

# Doctoral Community Forum: Terms of reference

## 1. Context

- 1.1 The Doctoral Community Forum is a mechanism by which the doctoral community come together to discuss opportunities and challenges within doctoral education at NTU. The forum provides a regular platform for community engagement, discussion, and consideration, where appropriate, of strategies for resolution.
- 1.2 The forum is key to ensuring ongoing quality of the doctoral training offer and research environment for PGR candidates.
- 1.3 There will normally be termly fora, on each campus where PGR candidates are registered (Brackenhurst, City and Clifton); however, additional meetings may be called to deal with specific projects. The dates for meetings will be circulated at the start of the academic year.

## 2. Remit

- 2.1 The fora will provide an opportunity for open and effective discussion as well as information-sharing on issues such as strategic developments, new partnerships, changes in guidance/regulations and new awards.
- 2.2 Each forum will also promote the outcomes and achievements of previous fora back to the doctoral community.
- 2.3 Indicative discussion points may include:
  - a. new ideas and initiatives arising from the NTU doctoral community, the University leadership, funding bodies, policy makers, business, industry third sector partners and the higher education sector;
  - b. resources for research and use of facilities; related to, for example: the Library and Learning Resources, Student Support Services and Estates;
  - c. doctoral community engagement and growing inclusive research communities;
  - d. School-level issues arising that have impact across the doctoral community.
- 2.4 The members may consider convening smaller working parties within the doctoral community in order to address specific issues that would most effectively be pursued this way.
- 2.5 PGR fora are not expected to deal with individual complaints from doctoral candidates. Complaints are dealt with normally through the informal procedure

outlined in the guidance for complaints and in the NTU Quality Handbook Section 17F:Research Degrees Complaints and Appeals Procedure.

### 3. Membership

- 3.1 The fora belong to the doctoral community and, as such, there is an ongoing open invitation to any member of the doctoral community to attend.
- 3.2 Core membership will comprise:
  - a. Director of NTU Doctoral School and Research Operations (Chair)
  - b. Doctoral Candidate representatives – from each School based at the relevant campus
  - c. **Director of Doctoral Programmes** – from each School based at the relevant campus
  - d. NTU Doctoral School Administration Manager
  - e. **NTU Doctoral School Programmes Manager**
  - f. **Doctoral Training Manager**
  - g. NTU Doctoral School Standards and Quality Manager
  - h. Nottingham Trent Students' Union (NTSU) Vice-President Postgraduate.
  - i. Libraries and Learning Resources Representative
  - j. **Researcher Development Representative**
  - k. Student Support Services Representative
- 3.3 In addition to the core membership, other staff members may be invited to attend who are relevant to the agenda.

### 4. Roles and responsibilities

- 4.1 It is the responsibility of all core members to identify and bring items for discussion and to engage constructively in a problem-solving dialogue. Members will, therefore, be invited to submit items for discussion prior to each meeting.
- 4.2 PGR representatives are expected to consult with their peers and disseminate actions or other outcomes from the meetings back to the doctoral community.
- 4.3 The NTU Doctoral School is responsible for ensuring actions and queries are taken up with the appropriate committees or departments within the University.
- 4.4 The NTU Doctoral School will ensure that there is appropriate administrative support for the meeting.

<b>Policy owner</b>
NTU Doctoral School

<b>Change history</b>			
<i>Version:</i>	<i>Approval date:</i>	<i>Implementation date:</i>	<i>Nature of significant revisions:</i>
Sept 2020	16.09.20	01.10.20	Completely revised to reflect the academic governance changes approved at Academic Board (April 2020)
Oct 2020	23.10.20	10.11.20	Membership updated to include a member of Organisational Development (Research and Development)
Sept 2021	07.09.21	01.10.21	None
Sept 2022	22.09.22	01.10.22	None
Sept 2023	14.09.23	01.10.23	Membership updated to include the Director of Doctoral Programmes, the NTU Doctoral School Programmes Manager and Doctoral Training Manager.

<b>Equality Analysis</b>		
<i>Version:</i>	<i>EA date:</i>	<i>Completed by:</i>
Sept 2020	TBC	TBC