

Requirements for joint and double PhD/MPhil collaborations

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Joint or double PhD/MPhil collaborations are normally offered on an individual student level and are subject to a cotutelle agreement.
- 1.2 A joint PhD/MPhil is where the University collaborates with another degree awarding body to jointly approve and supervise a programme of PhD/MPhil study for an individual student. The arrangement entails formal periods of study and research at each institution.
- 1.3 For joint award collaborations the PhD/MPhil is awarded jointly by both institutions. The student receives one award certificate which carries the crests/logos of the participating degree awarding bodies.
- 1.4 A double PhD/MPhil is where the University collaborates with another degree awarding body to jointly approve and supervise a programme of PhD/MPhil study for an individual student. The arrangement entails formal periods of study and research at each institution.
- 1.5 For double award collaborations each institution awards a separate qualification. The partners may agree to award the same qualification but issue separate certificates. Double award qualifications are generally developed as a result of legal impediments, in some jurisdictions, to a single joint qualification, therefore these arrangements tend to be the exception rather than the norm.
- 1.6 The University does not engage in dual award PhD/MPhil arrangements. This is because the requirements of these arrangements mean that at least one third of the research undertaken needs to be distinctive and two separate qualifications are awarded.
- 1.7 This supplement does not cover arrangements where there is joint supervision of a student that does not lead to a joint or double award.

2. Business evaluation and due diligence

- 2.1 Where an arrangement is proposed with a new partner, due diligence should be undertaken prior to academic approval. A Partnership Agreement Risk Assessment Tool (PARAT) form should be completed and submitted for approval by the University Internationalisation Committee (via Chair's action if appropriate).

- 2.2 Where an arrangement is proposed with an existing NTU partner, no additional due diligence is required, except during revalidation of the collaborative arrangement, and with notification to the University Internationalisation Committee.
- 2.3 Support for risk assessment and due diligence can be obtained from the Graduate School.
- 2.4 Decisions will need to be made about student fees by the relevant School in advance of commencing academic approval.

3. Transfer from a single to a joint or double award

- 3.1 A student may transfer from a University awarded PhD/MPhil to a joint or double arrangement any time up to the point of project approval.
- 3.2 The academic approval processes are the same as for a student applying to a joint or double award from the outset.

4. Prior to academic approval

- 4.1 The relevant Postgraduate Research Tutor should contact their Centre for Academic Development and Quality (CADQ) Officer for advice on academic approval. CADQ will provide an indicative timeline for the production of the documents and iteration.
- 4.2 The Postgraduate Research Tutor, or Director of Studies, must liaise with the partner and the student on the documentation and jointly agree the arrangements for the collaboration.
- 4.3 The School, in liaison with Legal Services, must produce a draft co-tutelle agreement before the academic approval event and agree its broad terms with the partner and the student.

5. Principles of joint and double PhD/MPhil awards

- 5.1 Joint and double PhD/MPhil collaborations always involve joint supervision and student mobility. The amount of time spent at each partner should be roughly equal.
- 5.2 The student should receive research training from both institutions. The research training to be provided by each institution should be agreed in advance, and there should be no significant overlap.
- 5.3 Each institution should provide a distinctive research environment.
- 5.4 Both partners are involved in monitoring the progress of the student, and determining whether the requirements at key milestones are met.
- 5.5 The requirements for key milestones such as project approval and transfer need to be jointly agreed by both partners.
- 5.6 Joint decisions need to be made about the length of the thesis, and the arrangements for the oral examination, that satisfy the requirements of both institutions.

- 5.7 The participating awarding bodies will need to determine which academic regulations govern the award. Bespoke regulations may be designed and approved.
- 5.8 Decisions will need to be made about which institution issues the certificate and transcript.
- 5.9 The policies and processes for academic appeals, complaints and irregularities need to be jointly agreed.

6. Documentation requirements for academic approval

- 6.1 **Partner's Postgraduate Research Environment statement:** The partner institution should provide a copy of its research environment statement (or equivalent), and any other relevant policies, such as research integrity statements, in order to allow the University to establish the appropriateness of the environment for the student.
- 6.2 **Collaborative Framework Document:** this document is prepared jointly by the Director of Studies (with the support of the Postgraduate Research Tutor) and the partner. It sets out a shared understanding of how the collaboration will operate, including the requirements for monitoring and examination.

7. Academic approval

- 7.1 Academic approval of the collaboration is undertaken by the University Research Degrees Committee (URDC).
- 7.2 Where a proposal requires urgent approval in between URDC meeting dates, a Development and Approval Group (DAG) will be set up to consider the collaboration.
- 7.3 The partner may have their own approval requirements, or a joint approval event may be held.

8. Post academic approval

- 8.1 Students are enrolled with both institutions. The Graduate School is responsible for registering students onto Banner as NTU students.
- 8.2 The Director of Studies is responsible for overseeing the day to day operation of the collaboration, with the support of the Postgraduate Research Tutor.
- 8.3 The cotutelle agreement **must be** signed by the University, the partner and the student in advance of the student enrolling on the PhD/MPhil.
- 8.4 A collaborative specification is completed by the allocated CADQ Officer and the partnership added to the collaborative register by the Collaborative Partnerships Office (CPO).

9. Monitoring and review

- 9.1 The collaboration will be monitored on an ongoing basis by the College Research Degrees Committee (CRDC). The collaboration will be reported upon in the CRDC annual report.
- 9.2 For a full-time student completing within the maximum registration period a periodic collaborative review is not required.
- 9.3 For a part-time student, the collaboration is subject to periodic review at the point of transfer from MPhil to PhD. The review will be undertaken by URDC.