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### **3. Definition of Roles**

3.1 Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that students receive all the help and

### Postgraduate

Research Degree Regulations. Areas of mutual interest and potential supervisors can be discussed with the applicant at this stage. Formal letters offering an applicant a place as a postgraduate student by research are sent by the central admissions staff and accompanied by supplementary offer information compiled by the Research Degrees Administrator. If not fully agreed prior to admission, the topic definition and supervisor identification should be undertaken as soon as possible after the student's arrival. Supervisors must be allocated to postgraduate research students even if they are to be involved only in preparatory studies prior to agreeing and embarking on a research project.

- 4.2 Students whose first language is not English may be required to sit an English test prior to being accepted. This requirement should be specified in any offer of admission. A student may also be required or recommended to undertake additional English language tuition as a condition of being able to ca8.0u3(y)10( o)4-(u)-3(i )

- 4.6 Section 5 of the Postgraduate Research Degree Regulations provides full guidance on the appointment of a supervisory team.
- 4.7 In many research programmes other staff members or external collaborators will be involved in supervision in an informal advisory capacity, especially if specialised equipment is to be used. It is the duty of the Director of Studies to ensure that these staff members or external collaborators are aware of their responsibilities and are prepared to offer the necessary assistance to the student.

## **5. Project Planning**

- 5.1 Students are required to complete an outline of their intended project at an early stage (within one month if full-time or two months if part time). This is intended to help clarify the aims of their research and to begin to identify the specific approaches and techniques they will need to apply. Directors of Studies should assist their students with this task and ensure that the Project Planning form (in the Postgraduate Skills Record) is completed and submitted as directed.

## **6. Postgraduate Induction**

- 6.1 In parallel with Project Planning, students need to become aware of the facilities and services available to them in support of their research work in the academic department and in the University more generally (and in their off-campus centre if applicable). To aid in this process the Postgraduate Induction form (in the Postgraduate Skills Record) should be completed by students with assistance from their Director of Studies and submitted (within one month if full-time or two months if part-time) as directed. In completing the form students should investigate the facilities provided and identify any areas needing attention. Through discussion with their Director of Studies and others students should be able to fill gaps in their knowledge or become aware of what they need to do to acquire the relevant information.

## **7. The Research Student - Supervisor Agreement**

- 7.1 Once all arrangements have been confirmed for the supervision of a student by an academic department, research students must complete a Research Student - Supervisor Agreement (in the Postgraduate Skills Record).
- 7.2 This Agreement is designed to define mutual responsibilities and obligations relating to the proposed research programme and to establish the timescale, supporting facilities, research training and other related conditions which are deemed to be essential for the research programme to be completed successfully. As such it constitutes a basic research plan against which progress can be monitored by the supervisor, the student and by the University.
- 7.3 Because of the significance of this document it is important that it is authorised by the student and the Director of Studies and also by the Head of



. This authorisation is essential because the Research Student - Supervisor Agreement should make clear the frequency of access to supervisors and the facilities which are to be made available to the student by the department (and, if applicable, by other collaborative establishments). It therefore forms a

proceed with the research work and requires both sides to define an effective working relationship and set of working conditions. The agreement of the Director of Studies, the student and the

for requesting these services and any systems used for scheduling work and logging its completion.

- 7.8 The library facilities available to students should be made clear. Note that research students normally have the same library borrowing rights within the University as do members of academic staff (i.e. currently 15 volumes for 3 weeks plus no charge for inter library loans). Local resource centres, if any, as well as the availability of central support for learning and teaching (e.g. educational technology) should be pointed out to students.
- 7.9 Students should be made aware of the laboratory facilities open to them and any conditions of access or usage, health and safety matters, risk assessment and so on. The facilities available in other Departments may sometimes be of interest and the procedures for securing access to them ought to be passed on to students as and when needed.
- 7.10 The Research Student - Supervisor Agreement should be formally submitted to the Research Degrees Administrator within one month (FT) or two months (if PT) of enrolment. It will then be authorised by the designated University post-holder, the student and the supervisor(s) notified accordingly, and the authorised part of the procedures whereby the progress will be followed up via the Postgraduate Skills Record and the forms contained therein. This latter document should be seen as the framework for recording the progress made by students and for establishing the basis of an effective and supportive relationship between supervisors and students. Directors of Studies should make sure therefore that they complete these documents in conjunction with their students and that they are submitted to the appropriate University authorities according to the timescales laid down.

## **8. Research Progress Monitoring**

- 8.1 Supervisors, in conjunction with their student, should ensure that after each formal supervision contact a note is kept of the issues discussed and the agreed outcomes. The Research Progress Monitoring form (in the Postgraduate Skills Record) is designed for the supervisor and student to have an agreed record of discussions and decisions to inform subsequent contacts and to provide a record of progress with the research. Whilst it is not currently mandatory to use this particular method for recording contacts, what is crucial is that a written record is retained

enrolment (within two months if full-time, four months if part-time) to establish a baseline profile, then it should be revised on an annual basis, normally in May/June each year.

9.2

prepare for one-on-one reviews, e.g. with your supervisor or line-manager, where you will be discussing your professional or career development;

identify strengths and areas to focus on;

prioritise the most appropriate formal and informal development opportunities provided by their institution and/or external bodies;

consider skills and experiences that will enhance their prospects of success in particular career areas.

- (ii) the project can be achieved with the resources that are available (taking into account internal and any external resources relevant to the research);
- (iii) the project is suitable for the degree which the student aims to undertake and should be capable of completion within the appropriate prescribed period of study as laid down in the Postgraduate Research Degree Regulations.

- (i) agreeing with the student a suitable field of study which will stimulate research interest and can be completed within an acceptable and reasonable period of time;
- (ii) consulting with the Research Co-ordinator and others as necessary to ensure that the necessary facilities are available and as far as possible that there is sufficient time allocated for the student and supervisor to develop a good working relationship;
- (iii) where necessary arranging liaison with additional supervisors and/or with collaborating bodies;
- (iv) arranging regular contacts with the student at which all matters relating to the student's work can be discussed with the supervisor(s) and where full oral and/or written feedback can be provided on the student's work;
- (v) making adequate alternative supervisory arrangements if (s)heW0r

documents as a record of their development as a researcher and in broader career development terms.

In order to accomplish these tasks effectively the Director of Studies must maintain regular contact with the student.

- 11.5 Research students rely on contact with their supervisors for general guidance and intellectual stimulation. Supervisors must maintain regular contact with their students, who in turn have a responsibility to make themselves available at times agreed with their supervisors. Supervisors should be approachable and available for consultation at reasonable times. The period of initial registration is particularly crucial and in addition to regular contacts the student should feel free to consult their supervisor(s) as need arises. As time passes, the initiative for establishing contact may gradually pass to the student but the supervisor will continue to have responsibility for ensuring that at least minimum contact with the student is maintained. It is helpful to the

**Research Students**

11.8



- (viii) determining the timing of the presentation of the thesis, the accuracy and completeness of its content and its compliance with University , which is however only advisory;
- (ix) responding to any requirements for the amendment of a proposed programme of study or transfer/mid-programme assessment of progression report made by the Board of Studies for Research Degrees or amendment to a thesis required by a team of examiners.
- (x) engaging with any programmes of research methods training or related studies which are part of the research programme of study.

11.10 Full-time, on-campus students will normally carry out their research in or near the University. Occasionally, it may be desirable or necessary for such students to conduct some of their research elsewhere. If the student is to be working away from the University for a significant period, then the Director of Studies must approve the arrangement in writing.

consulted. Student Services can also be approached at any stage to offer independent guidance and advice.

### **Research Co-ordinators**

- 11.14 Research Co-ordinators within each subject area have the responsibility (subject to the authority of the Head of academic department) for ensuring that there is an appropriate environment within which research can take place, for overseeing and co-ordinating all matters related to research and research h

Degrees and central research administration to ensure that institutional policies and procedures are complied with. They have an important role to play in supporting the work of research students and their supervisors and in monitoring the progress of individual research programmes taking place within an academic department or subject area. They are responsible for the operation of the monitoring and co-ordinating functions which are overseen by the relevant departmental board or sub-committee.

- 11.15 In relation to the role of supervisors and research students and to the management and administration of research degree programmes, Research Co-



## Concerns Procedures

11.17

### Appeals Regulations and Procedures,

research students may have a concern about the conditions relating to their programme of study or the operation of supervisory arrangements during the course of undertaking their research. If such a concern arises the student should first of all approach the Director of Studies or other persons and try to resolve any problems informally (see paragraphs 11.11 to 11.13). If this proves not to be possible then the following procedures will apply:

- (i) the student must notify the Research Co-ordinator in the University academic department and the designated off-campus centre post-holder in the case of an off-campus centre of the specific nature of the concern;
- (ii) the Research Co-ordinator must consult with the student and the supervisors and try to resolve the concern, if necessary by consultation with the Head of academic department and/or other designated University and/or off-campus centre post-holder; the student must then be informed of the outcome by the Research Co-ordinator;
- (iii) the Research Co-ordinator must notify the Board of Studies for Research Degrees of any actions taken in response to student concerns and, if any changes to confirmed supervisory arrangements are proposed as a result, must seek the approval of the Board for the revised arrangements;
- (iv) research students shall have the right to comment on the way in which a concern has been handled, by writing to the Research Degrees Administrator, who shall be responsible for drawing such comments to the attention of the Board of Studies for Research Degrees for any further investigation it deems to be necessary.
- (v) research students have the right, notwithstanding these concern procedures, to lodge a formal complaint in respect of

Panels,

12.6

Students have no right to consultation on the names of the examiners and no external examiner may be appointed who has been a member of staff or a student of the University at any time during the previous three years.

- 13.2 An oral examination is an essential part of the assessment and must be held in all cases (except as otherwise exceptionally permitted by the Postgraduate Research Degree Regulations).  
supervisor(s) and additional observers may be invited by the student to attend the oral examination but may not contribute unless invited to do so by the examiners. Students should be consulted to see if they have any objections to anyone other than the examiners being present at the oral examination. If they object then the observers should not attend.
- 13.3 An Independent Chair is appointed to every oral examination to help ensure that the examination is conducted fairly and in accordance with the regulations and procedures.
- 13.4 In cases where the student or one or more of the examiners is for good reason acceptable to the Board of Studies for Research Degrees not able to be present in person at the oral examination, a request may be granted, arising from the application for approval of the examination arrangements, to conduct the oral examination by video-conferencing. There are separate guidelines on the conduct of oral examinations by video-conferencing.
- 13.5 The criteria for assessment of theses, the procedure governing the examination and the recommendations open to examiners are described in the Postgraduate Research Degree Regulations and in the examiner's report forms. The examiners may tell the candidate what their views are at the end of, or after, the oral but they must make clear that their view is a recommendation to the Board of Studies for Research Degrees and not a decision.

- 13.6 The Director of Studies' role does not end after the examination. If there are minor revisions to be made to the thesis, these will be conveyed to the candidate and to the supervisor who should then confirm to the candidate the revisions to be made. The revised thesis is then examined by the internal examiners (and possibly also by the external examiner). Where the thesis is more seriously flawed, the examiners may recommend resubmission for the same degree after a further period of study under supervision. The candidate and the supervisors will obtain a statement of the aspects of the thesis requiring amendment and the supervisors should offer guidance as to what is required. The examiners may also recommend resubmission of a PhD thesis for MPhil with or without further modification. Candidates who are required to modify their theses will be given, as a matter of course, a clear indication of the aspects which require revision. When a thesis is rejected or a PhD thesis is referred for MPhil, the candidate will be given a statement of the reasons why the thesis has not been accepted.

#### **14. Appeals Procedure for Research Degrees**

Appeals Regulations and Procedures apply to all PGR students. These should be consulted if you wish to make an appeal.

#### **15. Suspension and Extension of Registration**

##### **Suspension**

- 15.1 Where a student is prevented by ill-health or other good cause from making progress with a research programme, the registration may be suspended upon application to the Board of Studies for Research Degrees, normally for not more than one year at a time. Applications for suspension should be made on the appropriate form and be supported by a recommendation from the Director of Studies. Periods of suspension will not count towards the student's maximum period of registration.

##### **Extension**

- 15.2 The maximum periods of registration for full-time and part-time students are stated in the Postgraduate Research Degree Regulations. Great importance is attached to completion of research degree programmes within the stated times and extension to registration periods will only be agreed to by the Board of Studies for Research Degrees where there are valid reasons. Applications for extension of registration periods should be submitted on the appropriate form as soon as possible prior to the end of the registration period and be accompanied by supporting medical or other evidence. The Board of Studies for Research Degrees will consider each case on its merits and may extend a student's registration by up to one year. Any extensions beyond this period will require a separate application to the Board.



## **16. General Matters**

### **Health and Safety**

16.1 Relevant health and safety legislation requires the University, as far as is reasonably practicable, to ensure the health and safety of all employees and students whilst at work. In the case of research work, supervisors are required to give careful attention to the health and safety of those under their supervision. The Research Co-



