

Code of Practice For Research Degrees

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Section One: Preface – the purpose of the Code

This code of practice has been developed by the Graduate School at Nottingham Trent University in compliance with the Quality Assurance Agency's *UK Quality Code for Higher Education* Part B: Assuring and enhancing academic quality - Chapter B11: Research Degrees. The code aims to ensure the continuing quality of information provided to potential and current postgraduate research students. It draws together and acts as a link to existing documents available to students and provides an introduction to the use of those central documents/guides for the student, supervisor and other stakeholders engaged in any aspect of postgraduate research.

It is intended that the Code of Practice acts as a guide to the chief documents that concern the research degree courses at Nottingham Trent University. This Code contains a summary of the chief content of these documents and in certain important cases, material from those documents, to provide a readily available reference point for students.

The key components of the regulatory and guidance nexus at the University are:

- The *Regulations for Research Degree and Higher Awards*
- The Student Handbooks:
 - MPhil/PhD Handbook
 - Course Handbooks for Professional Doctorate courses
- The Research Degree Supervisor Handbook
- The Research Training Guides
- The Procedure for Investigating Alleged Misconduct by Students
- and, other documents and guidance created and/or added to the list above from time to time

Each of these documents are regularly updated and maintained, and students and others should ensure that they continuously refer to them and ensure that they understand and act in accordance with their contents. It is not intended that this be a definitive list: it is expected that further documents will be added to it as part of the University's continuing enhancement of Quality Assurance.

Comments and suggestions regarding the contents of these documents are welcomed and can be passed on to the NTU Graduate School or at any time via the committees referred to in Section Three.

Section Two: Context

Nottingham Trent University has been awarding research degrees for over a quarter of a century, initially under the authority of the National Council for Academic Awards but since its incorporation as a university in 1992, under its own auspices. The research degree process is a partnership between the Nottingham Trent University Graduate School and the nine academic Schools in the University.

These Schools are:

- Animal, Rural and Environmental Sciences
- Art and Design
- Architecture, Design and the Built Environment
- Arts and Humanities
- Education
- Nottingham Business School
- Nottingham Law School
- Science and Technology
- Social Sciences

Students undertaking research degrees are members of both the Graduate School and the academic School in which their research discipline sits.

Nottingham Trent University currently delivers the following range of research degrees:

- Master of Philosophy (MPhil)
- Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)
- Professional Doctorates:
 - Doctor of Architecture (DArch)
 - Doctor of Business Administration (DBA)
 - Doctor of Civil Engineering (EngD)
 - Doctor of Construction (EngD)
 - Doctor of Design (DDes)
 - Doctor of Digital Media (DDM)
 - Doctor of Engineering (EngD)
 - Doctor of Fine Art (DFA)
 - Doctor of Fashion Industry (DFI)
 - Doctor of Education (EdD)
 - Doctor of Legal Practice (DLegalPrac)
 - Doctor of Real Estate (DRealEst)
 - Doctor of Social Practice (DSocPrac)
- Doctor of Philosophy by Creative or Published Works.

It also awards the following range of Higher Doctorates, which are not honorary doctorates, which can be awarded on the basis of an extensive and recognised corpus of work relevant to the appropriate field.

- Doctor of Arts (DArts)
- Doctor of Design (DDes)
- Doctor of Laws (LLD)
- Doctor of Letters (DLitt)
- Doctor of Science (DSc)

Section Three: Governance – An Overview

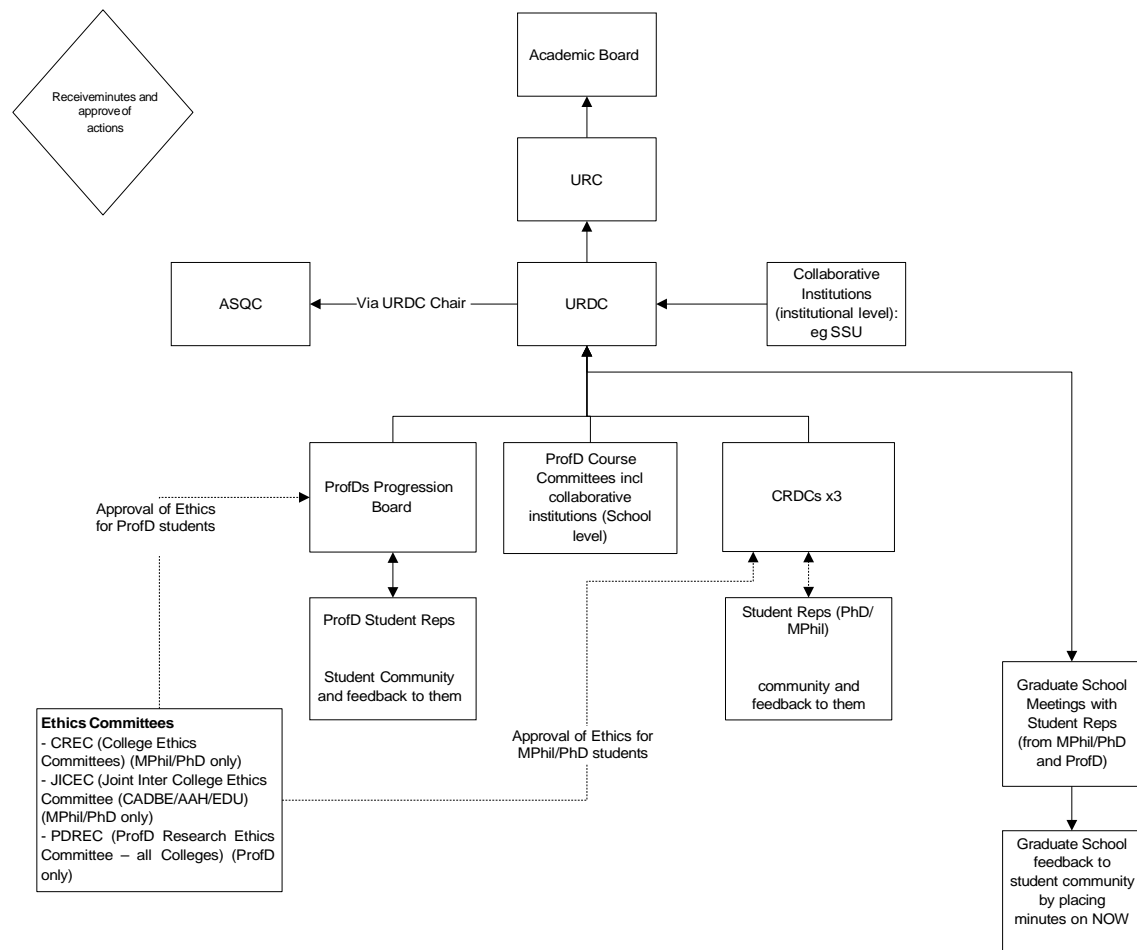
All University regulations and procedures are approved by Academic Board and this applies to the NTU Graduate School.¹ All Graduate School Quality Assurance and Enhancement procedures are referred to Academic Board for approval, through the chain of committees outlined below. The course committees for the professional doctorate courses govern professional doctorate courses and report directly to the University Research Degrees Committee (URDC). The College Research Degrees Committees (CRDCs) govern MPhil and PhD degrees and also report directly to URDC.² In turn the actions (including approval of research degrees and course committee actions) are sent to the University Research Committee (URC) for comment and support before being presented on to the Academic Board for approval.



¹ The academic board is responsible for 'all general issues relating to the research, scholarship, teaching and courses at the University, including criteria for the admission of students; the appointment and removal of internal and external examiners; policies and procedures for assessment and examination of the academic performance of students; the content of the curriculum; academic standards and the validation and review of courses; the procedures for the award of qualifications and honorary academic titles; and the procedures for the expulsion of students for academic reasons. Such responsibilities shall be subject to the requirements of validating and accrediting bodies.;

² The nine Schools are organised for administrative purposes into three colleges; these are: Art, Design and the Built Environment, which comprises the Schools of Art and design and Architecture, Design and the Built Environment; Arts and Science, which comprises the Schools of Animal, Rural and Environmental Sciences, Arts and Humanities, Education and Science and Technology; and Business, Law and Social Sciences which comprises Nottingham Business School, Nottingham Law School and the School of Social Sciences.

Committee Structures



Ethics Committees
 - CREC (College Ethics Committees) (MPhil/PhD only)
 - JICEC (Joint Inter College Ethics Committee (CADBE/AAH/EDU) (MPhil/PhD only)
 - PDREC (ProfD Research Ethics Committee – all Colleges) (ProfD only)

CRDCs, ProfD course Committees and Progression Boards informally feed into the following committees within colleges through committee members such as PGRTs, SRCs, Deans to ensure dissemination of information:
 CMTs, School Executive Committees, academic Teams and School Research committees.

ProfD Course Committee Activity:

- Maintenance and Enhancement of Academic Standards and Quality
- Admissions and Supervision (incl Changes to Supervision Teams)
- Recommend to URDC the External Examiners (Phase 1 of courses)
- Approval of External Examiners (Phase 2 Oral Examination)
- Course Monitoring and Annual Reporting
- Course Validation/Re-Validation
- Monitoring Collaborations

ProfD Progression Board Activity:

- Student progression decisions, including progression from phase one to phase two of the course (where applicable);
- To oversee the monitoring of students' progress and to receive an annual report on the progress of each student at phase two of the course;
- Suspensions of study
- Extensions to the Registration period (ie not to individual assessments)
- To receive and approve applications for permission, exceptionally, to submit a thesis in advance of the minimum period of registration
- To receive recommendations from Supervisors and/or any Progress Panel where the progress of any candidate gives cause for concern and to take appropriate action in accordance with the regulations in NTU Quality Handbook Section 4D.
- To receive notification of cases where a decision has been made by Chair's action
- To take decisions about the conferment of interim awards;
- To receive outcomes from oral examinations and to take any appropriate action.

CRDC Activity:

- Student Progression (Monitoring)
- Project Approval
- Transfer
- Ethics
- Health and Safety for Research Students
- Suspension of Studies
- Extensions
- Withdrawals
- Changes to Supervision Teams
- Changes to Mode of Study
- Conferments
- Annual Report to URDC
- Receive annual report (CSQR) on all ProfDs
- Examination Arrangements
- Course Validation/Re-Validation

Each CRDC and course committee produces an annual report which is passed to URDC for approval. In turn, URDC then compiles an annual report to be sent to the Academic Board via the URC.

The principal committee, in each of the three NTU Colleges, dealing directly with quality assurance procedures for MPhil/PhD is the College Research Degree Committee and this acts as the equivalent to a course committee and progression board. Each of the three College Research Degree Committees meet five/six times each year and the dates and times of their meetings are made known to the MPhil/PhD students and supervisors at the beginning of each academic year. Both the University Research Degrees Committee and the University Research Committee meet four times a year.

Course Committees govern the quality assurance of professional doctorate courses. Course committees and ProfD Progression Boards report directly to URDC. Course Committees meet three times per year (once per term) with progression boards meeting as often as required depending upon the volume of business.

Terms of Reference and membership structures of the CRDCs and URDC can be found in the Quality Handbook Supplement 4A and 4B respectively:

http://www.ntu.ac.uk/adq/quality_handbook/handbook_supplements/index.html

The terms of reference, membership and indicative framework for Professional Doctorate course committees are set out in Quality Handbook Supplement 4C:

http://www.ntu.ac.uk/adq/document_uploads/quality_handbook/167955.pdf

The purpose and powers of a ProfD Progression Board are set out in Quality Handbook Supplement 4E:

http://www.ntu.ac.uk/adq/document_uploads/quality_handbook/167957.pdf

Terms of Reference and other information for Progression Boards can be found in QH Section 15 and Quality Handbook Supplement 15B:

http://www.ntu.ac.uk/adq/document_uploads/quality_handbook/138198.pdf

http://www.ntu.ac.uk/adq/document_uploads/quality_handbook/148405.pdf

Section Four: Regulations

The doctoral programmes and courses are all governed by regulations set out in the University Quality Handbook. These regulations can be found via these web pages:
http://www.ntu.ac.uk/cadq/quality_assurance/standards_quality/8583gp.html

The research degree regulations are approved by the University's Academic Board and governed by the University Research Degrees Committee. (See: Section Three - Brief Guide to Governance). Research degrees regulations are kept under are updated annually. Alterations to regulations are made, if necessary, at the beginning of an academic year and students are informed of these changes. The Regulations are available on the University website at all times.

The Regulations contain details of all elements of research degrees requirements from entry requirements and admissions procedures, supervision arrangements, student progression to the final preparations for, and undertaking of, submission and examination. The Regulations also contain details of the complaints procedure and how to appeal against decisions made regarding progress and examination.

Section Five: The Student Handbook

Students are advised to use the Regulations in conjunction with the handbook (see guidance below) which provides essential information and guidance for the various quality and administrative processes which each student needs to undertake during their progress through their research degree.

All students and supervisors are provided with a relevant handbook. There is a single handbook for MPhil/PhD Students and Supervisors across all Schools in the University. Each ProfD course has its own course specific handbook. The handbooks are available to students and supervisors via the relevant course learning room in NOW at:

<https://now.ntu.ac.uk/>

The handbooks contain useful and comprehensive guidance on a range of topics, including an explanation of the research degree lifecycle (whether MPhil/PhD or ProfD), and details of a range of important contacts such as course team and Student Support Services. The handbooks deal with quality assurance, induction and the facilities and research expenses available and offered by the University for research degree studies (i.e., both MPhil/PhD and ProfD).

It is important for all students and supervisors to read the relevant handbook in conjunction with the regulations, and to familiarise themselves with the content.

Section Six: The Progress of a Doctoral Degree - General Guidance

At all times this code of practice is to be used in conjunction with the regulations relevant to the research programme being pursued and is to be read in conjunction with the detailed guidance contained in the handbooks.

Recruitment and Admission

Details of the application process are detailed on the University website:

http://www.ntu.ac.uk/research/graduate_school/applying_fees_funding/index.html

General Information

An applicant for admission to read for a research degree should normally hold a first or second class honours degree awarded by a UK University or a qualification which is regarded by the CRDC as equivalent to such an honours degree. Some students may be considered on his/her merits and in relation to the nature and scope of the programme of work proposed. In considering an applicant in this category, the CRDC will look for evidence of the student's ability and background knowledge in relation to the proposed research. Professional experience, publications, written reports or other appropriate evidence of accomplishment may be taken into consideration.

The application process follows these steps:

1. Completion of an application form: these forms can be downloaded from the webpages link above
2. Production of a Research Proposal which includes the following (a shorter version of this is required for PhD/MPhil in science and ProfDs):
 - a) Provisional title
 - b) The topic or area to be investigated (the subject or field to be researched)
 - c) The problem or hypothesis to be tested (the research question(s) or problem to be addressed)
 - d) The methods and techniques to be used in the research (how to go about the research)
 - e) A provisional timetable for the project indicating anticipated activities
 - f) The relationship of the proposed research to the published literature and to current research in the field (how the project relates to other work)
 - g) An indication of the contribution to knowledge that the thesis is anticipated to make (what it is hoped to be found out)
 - h) Details of previous work in the proposed field, or relationship to prior experience or study
3. Bibliography of sources already consulted or identified as of relevance to the proposal Provision of details of two appropriate academic referees

Accredited Prior Learning (APL) and the Research Degree

This aspect of the process is covered in the Quality handbook:

Section 15:

http://www.ntu.ac.uk/adq/document_uploads/quality_handbook/138198.pdf

Section 4A Regulations for PhD/MPhil:

http://www.ntu.ac.uk/adq/document_uploads/quality_handbook/148646.pdf

Section 4D Regulations for Professional Doctorates:

http://www.ntu.ac.uk/adq/document_uploads/quality_handbook/165759.pdf

Applicants wishing to make use of APL may well wish to pursue the subset known as Accredited Prior Experiential Learning (APEL, defined as 'a process through which learning achieved outside education or training systems is assessed and, as appropriate, recognised for academic purposes').

Any applicant wishing to pursue this pathway needs to raise this with the University, via the relevant postgraduate research tutor (for MPhil/PhD), relevant course leader (for ProfD), the Graduate School, or with any identified potential supervisor at the earliest opportunity to ensure a thorough exploration of the opportunities.

English Language Requirements for All Research Degree Programmes

As part of the application criteria, potential students must meet following language requirements:

Overall IELTS (International English Language Testing System) score of 6.5 with minimum sub-scores of 6.0 in all component sections (writing, reading, listening and speaking) or an overall TOEFL score of 94-95 (internet based – IBT) with a minimum score of 22 in each of the four component sections (writing, reading, listening and speaking).

Applicants who do not meet the English language proficiency requirement will normally be asked to successfully complete an English language course at [Nottingham Language Centre](#)

In-session English Language support is provided for all international and non-UK EU MPhil/PhD students for whom English is a second language. This support is free to these students and is provided through the Nottingham Language Centre. This support is being developed for international ProfD students.

Post-Application

Once admission has been approved, a student will be registered and enrolled for one of the following:

1. Master of Philosophy (MPhil)
2. Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)
3. Professional Doctorates:
 - a. Doctor of Architecture (DArch)
 - b. Doctor of Business Administration (DBA)
 - c. Doctor of Civil Engineering (EngD)
 - d. Doctor of Construction (EngD)
 - e. Doctor of Design (DDes)
 - f. Doctor of Digital Media (DDM)
 - g. Doctor of Engineering (EngD)
 - h. Doctor of Fine Art (DFA)
 - i. Doctor of Fashion Industry (DFI)
 - j. Doctor of Education (EdD)
 - k. Doctor of Legal Practice (DLegalPrac)
 - l. Doctor of Real Estate (DRealEst)
 - m. Doctor of Social Practice (DSocPrac)
4. Doctor of Philosophy by Creative or Published Works.

Progression: MPhil/PhD

The MPhil/PhD process has a number of important or key 'milestones' which relate to progression and quality assurance.

Firstly, there are two major approval stages for PhD and one for MPhil, which are both subject to approval by the relevant College Research Degrees Committees (CRDC) (see Section Three, above) and recommended by them to the University Research Degrees Committee (URDC) (see Section Three, above). These are:

a) Project Approval

Project Approval requires the student to complete a RD1PA form which includes a 2,000 written proposal. This proposal is assessed at a full tutorial (including all members of the supervisory team) with an independent assessor present at which the student gives a brief (up to 20 minutes) presentation on his/her proposal to open the session. This process is applicable to both MPhil and PhD.

b) Transfer from MPhil/PhD registration to PhD

The transfer from initial registration requires the student to complete the RD2T form along with a 6,000 word document which exhibits something of the early research findings as part of making a case to full doctoral registration. Like the approval document the transfer document is assessed at a full tutorial (including all members of the supervisory team) with an independent assessor present at which the student gives a brief (up to 20 minutes) presentation on his/her proposal to open the session. This process is applicable to those transferring from MPhil to PHD only.

Guidance on these procedures can be found in the Quality Handbook Section 4A.

Progression: Professional Doctorate

The details of progression through the various taught and research stages of professional doctorate courses are explained in their respective handbooks. It is important that these sections are read by students and supervisors on these courses to understand the relationship between the coursework documents, and particularly how these relate to the creation and development of the thesis.

Section Seven: Guidance and Support

In addition to the guidance provided by the University regulations for doctoral degrees and the handbook, all students are also advised to seek guidance from a range of other sources during their degree programme. These include:

- Their supervisory team;
- The academic school postgraduate tutor (MPhil/PhD students only) (names and contact details can be obtained from the NTU Graduate School);
- The ProfD Course Leader (ProfD students only);
- Their student representative (whose name can be obtained from the NTU Graduate School and is also displayed on NOW);
- The NTU Graduate School offices, which are situated on the City (Chaucer Building room 4711) and Clifton (CELS Building, room 203) campuses.

Opening times

| Day | City Opening Hours | Clifton Opening Hours | Notes |
|-----------|----------------------------|----------------------------|---|
| Monday | 08:30-09:15 10:15-16:30 | 09:30-16:30 | City office closed between 09:15-10:15 for weekly team meeting |
| Tuesday | 09:30-16:30 | 08:30-09:00 10:00-16:30 | Clifton office closed between 09:00-10:00 for weekly team meeting |
| Wednesday | 09:30-16:30 | 09:30-16:30 | |
| Thursday | 09:30-16:30 | 09:30-16:30 | |
| Friday | 09:30-15:30 | 09:30-15:30 | |

Brackenhurst: There is a monthly office opening time and students are provided with a calendar of these dates via NOW.

Online Support

Students are also encouraged to use these online sites:

NTU Sites:

NOW <https://now.ntu.ac.uk/>

The intranet site for all NTU researchers

<https://www.ntu.ac.uk/intranet/research>

Centre for Professional Learning and Development

CPLDenquiries@ntu.ac.uk

Training and support on resources and tools to support all areas of research can be found at: http://www.ntu.ac.uk/library/research_support/training-support/index.html

External sources include:

VITAE - the UK organization championing the personal, professional and career development of doctoral researchers and research staff in higher education institutions and research institutes.

<http://www.vitae.ac.uk/>

Section Eight: Ethics

MPhil/PhD

Full details of ethics procedures and policy can be found in the Handbook, section 11. Each discipline area has a series of specific policies and guidelines which can be found on the University website at:

http://www.ntu.ac.uk/research/ethics_governance/ It

is important to note the following:

Students must discuss possible ethical issues with their Director of Studies in the run-up to the project approval stage (See Section Four and Section Six) and if necessary seek approval from the appropriate Ethics Committee: confirmation of this review process is required on form RD1PA. Most importantly:

- No experimental or field work should be carried out without considering ethical issues that might arise

For further guidance on seeking the approval of the relevant Ethics Committee students can always contact the Graduate School Office.

Professional Doctorates

Full details of ethics procedures and policy can be found in the relevant course handbook. Each discipline area has a series of specific policies and guidelines which can be found on the University website at:

http://www.ntu.ac.uk/research/ethics_governance/

Ethical concerns are at the forefront of ALL research projects conducted within the Professional Doctorate programmes, and will continue through to the write-up and dissemination stages.

The Professional Doctorate Research Ethics Committee is responsible for overseeing matters relating to ethics on all professional doctorate courses. It is a cross-College committee which reports to College Research Ethics Committees and College Research Committees.

It is important to note the following:

Ethical approval **MUST** be obtained before any kind of primary research is undertaken. Documents without ethical approval will not be marked.

Section Nine: Intellectual Property

Information on Intellectual Property Rights is included in the Quality Handbook Section 4A.

The University's Intellectual Property Policy for Students is located here:

http://www.ntu.ac.uk/current_students/resources/policies_procedures/index.html

All researchers in the University work within the regulations governing intellectual property rights and the provisions in the research degree regulations relating to IP. These regulations lay down that intellectual property rights deriving from research accrue to the University, except in the case of collaborative projects where different arrangements have been explicitly negotiated, agreed and recorded. Publications are specifically exempted from this provision, and copyright of all books, articles, conference papers and other published material is vested in their authors. The Library can provide advice to authors on the assignment of copyright to publishers.

As a general principle, but subject to important exceptions, the University recognises that the student is the owner of any intellectual property (IP) that he/she creates in the course of his/her studies at the University. These exceptions include:

- i. IP that arises from projects in which students undertake specified work at the direction of University staff as part of an organised project
- ii. students with sponsorship from the University
- iii. students with external sponsorship
- iv. collaborative work.

IP, with possible commercial potential, should normally be disclosed to the Director of Studies or Lead Supervisor.

(https://www.ntu.ac.uk/current_students/document_uploads/87315.pdf)

Academic staff and students do not have authority to sign collaboration, non-disclosure or intellectual property agreements. These must be arranged via the relevant College Business Manager.

Section Ten: Facilities

The provision of facilities for research students is the responsibility of several organisations within the University working as a partnership. These include: the Graduate School; the nine academic Schools; Information Technology Services, Libraries and Learning Resources, and Estates Management.

In addition to the essential software packages and scientific equipment (for which a student may be charged 'bench-fees' specific to the research project and other requirements particular to a research project) all students can expect to have reasonable access to:

- IT facilities, including access to the internet and telecommunications
- Flexible-use desk space (including 'hot desking')
- Reprographic facilities
- Libraries and Learning Resources

Details of the availability and use of such resources is explained at induction and in the handbooks. Students are able and encouraged to raise issues regarding such facilities with the Graduate School team and through the student representatives on College Research Degree Committees (for MPhil/PhD) or on Course Committees (for ProfDs).

Section Eleven: Appeals and Complaints

Appeals

The University's Quality Handbook Section 4 explains the process and grounds for making an appeal: A candidate may make a formal appeal to the University Research Degrees Committee (URDC) – via the University Head of Academic Office - to request reconsideration of two principal actions: either an examination outcome, or the decision by a College Research Degrees Committee (CRDC) (for MPhil/PhD) or ProfD Progression Board to terminate their registration on a research programme or, in the case of PHD students, require them to re-register for MPhil. There are clearly defined grounds upon which an appeal can be made and these are defined in the regulations.

During the progress of a research degree there are numerous points at which issues, including the quality or effectiveness of supervision can be discussed or raised. These include tutorials, but especially the major progression points.

Complaints

Students are able to make complaints during their degree programme using the University's complaints procedure. This can be found at:

http://www.ntu.ac.uk/current_students/resources/student_handbook/complaints_summary/index.html

However, the general advice offered to all students is to try to seek a local resolution. As indicated above under Appeals, students have the opportunity to raise issues at any time with either the Graduate School, PGR tutor (for MPhil/PhD), ProfD Course Leader (for ProfDs) or supervision team as well as at all supervision meetings, but especially at the major progression points (document submission, project approval, transfer depending on the course of study).

A student wishing to raise issues regarding supervision or any other issues also has recourse to a Postgraduate Research Tutor (for MPhil/PhD) or ProfD Course Leader (for ProfDs). Key contacts are listed on NOW. If in doubt about the names of these contacts, then the Graduate School will be able to help. Some of the issues may also be resolved by using the channels available to students through the University Research Degrees Committee (URDCs), College Research Degrees Committees (CRDCs) and Professional Doctorate course committees through the student representatives. The Graduate School is able to provide the names of these representatives, in case of doubt.

Section Twelve: Further Information

The code of practice is not considered to be an exhaustive guide to the information available on every aspect of postgraduate student life and the Graduate School works in conjunction with a series of other policies and services of the University. The sites below will therefore be of value and use to individual students at various times during their research degree career at Nottingham Trent University.

Diversity and Equality

http://www.ntu.ac.uk/equality_diversity/index.html

Careers & Employability

http://www.ntu.ac.uk/careers/students_graduates/index.html

Libraries and Learning Resources

<http://www.ntu.ac.uk/lr/index.html>

Continuing Professional Learning and Development

<http://www.ntu.ac.uk/cpld/index.html>

Student Services

http://www.ntu.ac.uk/student_services/index.html

Health and Well being

http://www.ntu.ac.uk/current_students/while_here/health_well_being/index.html

NOTTINGHAM TRENT UNIVERSITY GRADUATE SCHOOL

TITLE: Supervision Record

DOCUMENT TYPE: POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

1.1. This policy is needed to ensure the effective and robust recording of supervision meetings.

1.2. It is intended to make compulsory the Supervision Record Form, previously approved by the University Research Degrees Committee.

2. DEFINITION(S)

Director of Study/

Lead Supervisor: At Nottingham Trent University this title designates the lead supervisor who bears the responsibility for ensuring that the supervisory team and student adheres to the University Code of Practice and appropriate related documents regarding the progress and progression of doctoral study.

Supervisor: At Nottingham Trent University this title designates the supervisory team members, usually one or two per team, who with the Director of Studies constitute the supervisory team responsible supervision of the postgraduate research student.

Supervision Team: At Nottingham Trent University this refers to the Director of Studies or Lead Supervisor and other supervisors for individual postgraduate research students.

Postgraduate Research

student: Candidate enrolled on a postgraduate research course at Nottingham Trent University.

Supervision Record

Form: Standard form for recording supervision meetings. This form is to be used for recording supervision meetings across all postgraduate research courses.

3. PRINCIPLES AND SCOPE

3.1. This policy is intended to ensure robust arrangements are in place for the recording of discussion and actions agreed in supervision meetings between supervision teams and postgraduate research students.

3.2. It is required as a quality assurance mechanism for ensuring postgraduate research students are receiving effective supervision and that this is recorded.

3.3. Such documents will be referred to when reviewing postgraduate research student progress.

3.4. Such documents may be referred to in the event of an appeal or complaint.

3.5. It applies to all staff and external agents who act as a supervisor for a research degree student, on all research degree courses.

3.6. It applies to all postgraduate research students on all postgraduate research courses.

4. PROTOCOLS

4.1. All supervision record forms should be submitted with Interim Monitoring and Annual Monitoring Forms at the required monitoring points.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1. The Director of studies/Lead Supervisor will ensure compliance with this policy and the requirements of monitoring (both interim and annual).

5.2. Postgraduate Research Students and supervision teams are responsible for ensuring the form is agreed, fully completed, and signed at the end of each supervision meeting.

6. REFERENCES

6.1. The University has a number of related policies, regulations and procedures which provide information and/or guidance on matters which may impact on the application of this policy. These are:

6.1.1. University Code of Practice for Research Degrees

6.1.2. University Regulations for Research Degrees

7. BACKGROUND

7.1. This policy is required in response to received complaints and appeals, of which the majority make reference to issues regarding supervision.

8. POLICY STATEMENTS

8.1. The Supervision Record Form is to be agreed, completed and signed off after each supervision meeting by the postgraduate research student and the members of the supervision team present at the meeting.

8.2. The Supervision Record Form is to be completed within a timely manner, preferably during the meeting.

8.3. All copies of the Supervision Record Forms within the current academic session are to be attached to either the Interim Monitoring Form or the Annual Monitoring Form as appropriate at the relevant monitoring point.

8.4. The relevant monitoring form along with the copies of the Supervision Record Forms are to be submitted as both of the following:

8.4.1. Hard copy to the relevant Graduate School Office

8.4.2. 1 Single electronic 'pdf file' to the Graduate School Outlook mailbox

8.4.2.1. Note: documents are **not** to be submitted as separate electronic files, they are to be submitted as a **single** electronic file.

8.5. Failure to comply with this policy will be addressed by the relevant College Research Degrees Committee and/or the University Research Degrees Committee as appropriate and sanctions may include, but not be limited to, the following: .

8.5.1. Chair of CRDC/URDC to write to the supervision team highlighting issues regarding appeals

8.5.2. Discussion with line manager of Director of Studies/Lead Supervisor

8.5.3. Supervision team may not normally be allowed to take on new students, at least as Director of Studies/Lead Supervisor.

9. TRAINING AND AWARENESS

- 9.1. This policy will form part of the Supervisors Training Course and the Annual Supervisors Briefing
- 9.2. This policy will be communicated to staff via SharePoint and cascaded through the College Research Degree Committee members to their home Schools.
- 9.3. This policy will be communicated to postgraduate research students through the course handbooks and NOW at the start of the academic year.

10. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

- 10.1. The Graduate School in conjunction with the College Research Degrees Committees and postgraduate research tutors will monitor adherence to this policy.
- 10.2. College Research Degrees Committees will ensure compliance with this policy through the postgraduate research student monitoring.
- 10.3. University Research Degrees Committee will ensure compliance with this policy and related regulations through monitoring of College Research Degrees activity.

Nottingham Trent University Postgraduate Research Environment

Context

At NTU we create strong relationships that enable discovery, drive innovation, and change both the world and ourselves (NTU Strategic Plan). As we launch our Strategic Plan for NTU (2015-2020), we are committing to expand further our research excellence, which already exists in a range of areas across the disciplinary breadth of our Academic Schools. Integral to the strategic plan is a focus on the development of the next generation of researchers and our existing research staff.

NTU recognises the importance of the postgraduate community in the pursuit of research excellence and impact. We have a community of over 700 research degree students whose research aligns with the current broad disciplines within our Academic Schools and the specialist areas of research that our academic and research staff pursue, in both established and emerging areas. Our practice shows commitment to the Research Integrity Concordat, the requirements of our many public, private and charity funders and the Quality Assurance Agency Quality Code for Higher Education, Chapter B11: Research Degrees.

In association with the NTU Code of Practice for Research Degrees, this document lays out what an NTU research student can expect of the postgraduate research environment.

1. The role of the NTU Academic Schools in research degrees provision

For each research degree student, the discipline expertise, experienced supervisory team and, if relevant, specialist infrastructure, resides within one or more of the nine Academic Schools of NTU. During the research degree student journey, most time will be spent in association with the research environment of these Schools. The University and the Academic Schools recognise and promote the importance of interdisciplinary research where appropriate.

Specifically, each of the nine Academic Schools:

- a. Maintains and monitors a research plan which has been devised to support the development and delivery of quality research within the School, including that which is of international renown. Each research plan will include a section describing the School's ambitions relating to research degree students. Members of the University Executive Team and the Head of the NTU Graduate School will regularly monitor the outcomes of these plans;
- b. Oversees, in partnership with the Graduate School, and through dedicated Postgraduate Research Tutors and Professional Doctorate Course Leaders, the appointment of appropriate supervisory teams consisting of trained and experienced research-active or, where appropriate, practice-active or practice-experienced supervisors;
- c. Provides opportunities for research degree students to participate in, and utilise the facilities and assets of, relevant NTU research groups and Centres that are critical to the support of enquiry and collaboration for both staff and research degree students;

d. Seeks to provide opportunities for research degree students to participate in, and present their research to, conferences, seminars and workshops organised by Academic Schools, by the Graduate School, by individual research groups or Centres, or external to NTU.

The research community in the Academic Schools not only supports the practice of research but also provides links to a whole range of activities that broaden the student experience. This includes, for example, training workshops and seminars throughout the academic year across NTU and the University's Distinguished Lecture series in which leading figures talk about their life and work. Research degree students may also be encouraged to become involved in the organisation of School Research Conferences, as well as presenting their research work through posters, exhibitions, multi-media formats or as oral presentations at such events.

The research training programme for M.Phil and Ph.D students and the Professional Doctorate workshops co-ordinated by the Graduate School give research degree students the opportunity to discuss their work with other students and academics, both formally and informally. Close engagement with the broader research community within an Academic School provides research degree students with an insight into the various academic researcher career routes that may be open to them. Further relevant support from supervisors, CPLD and the Employability Team may enable them to take the early steps into postdoctoral and other early career research posts or, in the case of Professional Doctorate students, enhance further professional practice and advancement.

2. NTU oversight of research degree quality and the enhancement of student experience.

The progression of individual research degree students is carefully monitored at pre-determined stages during the course of their research programme. This is achieved through a partnership between the Academic Schools, the Graduate School and a range of formal committees. Student representatives participate in some of these formal committees, reflecting their important role in decision-making about the postgraduate research environment and community. In addition, quality initiatives within Academic Schools may include the involvement of research degree students.

College Research Degrees Committees monitor research degree student progression from the initial approval of the research project, through transfer from M.Phil to Ph.D and other major stages of M.Phil and Ph.D degrees, including approval of examination arrangements. The monitoring for Professional Doctorate students is provided through meetings of dedicated course committees and progression boards.

The University Research Degrees Committee receives, scrutinises and monitors the minutes and actions of the College Research Degree Committees, Professional Doctorate Course Committees and progression boards. It acts in an advisory capacity as required by the committees. On behalf of the University Research Committee and Academic Board it also maintains oversight of the overall standards of research degree provision and carefully monitors and supports the development of initiatives that enhance the research degree student experience. The University Research Degrees Committee also maintains oversight of the quality management and enhancement processes with collaborative partners.

The University Research Degrees Committee is the guardian for NTU research degree regulations, keeping them under regular review and further developing them for ultimate approval by Academic Board.

These bodies meet regularly throughout each academic year. They report directly through the University Research Committee to Academic Board, and are constituted to support both strategic planning and monitoring, and the effective mobilisation of resources from the Academic Schools and a range of relevant professional support services, including the Library.

The work of all research degrees committees is informed by the regular use of a range of relevant internal and external benchmarks, input from research degree student representatives and from the results of surveys, e.g. the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey. This helps to ensure the quality of the research degree student experience.

The major areas of focus at University Research Degrees Committee level, in terms of oversight of the management of research degrees and of the enhancement of the research degree student experience, are:

- a. Enquiries and admissions; which are dealt with centrally based upon recommendations from the Schools following interviews with candidates;
- b. The appointment of suitably qualified supervisory teams following NTU policy and procedures laid down in the regulations;
- c. Student progression:
 - i. Ph.D and M.Phil - Project approval, annual and interim monitoring, transfers from M.Phil to Ph.D registration and through to submission;
 - ii. Professional Doctorates - progression through phase one to submission of the thesis at phase two;
- d. The training for research degree students, informed by the VITAE Researcher Development Framework, in support of the further development of research and professional skills;
- e. Examination processes, including pre-viva assessments for professional doctorates and the viva examination process including the appointment of examiners and independent chairs, arrangement of vivas and dealing with post-viva arrangements.

In addition, the University Research Degrees Committee supports the development and approval of a range of guidance for research degree students, e.g.:

- f. Information about the ethical review processes necessary for the pursuit of research, both in generic and specific terms;
- g. Information on avoidance of research misconduct, including plagiarism and infringements of intellectual property rights, and processes for dealing with such issues;
- h. Handbooks of advice and instruction for research degree students and supervisors.

3. Research and Supervisor training

NTU aims to provide a broad range of opportunities for research degree students to develop their research, personal and professional skills. In addition to the work done in these areas within supervisory teams, this is achieved through a combination of generic and discipline-specific research development opportunities. A range of professional support areas within NTU, including the Employability Team and the Centre for Professional Learning and Development may contribute to this training. Ultimately, the training is tailored in recognition of individual research degree students' prior experience, their research programmes and their ambitions for future career development.

The training on offer, which is informed by the VITAE Research Development Framework and, when appropriate, by the requirements of a range of public and charity funders, e.g. the Research Councils, has been designed to support:

- a. The doctoral research process generally;
- b. The first stages of being early-career researchers;
- c. The first stages of Higher Education Academy professional recognition for M.Phil/Ph.D students;
- d. Contact with established researchers from a range of disciplines close to and distant from the students on the course;
- e. The requirements of multi- and inter-disciplinary research;
- f. Ethics, transferable skills, and personal development;
- g. Understanding of relevant research methodologies;
- h. Access to the Essential Teaching Toolkit in HE (ETTiHE) for all research degree students who are intending to teach at NTU.
- i. For professional doctorate students, support for established practitioners in their transition into academic research;
- j. For professional doctorate students, tailored discussion and interaction with established researchers and peers, including research training, research ethics, research methods and methodologies.

In partnership with the Centre for Professional Learning and Development (CPLD), the Graduate School and partners from the Academic Schools design, develop and deliver:

- k. Academic supervisor training;
- l. Internal Examiner and Independent Chair training;
- m. Training for Independent Assessors of M.Phil and Ph.D students.

4. The Graduate School Professional Support Team

The Graduate School Professional Support Team plays an important role in supporting the development and delivery of those elements of the Schools' research plans associated with research degree students.

The Graduate School office, which supports all research degree students throughout their entire research programme, provides an essential point of contact, both physical and electronic, and is supported by a dedicated team of professional administrators.

The Graduate School office is the repository for all research degree student records. The office team provides research degree students with access to information and a range of practical support, e.g. in dealing with external organisations, for example local authorities or the Home Office.

The Graduate School, which is led by the Head of the Graduate School:

- a. A point for students to access those academic and professional services colleagues who are able to give appropriate advice and support;
- b. Supports the development and delivery of induction activities that highlight and introduce the services offered by the Graduate School and other partners at the University, such as the Library, Employability Team, CPLD, the Students Union and Student Support Services;
- c. Provides access to dedicated work space and IT facilities for research degree students, which includes access to social and break out space, to encourage networking and sharing of ideas, thus providing an inspiring learning and working environment. These spaces complement the learning spaces and resources provided in the Academic Schools and NTU libraries;
- d. Relays information and details provided by the Academic Schools about the various seminars and workshops being staged. These include internal and external researchers and speakers in cognate and related disciplines, thus encouraging multi-/and interdisciplinary synergies and a collegiate approach to research;
- e. Relays information about opportunities for research degree students to engage with, for example:
 - i. Relevant consortia external to NTU, e.g. Doctoral Training Centres or alliances associated with different university groupings;
 - ii. Academic conferences focussing on postgraduate research including conferences and events organised by the academic schools;
- f. Contributes to the work of the VITAE network by delivering workshops to students from across the East Midlands Hub;
- g. Oversees the delivery of research degree student training across NTU;
- h. Provides information about CPLD development opportunities for research degree students to facilitate the development of personal and employment related skills;

i. Liaises with the Placements Team to provide access to high quality, potentially ERDF supported experiences within the non-academic business community for full-time M.Phil and Ph.D students.

j. Links through to University initiatives such as Working with You, The Hive and The Future Factory that provide opportunities for M.Phil and Ph.D students to apply their skills to real-time business projects.

Format of thesis

1. Except with the specific permission of the CRDC the thesis should be presented in English.
2. An abstract of approximately 300 words should be bound into the thesis which will provide a synopsis of the thesis stating the nature and scope of the work undertaken and of the contribution made to the knowledge of the subject treated. Three loose copies of the abstract must be submitted with the thesis. The loose copies of the abstract must have the name of the author, the degree for which the thesis is submitted, and the title of the thesis as a heading.
3. The thesis should include a copyright statement, immediately following the title page, in the following form: "This work is the intellectual property of the author (*Note: if there are other owners of the IP, as a consequence of any statement issued under paragraph 12 of Section 14A, they must also be named here*). You may copy up to 5% of this work for private study, or personal, non-commercial research. Any re-use of the information contained within this document should be fully referenced, quoting the author, title, university, degree level and pagination. Queries or requests for any other use, or if a more substantial copy is required, should be directed in the owner(s) of the Intellectual Property Rights."
4. The thesis should include a statement of the candidate's objectives and must acknowledge published or other sources of material consulted (including an appropriate bibliography) and any assistance received.
5. Where a candidate's research programme is part of a collaborative group project, the thesis should indicate clearly the candidate's individual contribution and the extent of the collaboration.
6. The candidate is free to publish material in advance of the thesis but reference should be made in the thesis to any such work. Copies of published material should either be bound in with the thesis or placed in an adequately secured pocket at the end of the thesis.
7. The text of the thesis should normally not exceed the following length: PhD

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| | 80,000words |
| MPhil | 40,000words |

Where the submission includes material in other than textual form, the written thesis should normally be within the range:

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| PhD | 30,000 - 40,000 words |
| MPhil | 15,000 - 20,000 words |

The recommended length of the texts are indicative and examiners will have regard to the candidate's fulfilment of the University's published assessment criteria (see appendix 8).

8. The title of the thesis should not normally exceed twenty (20) words in length.
9. Conferment of the award is conditional on receipt by the College Graduate School Office of all of the following:
 - (a) A PDF version of the thesis for deposit in the University Institutional Repository (IRep), together with additional bound copies for each of any collaborating institutions.

If your thesis contains third party copyright material that you have either been refused or unable to obtain permission to include in an electronic version, you will not be able to make the full version of the thesis publicly available online in IRep. You will therefore need to select the option on the Thesis Deposit Agreement to restrict access to the electronic version of your thesis because of copyright restrictions. However you are still required to deposit an electronic copy of your thesis which will be held securely. When you come to deposit your thesis you should:

 - Submit two electronic versions of your thesis, one complete and one with the third party copyright material removed. The electronic version of your thesis with third party copyright material removed will be added to IRep and made publically available. The complete version will be retained by the University on restricted access

However, if removing the third party material seriously affects the remaining text, then you should:

 - Deposit only the complete version with the third party copyright material retained. The complete version will be retained by the University on restricted access and bibliographic details will be included within IRep
 - (b) A completed and signed Thesis Deposit Agreement.
 - (c) A draft certificate, including the wording of the thesis title, agreed by the candidate and the Chair of the CRDC.
10. Following the award of the degree the College Graduate School Office will send a copy of the title page, abstract and list of contents to the British Library in accordance with the arrangements for participation in the UK thesis service.
11. Where the CRDC has agreed that the confidential nature of the candidate's work is such as to preclude the thesis being made freely available in the library of the University (and Collaborating Establishment, if any) and, in the case of a PhD, the British Library, the thesis will, immediately on completion of the programme of work, be retained by the University on restricted access and, for a time not exceeding the approved period, only be made available to those who were directly involved in the project.

Guidance note on para. 11

The CRDC should normally only approve an application for confidentiality in order to enable a patent application to be lodged or to protect commercially or politically sensitive material. A thesis should not be restricted in this way in order to protect research leads. While the normal maximum period of confidentiality is two years, in exceptional circumstances the CRDC may approve a longer period. Where a shorter period would be adequate the CRDC should not automatically grant confidentiality for two years.

12. The copies of the thesis submitted to fulfil the requirements of the degree will remain the property of the University but the copyright in the thesis is vested in the candidate or as otherwise provided in any IPR or collaborative agreement made under paragraph 12 of Section 14A.

13. The following requirements should be adhered to in the format of the submitted thesis.
- (a) Theses should normally be in A4 format; the CRDC may give permission for a thesis to be submitted in another format where it is satisfied that the contents of the thesis can be better expressed in that format; a candidate using a format larger than A4 should note that the production of microfiche copies and full-size enlargements may not be feasible.
 - (b) copies of the thesis must be presented in a permanent and legible form either in typescript or print; where copies are produced by photocopying processes, these should be of a permanent nature; where word processor and printing devices are used, the printer should be capable of producing text of a satisfactory quality; the size of character used in the main text, including displayed matter and notes, should not be less than 2.0mm for capitals and 1.5mm for x-height (that is, the height of lower-case x).
 - (c) the thesis shall be printed on the recto side of the page only; the paper shall be white and within the range 70 g/m² to 100 g/m².
 - (d) the margin at the left-hand binding edge of the page should not be less than 40mm; other margins should not be less than 15mm.
 - (e) double or one-and-a-half spacing should be used in the typescript except for indented quotations or footnotes where single spacing may be used.
 - (f) pages should be numbered consecutively through the main text including photographs and/or diagrams included as whole pages.
 - (g) the title page must give the following information:
 - (1) the full title of the thesis;
 - (2) the full name of the author;
 - (3) that the degree is awarded by the University;
 - (4) the award for which the degree is submitted in partial fulfilment of its requirements;
 - (5) the Collaborating Establishment(s), if any; and
 - (6) the month and year of submission.

A specimen title page is provided below:

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| <p>THE ORIGINS OF THE FARMERS' CO-OPERATIVE IN WESSEX</p> <p>JOHN SMITH</p> <p>A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of Nottingham Trent University for the degree of Master of Philosophy</p> <p>This research programme was carried out in collaboration with the Borchester Farmers' Club</p> <p>October 2012</p> |
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