard Annual Review and Follow-Up Review cycle in cases where non-engagement with supervisors, training requirements or other regulatory matters that cannot be handled using either standard Academic Review processes, or student disciplinary and/or research misconduct procedures.

## **6.3 Completion**

### a) Approval of examination team

The supervisory team and student should agree a timetable for completion including confirmation of the submitted thesis title. The nomination of examiners and entry for examination and compliance with other regulations of the University, as appropriate, is the responsibility of the supervisory team. The examiners and student must declare any prior connections including personal friendships/relationships and previous joint academic work. Applications for examination should be submitted to the Postgraduate Research Assessment Board, in advance of the planned submission of the thesis. This will allow the Board to approve the necessary arrangements in good time. Students must take no part in the formal nomination of examiners or in the arrangement of the examination.

### b) Thesis submission and examination timescale

Students are not permitted to submit a thesis unless an examination team has previously been nominated. "Nominated" means that the examiner paperwork required for their approval has been received. The required number of copies of the thesis should be submitted to the Postgraduate Research Assessment Board within the appropriate timescale, before expiry of the Registration period, and in accordance with the University's regulations. Students should not submit their theses before they have been notified that their examination team has been

nominated and attempted submission where an examination team has not been nominated will be rejected. Once submitted, there should be no unreasonable delay in examining a thesis, and examiners are requested to offer the earliest possible dates. In most cases, examinations are held within three to four months of submission of the thesis. However, this cannot be guaranteed, especially during the summer and Christmas/New Year holiday periods. Students should be aware that arranging examination for submissions delayed longer than four months after an examination team has been approved can sometimes be affected by examiners taking sabbatical leave, or other theses to which examiners have committed themselves being submitted and taking precedence.

The University's Awards Ceremonies are held annually in July. Students are advised that because of the timing of the arrangements, there is a last date before which awards must have been made in order for students to be invited to attend the Ceremonies, usually in late June. However, every effort will be made to try to expedite matters.

### **c) Reasonable adjustments for dyslexia**

Candidates who have been officially diagnosed as dyslexic should consult an appropriate University Disability Advisor so that appropriate facilities may be sought for proof-reading the thesis, and should consult with the Secretary of the Postgraduate Research Assessment Board so that reasonable adjustments may be made for the conduct of the *viva voce* examination. A copy of the candidate's dyslexia assessment may need to be seen and, with the candidate's approval, selected information shared with the examiners to facilitate reasonable adjustments during the viva.

## **6.4 Academic Appeal**

A research student may request a review of an assessment decision not to permit progression, or the final award at the following stages:

- Special Review (following Annual Review and Follow-Up Review)
- Extension to Registration
- Re-examination at final examination

The right to appeal is subject to certain circumstances outlined in the *Framework and Regulations for the Award of Higher Degrees by Research*.

## **7 MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

*A research degree programme must be monitored and evaluated to ensure that progress is satisfactory and that students, supervisors and the University are carrying out their responsibilities properly.*

### **7.1 Student Record**

A record containing a comprehensive record of each student's progress, from initial enrolment to completion, will be kept using the E-Vision online record system for PGR students.

When applications and other materials associated with each student is approved by the Postgraduate Research Assessment Board, these will be signed for authorization by an approved authorizer for the Board and held by the Doctoral Training Team in Research and Innovation Services. Communication related to such applications and other materials will be forwarded to the student, Director of Studies and other School staff.

### **7.2 Director of Studies**

Day-to-day responsibility for monitoring student progress lies with the Director of Studies.

### **7.3 School staff responsible for research student support**

Within each School, there are named staff responsible for the academic progress, monitoring and support of research students within the School, as well as undertaking the day-to-day administration of the procedures agreed by the Postgraduate Research Assessment Board. Each School will appoint named staff for such duties and at least one of the named staff will be an ex-officio member of the Postgraduate Research Assessment Board. The roles associated with these duties may be undertaken by the Associate Dean (Research & Innovation), Principal Lecturer (Research & Innovation), or a Postgraduate Tutor. In addition, each School Dean may appoint named representatives of the School as members of the the Postgraduate Research Assessment Board. A minimum of two representatives per School is required on the Board.

The responsibilities of named School staff include:

- ensuring that the admission, enrolment and annual re-enrolment of research degree students conforms to university regulations and procedures; that only students who are qualified to do so are admitted; that before enrolment all new students have agreed a project topic with a full-time permanent member of the academic staff qualified to undertake the role of Director of Studies and who is willing to take on that role; and that, in the event of a member of the supervisory team leaving the university, a replacement is promptly found,
- ensuring that there are sufficient resources for the research degree project and that the project is viable,
- ensuring that application of the admissions criteria is closely scrutinized in the case of the appointment of staff likely to be required to undertake a research degree,

- informing students and supervisors of the roles and duties of supervisors and encouraging good supervisory practice,
- providing advice and assistance on registration procedures and related matters to students and supervisors,
- ensuring that applications for Annual Review, change of supervisory arrangements and examination arrangements are all made promptly as and when required,
- chairing Annual Review meetings
- coordinating the Annual Review meetings and assessment
- ensuring that all student records are maintained adequately
- preparing reports as necessary on the progress of all enrolled students.
- representing the School and the School's students as a member of the Board.

Schools may add to the core responsibilities above.

## **8 FINANCE**

### **8.1 Studentships/Scholarships**

From time to time, the University offers studentships/scholarships for full-time postgraduate research. Students holding such positions are not required to pay their own fees, but are subject to the University regulations and conditions of service which apply to studentships/scholarships at any given time and are required to go through the standard application, enrolment and registration procedures in the normal way. Student attendance will be monitored and studentship/scholarship payments may be withheld if, on investigation, it is proven that the student is not engaging with their research project and keeping in contact with their supervisors.

### **8.2 Other awards**

Students holding awards from Research Councils and other funding bodies are required to go through the standard enrolment and registration procedures in the normal way, and are subject to the conditions which are attached to such awards in addition to standard University regulations.

### **8.3 Fees**

Fees, where applicable, are payable at the time of enrolment or re-enrolment and up to the date of submission of the thesis. There are different rates for part-time and full-time study, which may increase annually. Fees may be waived for part-time students who are in receipt of one or more benefits specified by the University. Arrangements may be made by application to pay fees by instalments. Normally the payment of all fees by instalments must be completed by a specified time each year. Fee waiver applications may also be available for students supported by University studentships/scholarships at the discretion of the relevant School. A writing-up fee is payable after three years of full time study for a further year; and five year of part-time study for a further two-years.

## 8.4 Staff undertaking Research Degrees

University staff wishing to undertake a research degree may apply to the fund available for staff development Fund for available funding. Applications should be made within the normal cycle in consultation with their Line Manager following a PDPR Process and having made a formal application to study for a research degree. Staff must re-apply annually to secure continued funding.

## 8.5 Part time Teaching

From time to time, subject to availability and subject expertise required, and depending upon the Regulations of the funding body (if applicable), Research Students might be offered the opportunity of undertaking paid part-time teaching or other work by the University. However, students should not rely on the possibility of obtaining part-time teaching or other work in order to supplement the funding of any part of their studies or maintenance, unless this forms part of their written agreement with the University. Students in receipt of Research Council Studentships may be permitted to undertake part-time teaching as part of their studentship, subject to the maximum permitted contact time under Research Council regulations. There is a University Policy regarding research students undertaking teaching and assessment duties. Training is provided. Any research students who are assessing the work of other students, whether UG or PGT, should not do so without having received prior training in teaching and in assessment.

## 9 Use of University logo by students

The use of the University's logo is **not permitted on student work**, including assignments, essays, reports, posters, presentations, theses, etc, except in special circumstances.

Any student who needs to use the University Logo on Research Documents for the purposes of NHS or other external body's research ethics or governance procedures must use an amended logo, and the following process must be adhered to:

- the Supervisor of the Research Student must request the use of the Logo
- the approved logo and monitoring of use will be approved by the Governance Team in Research and Innovation Services, from whom further information may be obtained.

## 10 Complaints Procedure

*Despite the University's best efforts, students and other users of its services may, from time to time, encounter problems with the services provided.*

The Complaints procedure can be used to make a complaint about:

- i) standards of service provided by the University or its staff; or failure of the University or its staff to provide a service;
- ii) action or lack of action by the University or its staff;
- iii) unfair treatment by Teesside University's Students' Union on any matter; or unfair disadvantage attributable to opting out of Students' Union membership.

Details can be obtained by referring to the University's Complaints Procedure.

Advice on the management of the Procedure and forms can be obtained from the Office of Student Complaints, Appeals and Regulations (OSCAR). Complaints may be made on an individual basis, or by a group of students.

## **11 Research Support**

*Research students are expected to take personal responsibility for their research, and can enhance their research by engaging in related activities that will help to embed them in the research culture and environment.*

In addition to requirements to attend central Induction and research training sessions, research students should take every opportunity to attend other induction sessions, research seminars and workshops in their own, or other cognate disciplines within their School, or more broadly within the University, including the Public Lecture Series. Research students should discuss sources of funding for appropriate external events with their supervisory team. The University receives specific Research Support Training Grants for each Research Council funded student.

## **12 Postgraduate Study Space**

Research students have access to a PG study space which is located on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor of the Library. This space is shared with taught postgraduate students. Other dedicated study space is provided across the University by Schools. Quiet study space is also in place on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of the Library.

## **13 Student Representation**

Each School elects a Research Student Representative who is responsible for bringing matters of concern to the Postgraduate Research Assessment Board. Research student representatives also sit on senior committees of the University.

## **14 Student Support**

Support for students is available from Student Services staff and the Students' Union. Advice on both academic and pastoral matters may also be obtained from the Doctoral Training Team in Research and Innovation Services.

## **15 PGR Networking**

Various events are convened throughout the academic year to which research students are invited. There is also a Postgraduate Society in the Student's Union.

## **16 Library**

Information about the services provided for research students can be obtained from the Library website, particularly the Researchers Libguide:

<http://www.tees.ac.uk/depts/lis/>

<http://libguides.tees.ac.uk/researchers/welcome>

## **17 University IT account and email**

All research students have a Microsoft Outlook account with a named e-mail address and access to appointment scheduling and calendars. ***All official communication with students will take place using this official student email account.*** Students wishing to use a personal email account should ensure that their student email account is forwarded. Non-checking of a university email account is not a valid excuse where failure to respond to an email results in formal actions relating to a student's Registration.

## **18 English language support and the Learning Hub**

English language support including academic writing for research is available for international Students provided by the English Language Centre. Details are available on enrolment from the Doctoral Training Team in Research and Innovation Service. Staff in the Learning Hub, located in the Library, are academic tutors who can help provide additional writing and study skills support.

<b>RESEARCH STUDENT BASELINE ENTITLEMENT</b>
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As a minimum, all research students should normally expect to receive the following as part of their package of study at Teesside University:

1. An assigned supervisory team, with an identified Director of Studies and other supervisors and or advisors to support specific aspects of the project, as defined at the point of registration and reviewed annually.
2. At least one formal supervisory meeting each month, with a member of the academic supervisory team to discuss progress and offer personal support, advice and guidance on the research.
3. Holiday entitlement consistent with that of University academic staff (currently 35 days, plus statutory holidays for full-time and pro-rata for part-time), agreed in advance with the Director of Studies (students in receipt of a stipend will be entitled to continue to receive that during holidays).
4. Free access to the University's suite of doctoral training modules/course materials offered through Research & Innovation Services and linked to the national Researcher Development Framework.
5. Free attendance on other specialist Undergraduate or Postgraduate taught modules offered by the University/School to support their study needs and/or career aspirations (subject to availability, capacity and normally up to a maximum of 30 credits per year).
6. Full access to the University's student support services and Student Union including student sports and leisure facilities career and professional development support with an assigned Careers Adviser, Student Health, Counselling, and Disability services
7. Provision of all general consumables and pre-agreed expenses associated with conducting the project, including costs incurred in undertaking field work, surveys etc.\*
8. Relevant training on the use of appropriate technical/laboratory equipment and/or on-line resources, including certification of competence where appropriate.
9. Free use of University technical facilities/laboratories (subject to availability, successful completion of necessary training, and any relevant health and safety requirements).\*
10. Support of University technical staff and workshops, etc.\*

11. Free access to Library, on-line resources subscribed to by the University, and inter-library loan facilities where required.\*
12. Free access to University photocopying and printing facilities for production of thesis, interim drafts, progress reports and research materials (subject to reasonable use and copyright restrictions).
13. Free access to Microsoft Office package and personal email account.
14. Access to and use of desk, computer and lockable storage.
15. A contribution of £500 towards the costs of attending and presenting research findings at a relevant conference, or towards the costs of publication (once over the life of the research degree).

\* Subject to reasonable use and necessary for the completion of the planned and approved programme of work.