



QH Supplement 1C: University Research Degrees Progression Boards Requirements

1. Introduction

The University Research Degrees Progression Board provides academic guidance and strategic oversight for matters relating to doctoral education across the institution, including progression, research programmes and partnership development within Academic Schools. There will be two University Research Degrees Progression Boards (URDPB) that together will oversee the progression of all doctoral candidates.

- 1.1 The University Research Degrees Progression Boards (URDPB) have delegated responsibility from the University Research Degrees Committee (URDC) to monitor progression and make decisions on doctoral candidates from each of the Academic Schools that require the judgement of an academic committee.

2. The role of the University Research Degrees Progression Boards (URDPB)

- 2.1 All research degree pathways and courses at Nottingham Trent University must have a Progression Board to:
- a. Ensure there are consistent and fair decisions carried out for the doctoral journey of each candidate;
 - b. make academic judgements on the progress of doctoral candidates through their doctoral journey;
 - c. consider any cases where doctoral candidate performance is giving cause for concern;

- d. make academic judgements on thesis confidentiality and embargos submitted to the Boards with supporting evidence for consideration and approval.

3. Terms of reference

- 3.1 The Terms of Reference (ToR) for University Research Degrees Progression Boards (URDPB) are as follows:
- a. To oversee the monitoring of candidates' progress through consideration of each of the Director of Doctoral Programmes' (DDP) commentary, in conjunction with the PGR Dashboard and to discuss matters arising.
 - b. To receive and ratify Project Approval and Annual Review for each doctoral candidate as key progression points through the doctoral candidate journey and maintain oversight of changes to supervisory teams and change of Mode of Study.
 - c. To receive recommendations from Directors of Doctoral Programmes (DDP) in the relevant Academic School 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 11: Research Degrees](#), associated PGR guidance and PGR Policy documentation.
 - d. To consider action for candidates with overdue Project Approval and overdue Annual Review.
 - e. To consider End of Supportive Measures reports from supervisory teams and act accordingly within NTU Research Degrees regulations and guidance in the consideration of candidate progression.
 - f. To receive information pertaining to suspension of study approvals. To
 - g. To receive information pertaining to extensions of study approvals.
 - h. To receive information pertaining to each of the following areas of the doctoral candidate journey:
 - i. Withdrawals
 - ii. Candidates In Examination
 - iii. Thesis Submitted
 - iv. Upcoming Vivas
 - v. Conferments
 - i. Consideration of Professional Doctorates (DPsych/EdD/Soc Prac/DLegal/ADBE) including External Examiner Comments (where appropriate). All Professional Doctorates are subject to academic and business consideration and approval through the University Research Degrees Progression Boards and University Research Degrees Committee processes.

- j. To agree to all Phase One assessment results (including referral results) for Professional Doctorates, where appropriate.
- k. To receive and approve applications for permission, exceptionally, to submit a thesis in advance of the minimum period of registration.
- l. To ratify the approval of the examination team for the viva voce examination and report decisions to the University Research Degrees Committee (URDC).
- m. To receive notification of Independent Chairs of viva voce examinations and report decisions to University Research Degrees Committee (URDC).
- n. To make decisions about the conferment of interim awards.
- o. To receive outcomes from viva voce examinations and to take any appropriate action.
- p. To consider any issues related to examination that require the judgment of an academic committee.
- q. To consider Applications for thesis confidentiality.
- r. To consider outcomes from Complaints and Appeals panels and investigators where the University Research Degrees Committee (URDC) Complaints and Appeals Sub-Committee deems a submission to be substantiated and is referred back to the University Research Degrees Progression Board for reconsideration.
- s. To support the Doctoral School, on behalf of the University Research and Innovation Committee (UR&IC) and University Research Degree Committee (URDC) to review annual trends in PGR admissions, progression, submission, and completion rates relevant to the Academic Schools and to use these data to make recommendations about training and support, areas for programme growth, investment and partnership development at an institutional level.
- t. To monitor the involvement of Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) with research degree programmes as appropriate and ensure action is taken on the reports and recommendations from those bodies.
- u. To assure the University Research Degree Committee (URDC) of the currency of research degree provision within Academic Schools and the appropriateness of the research and learning opportunities for research candidates.

4. Membership

- 4.1 The membership of University Research Degrees Progression Boards is as follows:
 - a. An appropriate and experienced Chair with Research Degrees expertise and research-related impact.
 - b. Deputy Chair (drawn from the Directors of Doctoral Programmes on rotation).
 - c. Doctoral Programmes Manager (or nominee, nominated by Director of Research Culture and Environment (RCE)/ PVC Research and International).

- d. Directors of Doctoral Programmes (one per Academic School).
- e. Doctoral School Administration: [3x Servicing Officers: 1 x Servicing Officer for minute taking; 1 x Servicing Officer for PGR Dashboard support; 1 x Servicing Officer for Meeting Actions].
- f. Director of Research Culture and Environment (RCE) (or nominee).
- g. The External Examiner(s) for Phase One of the Professional Doctorate courses (once per year).

5. Operational notes

- 5.1 University Research Degrees Progression Boards (URDPB) shall meet at least four times per year and comprise two Progression Boards where the Chair and Doctoral Programmes Manager (or nominee) will attend both Progression Boards for consistency of decisions made across the institution.
- 5.2 The Doctoral Programmes Manager (or nominee) will act as an advisor to the University Research Degrees Progression Board (URDPB) on matters related to NTU regulations, policy and guidance.
- 5.3 The dates of University Research Degrees Progression Board (URDPB) meetings shall be circulated well in advance.
- 5.4 At least half of the membership must be in attendance for the University Research Degrees Progression Board (URDPB) meeting to be quorate.
- 5.5 A nominated Deputy (usually the Deputy Director of Doctoral Programmes for each Academic School (or nominee)) may attend the University Research Degrees Progression Board (URDPB) in place of the Director of Doctoral Programmes.
- 5.6 University Research Degrees Progression Board (URDPB) members will take no part in discussing or making decisions about candidates under their own supervision.
- 5.7 University Research Degrees Progression Board (URDPB) will have the authority to co-opt additional persons either internal or external to the University, with particular expertise or experience, to participate in the work of the Progression Boards, either on an ad hoc basis or as formal members.
- 5.8 University Research Degrees Progression Board (URDPB) will strive to maintain a membership that reflects a rich diversity, taking positive action to achieve this where necessary.
- 5.9 Professional Doctorate External Examiners must be invited to at least one University Research Degrees Progression Board in each academic year.
- 5.10 PGR Dashboard allows users to monitor and track progress in real-time, as well as provide and receive feedback through its various modules. Decisions about supervisory teams, examination teams, doctoral candidate progression, suspension and withdrawal taken outside of the Progression Boards should be actioned by the Chair and notified to the next meeting of the Progression Board.

Policy owner		
NTU Doctoral School		

Change history			
<i>Version:</i>	<i>Approval date:</i>	<i>Implementation date:</i>	<i>Nature of significant revisions:</i>
Nov 2020	25.11.20	25.11.20	Complete revision to reflect the academic governance and research degree regulations changes approved at Academic Board (April and June 2020)
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	Minor update to SRDC terms of reference.
Sept 2024	19.09.24	01.10.24	None
Sept 2025	25.09.25	01.10.25	Complete rewrite and rename to reflect replacement of SRDC with University Research Degrees Progression Boards.