Postgraduate Research Students

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Postgraduate Research Students

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Postgraduate Research Students

# Preamble

* 1. Postgraduate research students, whether full-time or part-time, are expected both to acquire the skills of research and to make their own contribution to the advancement of knowledge. The successful outcome of the period of research for the student will be the completion and submission of the thesis and the award of the higher degree. The University will endeavour to give the student every assistance to achieve this goal. However, a successful outcome also demands from the student commitment a willingness to be imaginative yet self-critical, and the ability to adapt and mitigate in adversity. There should be intellectual excitement and personal satisfaction with the discovery of new knowledge or the establishment of new ideas. This Code of Practice should be read with this general framework in mind.
  2. A principal supervisor and at least one other (second) supervisor must be appointed for each student. Supervisory arrangements may vary from a supervisory panel to one principal supervisor and a second supervisor but must include at least two supervisors. The roles and responsibilities of the principal supervisor and the second supervisor are explained in 5.3 below. References to supervisor(s) in the text below, therefore, refer to appropriate supervisory arrangements made in Academic Units. Potential supervisors must be approved by Research Degrees Committee before starting supervisory duties and must be appointed with due regard for issues of conflict of interest. Staff from partner institutions can act as part of a supervisory team in the same way as any other external supervisor.
  3. Potential supervisors must be approved by Research Degrees Committee before starting supervisory duties according to the following criteria:
* hold a doctorate (or equivalent qualification or experience, as defined in the Criteria for Approved Supervisors (please see the annex attached to this document);
* have taken and passed either the New PGR Supervisor Training or Refresher Training for Experienced PGR Supervisors within the last three years;
* and hold a continuing contract at the University for the duration of the PGR’s period of study.
  1. In addition, supervisors must be appointed with due regard for issues of conflict of interest. Staff from partner institutions can act as part of a supervisory team in the same way as any other external supervisor.
  2. Postgraduate research students are expected to undertake a compulsory period of research training in accordance with the University’s Postgraduate Training Scheme. Details are contained in the Postgraduate Training Scheme Handbook which is available from the Doctoral College on request and from the Doctoral College SharePoint site.

# Introduction

* 1. The Code of Practice is for use by postgraduate research students and their supervisors. It is based on a Code of Practice prepared by the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals and circulated to all Universities and also takes account of the Quality Assurance Agency’s Quality Code, (2018). Its aim is to set out the procedures and practices which have been adopted on matters relating to postgraduate research degrees; and these must be followed closely to avoid problems during the course of a student’s registration.
  2. Candidature for a degree is governed by the appropriate Ordinances and Regulations. Those for research degrees are given in the quality handbook and the on-line student handbook. Some faculty handbooks also contain Ordinances and Regulations for postgraduate degrees. Students should ensure that they are familiar with the requirements of the Ordinances and Regulations for the degree for which they are registered

# Responsibilities at University Level

* 1. The University, through the Research Degrees Committee (RDC) and the Doctoral College, is responsible for ensuring that appropriate University policies are developed for the admission, supervision and examination of research degree students, and for ensuring that these policies (including this Code of Practice) are implemented within the faculties and Academic Units. More specifically the RDC is responsible for:

1. defining University-level policy on admission of candidates for research degrees and ensuring that these policies are followed by Academic Units,
2. ensuring, through the appropriate handbook, that postgraduate research students are made aware of the facilities available to them at University level, the regulations pertaining to their degree, the role of their research degree supervisors and the University’s expectations of them as postgraduate research students,
3. ensuring that students have access to appropriate information technology and library facilities, careers advice, welfare guidance and, where necessary, English Language tuition,
4. providing advice to Academic Units on the production of postgraduate research student handbooks, monitoring of postgraduate research students and the role of research supervisors,
5. approving staff nominated by Academic Units as research supervisors, against established criteria (set out in 1.3 above),
6. ensuring that annual training and staff development opportunities are provided for research supervisors,
7. ensuring that students are given the opportunity to make their views known on their experiences as research students, (including commenting on the quality of research supervision received), through the University’s Annual Monitoring and Progression (AMP) and Mid-Year Monitoring (MYM) progress meeting reports and monitoring procedures, and student staff forums. Problematic issues raised in such reports which cannot be resolved directly by RDC will be passed to the appropriate University authority,
8. ensuring that Academic Units are complying with the University’s AMP and MYM monitoring meeting procedures and the recording of supervisory meetings on the designated proforma,
9. ensuring that the University’s standards and procedures for research degrees are adhered to through:
   1. the publication of clear definitions of the University’s expectations for research degrees, guidance concerning the length and presentation of research theses, approval of examiners (following nomination by Academic Units) and the provision of appropriate guidance to examiners on their role and the application of the University’s research degree regulations,
   2. the establishment of administrative procedures which encourage students to complete their research successfully within an appropriate timescale,
   3. the operation and review of the University’s procedures for student appeals against the decisions of research degree examiners.
10. following notification by a supervisor, or Academic Unit, ensuring that the Research Funding Office (RFO) is aware of cases where particular consideration may need to be given to the protection of intellectual property developed within a project (the RFO is responsible for ensuring that students retain appropriate rights over the results of their research and that undue restrictions are not placed on access to student’s thesis by a research sponsor),
11. collaborating with the University’s Teaching Excellence Academy in defining policy in relation to research degree students who engage in teaching and to ensuring that appropriate training is available to students who teach,
12. ensuring that all postgraduate research students follow a research training programme including research integrity training, and have suitable opportunities for reviewing their progress in discussion with their supervisors,
13. ensuring that a postgraduate research student’s supervisor is not normally appointed as internal thesis examiner, (unless there is no other suitable alternative), although they may, at the request of the candidate, subject to the agreement of the examiners, be present as an observer at the oral examination (if, in exceptional circumstances, the supervisor is appointed, a second external examiner must be appointed),
14. ensuring that examiners for a thesis (including an Independent Chair) are appointed following a student giving notice of intention to submit the thesis,
15. ensuring that examiners for a thesis complete the examination normally within 3 months of receiving the thesis, including the viva voce examination.

# Responsibilities at Academic Unit Level

* 1. Academic Units are responsible for:

1. nominating a member of staff to act as Graduate Research Director (or equivalent) with responsibility, in collaboration with other members of the Academic Unit as appropriate, for oversight of the selection of research students, the allocation of supervisors, and the monitoring of student progress,
2. ensuring that accurate information and advice are available to prospective students concerning the research interests of members of staff and opportunities for undertaking research degrees,
3. ensuring that candidates are appropriately qualified in their discipline and as far as possible have the necessary motivation and aptitude for research,
4. nominating staff to Research Degrees Committee for approval as supervisors and ensuring that no member of staff supervises research students without having first been approved as a supervisor,
5. ensuring that the appointed supervisors have sufficient expertise and interest in the field of the research project to provide adequate guidance to the student, and ensuring that additional supervisory advice is available should a project develop in a direction significantly divergent from the expertise of the original supervisors, from which it follows that ideally one other member of staff in the Academic Unit should also have the expertise to supervise the project in case unforeseen difficulties arise with the original supervisory arrangements, although this may not always be possible,
6. ensuring that inexperienced supervisors and supervisors new to the University attend staff development activities in research supervision (currently the Doctoral College’s Supervisor Training Programme) and where appropriate are supported through joint supervision arrangements with more experienced staff,
7. ensuring that any staff from partner institutions meet the requirements of supervisors, attend suitable staff development activities and are in all cases supported through joint supervision arrangements with more experienced staff. It is expected that in all cases staff from partner institutions would act as members of the supervisory team, rather than principal supervisors,
8. ensuring that supervisors’ details appear on their students’ SIS records and that student progress and attendance monitoring records are also kept up to date on the SIS,
9. ensuring that students are provided with information (through a handbook and induction meetings) about the facilities and training available to them in the Academic Unit, Faculty and University, especially on computer and statistical techniques, and including English Language tuition for international students, the Academic Unit’s expectations and arrangements for monitoring attendance and progress, procedures for making formal complaints concerning supervision, changing supervisors, the operation of the Student Staff Forum and any other relevant procedures,
10. ensuring through direct provision of an induction and research training programme that training is provided in research methodology, use of equipment and computer software, health and safety, ethical issues and intellectual property rights etc. appropriate to the discipline,
11. organising research seminars or similar programmes for postgraduate research students and staff according to practice in the discipline, including opportunities for students to present their work to other members of the Academic Unit,
12. ensuring, within the resources available, that students have access to adequate study space, equipment, library and computing facilities to pursue their research successfully and that any serious deficiencies are brought to the notice of the appropriate University body,
13. operating the University’s monitoring procedures for postgraduate research-student progress and attendance and ensuring they are well understood and complied with by both staff and students,
14. establishing procedures to allow for a change of supervisor should a student or supervisor feel this to be necessary (if the Head of the Academic Unit is also the supervisor, recourse should be made to the Chair of the Research Degrees Committee) and requesting approval of the replacement supervisor from Research Degrees Committee,
15. ensuring that supervisors provide adequate guidance and support to research students in line with the University’s Code of Practice, that Academic Unit monitoring procedures are adhered to and that students are given every encouragement to complete their research to the required standard within their period of full registration,
16. ensuring that the other duties of supervisors within their Academic Units leave them sufficient time to supervise their research students to an appropriate standard by developing explicit mechanisms for determining staff workloads in respect of teaching, research student supervision, personal research and administrative commitments,
17. ensuring that supervisors are aware of Academic Unit procedures for dealing with cases in which a student appears not to be making sufficient progress or when a breakdown has occurred in the relationship between student and supervisor(s). (See the Code of Practice for warnings leading to the termination of research students’ programme of study on the grounds of lack of progress),
18. ensuring that supervisors make adequate arrangements for the supervision of their postgraduate research students during periods of absence from the University of more than one month, such as during summer vacations or study leave, and in periods when the student is undertaking research away from the University for a similar period,
19. ensuring that alternative arrangements are made for students whose supervisor(s) suffer a prolonged period of illness,
20. ensuring that there is a clear procedure for succession should a principal supervisor need to be replaced and that it is the explicit responsibility of the Graduate Research Director (or equivalent) to oversee this process and ensure that an appropriate replacement is found, or alternative arrangements made. This could include a transfer to another institution,
21. ensuring that the arrangements made for the continued supervision of a student are appropriate, and made with the student’s full agreement,
22. nominating suitable examiners for research degrees (including an Independent Chair) to the Research Degrees Committee as soon as possible following the student’s giving notice of an intention to submit,
23. ensuring that students whose theses are referred for resubmission are provided with appropriate advice by the internal examiner,
24. ensuring, when a student who is registered for a Master’s degree is being considered for transfer to PhD, that the transfer assessment follows the University’s annual progress monitoring procedure and that the report(s) recommending the outcome of the process to Research Degrees Committee is/are also submitted to the Doctoral College, using the Special Cases form,
25. ensuring, that candidates undergo their Annual Monitoring and Progression procedure by month nine of each year of registration, in order to confirm that they are performing at a standard appropriate for a doctoral candidate at this stage of their registration,
26. ensuring that no supervisor undertakes the supervision of more than a limited number of students (this limit will vary from one subject to another and according to such factors as a supervisor’s experience and other duties. This should be covered by Academic Unit workload models).The expectation is that, in general, no supervisor should have more than six supervisees as principal supervisor.

# Responsibilities of Supervisors

* 1. Before agreeing to supervise a research proposal, members of academic staff must be approved by Research Degrees Committee and must satisfy themselves that they have the necessary knowledge and expertise to supervise the project, that the project is appropriate for the degree concerned, and that it can reasonably be undertaken with the resources available and in the required timescale, and that they are confident, as far as this is possible to determine, that the student has the capacity to undertake the project successfully.
  2. Particular care needs to be taken with international students who may, in the early stages, need very frequent meetings of a seemingly elementary kind. The assistance needed may include help with language problems and advice about language training, including the possibility of making such training compulsory where necessary. This help may include advice on what research is and how to conduct research.
  3. Supervisors are expected:

1. to give guidance about the nature of research and the standards expected, about the planning of the research programme, about literature and sources, attendance at taught courses or specialist training, and the use of requisite techniques (including instruction where necessary) and to encourage students to be aware of all relevant developments within the subject,
2. to ensure that students are aware of and comply with all relevant University and Academic Unit regulations, standards and criteria for their degree, progress and attendance monitoring processes as well as the regulations and conditions attached to any visa, scholarship or studentship held by the student,
3. to ensure that the student complies with the University’s Risk Assessment policies and procedures for travel, including travel home on leave of absence,
4. to ensure that the student attends and engages with their Faculty’s research integrity training, as part of the PGTS module ‘The Modern Researcher 1’, in compliance with the expectations of the Concordat to Support Research Integrity,
5. to give detailed advice on the necessary completion dates of successive stages of the work, agreeing objectives for each stage so that the thesis may be submitted within the scheduled time and any visa end dates and requirements,
6. to provide advice on writing up the work, requesting written work as appropriate and returning such work with constructive criticism and within a reasonable time,
7. to read through the final draft of the thesis and provide detailed comments,
8. to meet (face to face or by online contact) students on a regular and frequent basis to discuss problems and progress: in the first year of study, these may be more frequent than in subsequent years. Full-time students can expect 12 documented supervisory meetings per academic year during the research period which includes the MYM, but excludes the AMP and part-time students can expect 6 per academic year during the research period, including the MYM and excluding the AMP. During the thesis finalisation period all students whether full-time or part-time are entitled to one supervision meeting every other month. During any correction, amendment or referral period post viva, students both full-time and part-time will be entitled to one supervisory meeting every other month. This is particularly important for international students as regular and documented monitoring is a UKVI visa compliance requirement. Should circumstances prevent supervisory meetings taking place (i.e. short-term illness, annual leave, field trips) etc, this should be recorded on the supervisory meeting form and stored in the Student Information System. This must not be a frequent and ongoing occurrence in the supervision of any postgraduate researchers and is a particular risk for international students with regards to visa compliance.
9. The content and outcomes from meetings must be recorded by the student and supervisor on the standardised supervisory meeting record forms available from the Doctoral College’s SharePoint site and signed off by the supervisor. The student’s supervisory meeting attendance should be recorded by the Academic Unit on the Student Information System,

\*Note: *University regulations require that part-time postgraduate research students shall meet their supervisor as and when stipulated, which shall normally be at least six times per session. Before beginning a course of study, part-time students must satisfy the University that they are able to do this and have adequate facilities to pursue their research.*

1. to be accessible to their students at other times, should advice on academic or personal problems be required,
2. to inform their students should they plan to be away from the University for more than a few days to allow students to plan accordingly,
3. to make appropriate contact arrangements/alternative supervision arrangements should either the supervisor or student be away from the University for more than a month (for example during study visits/leave, industrial placements or University vacations),
4. to fulfil the responsibilities of supervisors with regard to the Postgraduate Training Scheme (PGTS) as detailed in the manual and assist the student in development of personal transferable skills as appropriate to the student’s aspirations and requirements of the research area, through for example:
5. arranging for students to discuss their work at staff or graduate seminars,
6. encouraging and assisting students to publish the results of their research and to present it at scholarly conferences.
7. to carry out a Training Needs Analysis, using the Vitae Researcher Development Framework, at least once a year, and recommend specific PGTS modules or other development opportunities,
8. to ensure that students are made aware if either their progress or the standard of their work is unsatisfactory, and arrange a plan of supportive action,
9. to participate annually in the student‘s progress-monitoring meeting, and report on their progress with their research programme and the PGTS,
10. to prepare students, for their first Annual Monitoring and Progression Meeting examination at month nine of the first year of full-time registration, at which they need to be able to demonstrate that they are working at the PhD level. For part-time mode, having had an Annual Monitoring and Progress meeting at month nine in their first year, help them prepare for the examination at month nine of the second year of part-time registration, and for all subsequent Annual Monitoring and Progress Meetings,
11. to take an active role in introducing the student to other researchers in the field and appropriate academic bodies and societies, and encourage the student to engage in other activities such as attendance at relevant conferences and research workshops and fieldwork or work in archives, libraries or specialised laboratories away from Hull,
12. to advise students on matters of confidentiality or ethical considerations relating to particular techniques, sources or results,
13. to ensure that the correct safety procedures are followed when using equipment or laboratory materials (full details on safety procedures are available from Safety Officers and from the University Safety Officer),
14. to ensure that, should a major change in research direction occur, appropriate adjustments are made to the supervisory arrangements and, if necessary, to advise the Graduate Research Director and/or Student Case Committee (or equivalent) should the student’s research lead in a direction which the supervisor is not equipped to supervise,
15. to agree with the other supervisor(s), and with the student, the respective responsibilities and roles of the different supervisors and to maintain good communication with the other supervisor(s) concerning the student’s progress throughout the period of study,
16. after discussion with the student, to recommend examiners for the student’s thesis (to the Academic Unit for proposal to Research Degrees Committee, via the Doctoral College) to ensure that the proposed examiners are appropriate but have not had prior, significant input into the project,
17. to help students prepare for the PhD viva,
18. if the candidate wishes, in cases where a thesis is referred for resubmission to advise on the necessary revisions in consultation with the internal examiner,
19. in the case of a student who has not submitted the thesis at the end of the research period of study but indicates an intention to do so by paying the University’s /Continuation fee, normally to keep in close contact with the student until final submission (a minimum of one formal supervision every two months) or a decision not to submit. Payment of the Continuation fee does not entitle a student to full research supervision but only advice on chapters of the thesis. Nor does it automatically entitle them to laboratory access. It does entitle them to library facilities and access to the Doctoral College facilities: students requiring full supervision or laboratory access should seek permission from Research Degrees Committee to register for a further year, but such cases should be rare),
20. to attend the Training Programme for Research Supervisors before starting to supervise, and to update supervisory skills every three years, by attending Continuing Professional Development sessions arranged by the Doctoral College, or taking the available online training module for postgraduate research supervisors,
21. explain what students can expect in terms of references (when applying for employment) and how long records will be kept.
22. Second supervisors are expected from the start to keep apprised of their research student’s project and progress and have an input into the supervisory process, with a view to becoming principal supervisor, if the principal supervisor becomes unavailable through illness or study leave, or leaves the University, or the student requests a replacement, or for any other reason.
23. Joint meetings may be held with the first supervisor, or the second supervisor may prefer to meet the student individually.
24. Second supervisors should participate in the annual monitoring procedure, acting as part of the panel in both the Mid-Year-Monitoring and Annual Monitoring and Progression meetings.
25. In some subject groups the second supervisor acts as peer observer of the student’s teaching (where the student is employed to teach).
26. Second supervisors should take care not to give the student conflicting and confusing advice. Where there is a genuine difference of opinion, the supervisors should discuss their differences and agree a way forward before advising the student.

# Responsibilities of Postgraduate Research Students

* 1. As candidates for research degrees, students are expected:

1. to discuss with their supervisor(s) the type of guidance and comment they find most helpful, and to agree a schedule of meetings and other contact both during trimester-time and vacations for the prescribed period of study,
2. to seek advice from the supervisor in an active manner, recognising that it is the student’s responsibility to have their own topics to raise with the supervisor,
3. to maintain the progress of the work in accordance with the stages agreed with the supervisor and in accordance with the University’s attendance and progress monitoring procedures (including, in particular, the provision of well-presented written work within the agreed timescales for comment and discussion before proceeding to the next stage),
4. to be engaged with their research for around 40hrs per week and undertake paid work for no more than 12 hrs per week (50 weeks x 12hrs = 600 hrs per year). The peak workload of waged labour should not exceed 40hrs a week for a maximum of 4 weeks. University PhD Scholarship students are expected to undertake no more than 12 hrs a week of paid teaching/demonstrating if full-time or 24 hours per week if part-time. Part-time students should be working on their research degree for around 20hrs per week, to ensure sufficient time is devoted to research and the timely completion of the degree,
5. To engage with formal supervisory meetings and submit work by the deadlines as agreed with the supervisor,
6. To engage with the formal monitoring and progression process (AMP and MYM) and submit work as agreed with the supervisor,
7. A student studying for a thesis based research degree is entitled to 30 working days annual holiday per academic year, in addition to the periods when the University is closed. This constitutes an entitlement to 30 working days of Authorised Absence. Students are expected to be working on their research for the rest of the year,
8. Holiday dates should be discussed and agreed in advance with supervisors and formally booked following Academic Unit processes. Failure to do so will be considered Absence Without Good Cause and may invoke termination procedures,
9. to submit reports of work undertaken as specified by the supervisor and University,
10. to take note of the guidance and feedback provided by the supervisor,
11. to inform the supervisor of other individuals with whom the work has been or is being discussed, so that this may be taken into account when examiners are recommended,
12. to be familiar with the regulations and Academic Unit guidelines relating to their degree and the monitoring of progress and with the regulations for any visa, studentship or award they may hold,
13. to contribute to the research environment of the Academic Unit as appropriate by taking up opportunities to present work at Academic Unit seminars (etc) and by engaging in discussion with other researchers,
14. to discuss with the supervisor, the appropriate choice of research training modules and actively pursue research training (including the mandatory module ‘The Modern Researcher 1’, which incorporates research integrity for first-year students), through the PGTS and other opportunities, and,
15. to conduct their work at all times in accordance with University and Academic Unit safety requirements, and to follow ethical guidance provided by the Academic Unit or supervisor,
16. to inform their supervisor, in good time where possible, should they plan to be away from the University for more than five working days and to provide a doctor’s note, in the case of illness of over five working days duration and apply for a formal suspension of study, if the absence is to be more than one calendar month,
17. to provide an annual report on their progress to the Research Degrees Committee via the designated annual monitoring and progression procedure, including submission of work using originality checking software for assessment of originality, through the student’s own Academic Unit,
18. to complete a risk assessment for laboratory, field work and all travel (including travel home on leave of absence), as required by the University’s policies and procedures on Risk Assessment,
19. to take the initiative in raising problems or difficulties with the supervisor in the first instance, however elementary these may seem, including any matters which may require a suspension of registration or cause a delay in the expected completion date of the work,
20. to decide when to submit the thesis taking due account of the supervisor’s opinion (which is necessarily only advisory) and to provide the supervisor with a final draft of the thesis in reasonable time for comment and feedback prior to its examination,
21. in accordance with the University’s Policy on Use of Originality Checking Software, to submit the thesis using originality checking software for assessment of originality, through the student’s own Academic Unit.

# Postgraduate Training

* 1. It is now widely recognised by employers, professional bodies and research funding agencies that specialist expertise alone is not sufficient preparation either for research or a subsequent career.
  2. With this in mind, the University of Hull requires all its postgraduate research students to follow a research training programme relating both to their particular field of study and to generic/professional skills; for example, information technology and communication skills.
  3. Personal student contact with the academic supervisor, from whom many of the specialist skills and appropriate research methodology will be learned, is supported by training modules designed to help the student undertake research more effectively and complete successfully whether their future career lies in the research or another community.
  4. Training is broadly based and co-ordinated by a Graduate Research Director in the relevant academic area and the Doctoral College administrative staff, but each research student and supervisor, in effect, put together an individually tailored programme of training from the PGTS manual and other sources, based on the Training Needs Analysis which should be conducted annually by the supervisor.
  5. Within the programme, and unless granted exemptions, all research students (full-time and part-time) registered for a PhD are required to acquire during their period of study a minimum of 60 credits (without exemptions) which will qualify them for the award of the Postgraduate Certificate in Research Training.
  6. Students should note that unless they have been granted exemptions, the submission of their thesis is not permitted until they have accumulated sufficient credits.
  7. Students following one or two-year research degrees (by full-time and part-time study) are required to obtain 20 and 40 credits respectively (which may include appropriate exemption).
  8. With the agreement of the supervisor, a research student may take a maximum of 120 credits and be awarded, if successful, (without exemptions) the Diploma in Research Training.
  9. Further details of the training scheme are described in the Postgraduate Research Training Manual which is available online from the Doctoral College.

# Summary of Responsibilities

* 1. Responsibilities of research students:

1. to read the PGTS training manual and plan your own training programme, taking modules early in your period of study where possible (front-weighting), but always pacing the training to match your research needs,
2. to discuss and agree your training programme and any claims for exemptions with your supervisor(s),
3. if necessary, with your supervisor consult the Academic School Graduate Research Director for advice on your training programme, supervisory arrangements, or progression issues. Liaise with the coordinator for each module as necessary, to confirm that you meet any pre-requisites, and that you know the time and place of training sessions,
4. fill in your training programme form from the PGTS manual annually. Sign the form and obtain your supervisor’s counter-signature. Return the form to the Doctoral College Office to record your choice of modules,
5. inform the Doctoral College Office of any subsequent changes in your choice of modules,
6. write your personal details on a Module Outcome form for each module you take, and give that form to the module coordinator,
7. attend the training, and complete the assessment,
8. keep a record of your own training so that you can record it on your annual progress monitoring proforma and keep your supervisor informed as to your progress and any difficulties regarding your training programme.
   1. Responsibilities of supervisors:
9. carry out an annual Training Needs Analysis, using the Vitae Researcher Development Framework, and ensure that training is relevant and useful to each student’s research and general development,
10. evaluate each student’s claims for exemption in the context of the University policy on APCL/APEL and forward the evidence to the Postgraduate Research Director,
11. bring to each student’s attention possibilities for training through conferences or courses elsewhere,
12. monitor each student’s progress and check that they have attended and benefited from training modules including the compulsory module ‘The Modern Researcher 1,
13. warn the student, as part of the regular process of University reports, if they seem not to be satisfying the training requirement,
14. provide feedback on the quality and appropriateness of the PGTS to the Postgraduate Research Director, who will in turn report to the Doctoral College.
    1. Responsibilities of the Postgraduate Research Director:
15. request and collate module entries from their Faculty or Academic unit for the training manual,
16. identify gaps in provision and negotiate with tutors to provide new modules,
17. advise supervisors and, when necessary, discuss with new and continuing postgraduates their module choices,
18. provide information to the Doctoral College to promote the implementation and development of the PGTS,
19. recommend actions on exemptions.
    1. Responsibilities of module providers:
20. provide details of the content and arrangements for their modules to their Postgraduate Research Director (for Academic unit modules) or to the Doctoral College (for University modules),
21. provide assessment that tests both the content of the training and also the student’s ability to incorporate it into the research process and apply it to their own research,
22. following assessment (including any inspection for the External Examiner for that module), follow a defined procedure to ensure the result is entered on the Student Information System,
23. return a copy of the assessed work with formative comments to the student,
24. for University-level modules, forward the resultant copy of the student’s assessed work to the Doctoral College, who will retain it until completion of external assessment of the PGTS of that student,
25. forward to the Postgraduate Research Director (or the Doctoral College as appropriate) feedback from students on the appropriateness of the module, in content and level, for their research needs,
26. carry out Module Evaluation Questionnaire procedures and return student responses to the Doctoral College for PGTS modules managed by the Doctoral College.
    1. Responsibilities of the Doctoral College:
27. update the training manual annually, and publicise to students further training opportunities that become available during the year,
28. maintain a record of the training choices for each student,
29. enter results for University level modules as received from the module providers,
30. supply on request, in compliance with Data Protection legislation, a copy of a student’s record,
31. print and supply, on request in writing, a copy of students’ records to their supervisor or to their Faculty office,
32. annually inform students of the date of the Programme Board so that their PGTS record can be amended in time to be approved by the Programme Board,
33. when a student wishes to submit their thesis, or when a programme is terminated, indicate whether the student appears to conform to requirements for submission or for an award and issue a transcript of their training credits,
34. arrange for the external assessment of the Postgraduate Research Training Scheme as a whole,
35. convene a Programme Board for the confirmation of results.

**Annex**

**Criteria for Approved Supervisors**

The Research Degrees Committee (RDC) annually approves staff nominated by their academic areas to act as research supervisors, against established criteria. These criteria are based on the QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education- Chapter B11: Research Degrees.

The criteria are that nominated supervisors must:

* hold a doctorate (or equivalent qualification or experience, as defined below)
* have completed the New Supervisor Training online course provided by the Doctoral College); *or* completed Refresher Supervisor Training online course within the previous three years (applies to both first and second supervisors). Access via the Staff Development page.
* hold a continuing contract in the (i) teaching and research or (ii) the research domain at the University for the duration of the student’s period of study (or else be appointed only as second supervisor).

**The Nomination and Approvals Process**

* Subject areas and Schools must check that each of their nominated supervisors meets the criteria listed above.
* Faculty Graduate Research Directors each maintain an up to date list of supervisors for their area of responsibility.
* Annually, from the early summer, the Doctoral College will request lists of all supervisors that Faculties would wish to nominate for approval for the year ahead.
* The Graduate Research Directors resolves any queries about the lists and provides these to the Faculty PGR administrators.
* Faculty Administrators will then send the updated supervisor lists to the Doctoral College.
* Updated supervisor lists will then be approved by RDC.

Where a Graduate Research Director or Head of School has reservations about any nominated supervisor, they should discuss these in confidence with the Director of the Doctoral College.

**Supervisor Criteria: Further Guidance**

* Staff who supervise at the doctoral level should normally have a doctorate themselves. There may, however, be good reasons why a supervisor does not hold a doctorate, and Schools should be prepared to consider equivalent qualifications. These might include a pre-existing track-record of successful supervision; an established research profile, including publication of books or articles; relevant professional experience; or experience of examining doctorates (internal and/or external examining).
* The principal supervisor must be a permanent member of staff employed by the University.
* Staff on fixed term contracts shorter than the duration of the student’s prescribed period of study should not be appointed as the principal supervisor, but might act as second supervisor.
* Persons holding honorary appointments or those external to the University should not normally be appointed as principal or second supervisor, but might act as an additional adviser / third supervisor.
* Staff approaching retirement are eligible to be principal supervisors provided that joint or other appropriate supervisor arrangements are made.
* Staff under probation or not on a full-time contract may be appointed as supervisor, but the subject area or School should appoint a co-supervisor (first or second) who is a permanent member of staff and/or full-time, in order to safeguard against interruption of supervision for the student, and provide additional support for the supervisor on probation or employed part-time.
* Where a programme is run with a collaborative partner providing supervision, there must also be a joint University of Hull supervisor for each student.
* Appointed supervisors must have ‘appropriate skills and subject knowledge to support and encourage research students, and to monitor their progress effectively’ (QAA Quality Code for Higher Education). ‘Appropriate subject knowledge’ might be defined as having research interests and publications, or extensive reading knowledge, of the field (eg. for postgraduate teaching purposes); or previous supervisory experience in a similar research area. The supervisor’s Graduate Research Director should be willing to approve their appointment as supervisor, and the supervisor should be willing to maintain currency in the research field. ‘Appropriate skills’ should be acquired initially through the new supervisor training provided by the Doctoral College, and maintained by attendance every three years at continuing professional development events (or via the online version).
* Supervisors with an unsatisfactory completion rate (which might be defined as more than half of supervisees taking longer than four years to complete their thesis), or a track-record of complaints, referrals or failures, should not be appointed as principal supervisor until the Research Degrees Committee is satisfied that they have (re)taken the supervisors’ training programme provided by the Doctoral College, and co- or second-supervised a PhD student to successful completion.
* It can be difficult for academic staff new to doctoral supervision to know when they have the requisite expertise to begin supervising. An ’apprenticeship’ stage during which they act as second supervisor with a more experienced colleague as principal is recommended. Where this is not possible or the new supervisor has the requisite knowledge but has never previously supervised a PhD student to successful completion, the new supervisor might act as principal in partnership with a more experienced co- or second supervisor.
* Supervisors may be appointed as joint or co-supervisors (rather than first and second) where they have complementary skills or expertise. If different Schools or Faculties are involved, they should reach agreement on which supervisor takes primary responsibility for the student, and to which Faculty or School the student should be credited.
* As supervisors should have sufficient time to carry out their responsibilities effectively it is recommended that they are allocated no more than six PhD students at any one time, or that their workload in other areas should be adjusted accordingly**.**

**Role of Second Supervisors**

The role of second supervisor is likely to vary across Schools and according to the needs of the supervisee. Suggested models are defined below:

* As ‘back up’ to the principal supervisor: the second supervisor has similar expertise to the principal supervisor and could step into that role should the principal supervisor become unavailable (whether through illness, death, absence, departure to another post, or for any other reason).
* As offering complementary expertise to the principal supervisor: for example research interests in a different (though still relevant) area.
* As offering interdisciplinary expertise: in this case the two supervisors may have equal status.
* As representing the expertise available in a partner institution (for example, as the result of a consortium studentship bid). Second supervisors appointed in this way should not expect to be paid by Hull.
* A subject groups or School should not appoint a second supervisor who is unwilling or unable to step in and support the student if the principal supervisor becomes permanently unavailable.
* Second supervisors should *not* be appointed as internal examiners for theses for which they have provided any supervision.

**Arrangements for Supervisors who leave the University**

Where a Principal Supervisor leaves the University of Hull to take up a permanent post at another institution, arrangements for their supervisees must be guided by what would best serve the supervisee’s best interests. Three possible options must be considered:

* The student may ask to be transferred to the supervisor’s new institution (but would have to satisfy the new institution’s entry requirements).
* The student may remain in Hull, but continue to be supervised at a distance by the supervisor from their new institution. Arrangements for meetings would have to be agreed, and be fully compliant with Hull’s progress monitoring procedures and the requirements of UoH supervision training.
* The student may be reallocated to a new Hull supervisor (usually the second supervisor whose role must also be replaced).

In any instance where a supervisor leaves the university a business continuity form must be completed and submitted to the Faculty and Doctoral College.

# Version Control

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Version** | **Author** | **Date approved** | **Relevant sections** |
| 3 09 | Lisa Tees | NA | Migrated to new template |
| 3 10 | Nigel Shaw | Sept 2021 | Makes clear that completion of the PGR Progress Monitoring paperwork is mandatory. Strengthens terminology (4.1m, 5.3b, 5.3h) |
| 3 11 | Doctoral College | Sept 2022 | 1.1: Inserts additional text (in bold) here *However, a successful outcome also demands from the student both commitment and a willingness to be imaginative yet self-critical,* ***and the ability to adapt and mitigate in adversity****.*  3.1 g): Changes ‘6-month’ and ‘annual’ to *Mid-Year Monitoring (MYM)* and *Annual Monitoring and Progression (AMP)* respectively*.*  3.1 h): Changes ‘annual and 6 month progression ‘to *AMP and MYM*.  5.3 h): In sections covering supervisory contact amends several phrases: ‘skype contact’ to *online* contact; Doctoral College ‘Website’ to *Sharepoint site*; and ‘visit’ their supervisor to *meet.*  5.3 i) amends sentence (in bold) here *to be accessible to* ***their*** *students…*  5.3 J) amends sentence (in bold) here *to inform* ***their*** *students…*  5.3 p) removes entire clause referencing preparing MPhil students for transfer to PhD. Subsections relabeled, with p)-cc) now **p)-bb)**.  5.3 p) Amends text to remove reference to previous process; replaces references to ‘annual progress monitoring’ with *Annual Monitoring and Progression*; clarifies the AMP to take place in month 9 for full time first year students; stipulates that supervisors to prepare PT students for AMP in first and second years, and all subsequent years, at 9 month mark.  5.3 y) Changes text concerning rights of PGRs who have paid a continuation fee to clarify they are only entitled to advice on thesis chapters rather than full supervision and that the fee does not entitle them to automatic laboratory access. Removes ‘limited’ from reference to entitlement to access library and Doctoral College facilities.    6.1 e) new clause inserted, *To engage with formal supervisory meetings and submit work by the deadlines as agreed with the supervisor,*  6.1 f) new clause inserted, *To engage with the formal monitoring and progression process (AMP and MYM) and submit work as agreed with the supervisor*,  6.1 h) new clause inserted *Holiday dates should be discussed and agreed in advance with supervisors and formally booked following Academic Unit processes. Failure to do so will be considered Absence Without Good Cause and may invoke termination procedures,*  6.1 n) amends wording to better clarify The Modern Research 1 module incorporates research integrity for first year students.  6.1. q) Amends clause to update terminology for AMP, and adds requirement for submission of work to include originality checking software.  6.1 u) Amends title of University Policy on Use of Originality Checking Software.  7.9 Removes reference to Doctoral College Website.  References to ‘students’ and ‘postgraduate students’ amended throughout document to *postgraduate research students*.  Amends title of ‘Postgraduate Research Director’ throughout document to *Graduate Research Director.* |
| 3 12 | Doctoral College | Jan 2023 | 1.3 & 1.4 new clauses inserted to clarify criteria for supervisory appointments.  3.1 e) Insertion of additional text (as in bold): *approving staff nominated by academic units as research supervisors, against established criteria* ***(set out in 1.3 above)****.*  4.1 y): Amends text to clarify that Academic Units must ensure all PGR candidates undergo their AMP by month nine of each year of registration.  6.1 d) Change to amount of time PT students should be working on research each week, from 20 hours to 24 hours. |
| 3 13 | Doctoral College | Sept 2024 | 1.3 Inserted additional text (in bold); hold a doctorate (or equivalent qualification or experience, as defined in the Criteria for Approved Supervisors **(please see the annex attached to this document).**  5.3 h) removed entire clause and new clause inserted, to meet (face to face or by online contact) students on a regular and frequent basis to discuss problems and progress: in the first year of study, these may be more frequent than in subsequent years. Full-time students can expect 12 documented supervisory meetings per academic year which includes the MYM, but excludes the AMP and part-time students can expect 6 per academic year, including the MYM and excluding the AMP. This is particularly important for international students as regular and documented monitoring is a UKVI visa compliance requirement. Should circumstances prevent supervisory meetings taking place (i.e. short-term illness, annual leave, field trips) etc, this should be recorded on the supervisory meeting form and stored in the Student Information System. This must not be a frequent and ongoing occurence in the supervision of any postgraduate researchers and is a particular risk for international students with regards to visa compliance.  5.3 i) new clause inserted, The content and outcomes from meetings must be recorded by the student and supervisor on the standardised supervisory meeting record forms available from the Doctoral College’s SharePoint site and signed off by the supervisor. The student’s supervisory meeting attendance should be recorded by the Academic Unit on the Student Information System.  5.3 cc) Inserted additional text (in bold); second supervisors are expected **from the start** to keep apprised of their research student’s project and progress and have an input into the supervisory process, with a view to becoming principal supervisor, if the principal supervisor becomes unavailable through illness or study leave, or leaves the University, or the student requests a replacement, or for any other reason.  5.3 dd), ee), ff), and gg) new clauses inserted.  6.1 d) Inserted additional text (in bold); to be engaged with their research for around 40hrs per week and undertake paid work for no more than 12 hrs per week (50 weeks x 12hrs = 600 hrs per year). The peak workload of waged labour should not exceed 40hrs a week for a maximum of 4 weeks. University PhD Scholarship students are expected to undertake no more than 12 hrs a week of paid teaching/demonstrating **if full-time or 24 hours per week if part-time**. Part-time students should be working on their research degree for around **20**hrs per week, to ensure sufficient time is devoted to research and the timely completion of the degree.  6.1 g) Inserted additional text (in bold); A student studying for a thesis based research degree is entitled to 30 working days annual holiday **per academic year**, in addition to the periods when the University is closed. This constitutes an entitlement to 30 working days of Authorised Absence. Students are expected to be working on their research for the rest of the year.  Annex; Inserted annex to clarify criteria for approved supervisors, nomination of approval process, supervisor criteria: further guidance, role for the second supervisors and arrangements for supervisors who leave the University. |
| 3 14 | Doctoral College | April 2025 | 5.3 h) added additional text to provide supervisory meetings post-viva the same as for thesis finalisation. This is a recommendation from the visa compliance team to ensure engagement for visa PGRs  5.3 h) Full-time students can expect 12 documented supervisory meetings per academic year during the research period which includes the MYM, but excludes the AMP and part-time students can expect 6 per academic year during the research period, including the MYM and excluding the AMP. During the thesis finalisation period all students whether full-time or part-time are entitled to one supervision meeting every other month. During any correction, amendment or referral period post viva, students both full-time and part-time will be entitled to one supervisory meeting every other month. |