Faculty of Mathematics and Physical Sciences (MaPS)

The Faculty Protocol for the implementation of the University's Code of Practice for Research Degree Candidatures with effect from 2016/17

Note to Readers: This document sets out the University's Code of Practice for Research Degree Candidatures which is relevant to all University Faculties. Where arrangements for the implementation of the Code, specific to the Faculty of MaPS, are described in more detail these are shown in shaded boxes.

Within this Code, Deans may delegate some of their responsibilities to the Faculty Director of Postgraduate Research Studies, to Heads of Schools and / or Postgraduate Research Tutors within the Faculty.

1.   **General**

Postgraduate researchers (PGRs) are an essential part of the research activity at Leeds. Most candidates are early career researchers who will receive relevant research and generic training to enable them to enter a variety of fields upon completion of their degrees. However, the University also recognises that some PGRs will already have significant skills and research experience. This Code sets out a framework of shared responsibilities between the University, supervisors and PGRs with the aim of delivering successful research degree programmes according to national and international expectations and to inspire all our PGRs to develop their full potential.

This Code of Practice also outlines for PGRs the minimum standards they can expect in connection with the supervision of their research degree study at the University of Leeds. Deans of Faculties are responsible for the provision of the resources to implement the University Code of Practice. The University Code will be supplemented by Faculty Protocols covering the practices of individual Faculties. More detailed information on arrangements may also be available, in some cases, at School level. Faculties must ensure that both the University Code and Faculty Protocols for its implementation are made available to PGRs and academic staff.

This Protocol is also available on the Faculty's Graduate School (GSO) website at http://www.maps.leeds.ac.uk/intranet/graduate-school.html, on each School website, and a copy made available to each new PGR on arrival.

2.   **Management Structure**

2.1   The Dean of Postgraduate Research Studies maintains strategic oversight of the PGR experience and works through the Graduate Board to develop policies that maintain and assure the academic standards of research degree awards and enhance the experience of PGRs.

2.2   It is essential that each Faculty should have in place an adequate management structure for handling PGR matters. Each Faculty has a Graduate School Committee and the Faculty Deans may allocate responsibilities via the Faculty Graduate School Committee and the Faculty Director of Postgraduate Research Studies to Schools or to other appropriate units within the Faculty (see note 1). There should be at least one Postgraduate Research Tutor (see note 2) in each School who (subject to the overall responsibility of the Faculty Director of Postgraduate Research Studies and the Head of the School) has general responsibility for co-ordinating admission, pastoral care, recording and monitoring of progress and attendance of PGRs (with absence being reported) and for liaison with Postgraduate Research and Operations.

In some cases, the Postgraduate Research Tutor may report to a School Postgraduate Research Committee or other formal body within the School as well as the Faculty Graduate School Committee. There must always, however, be a clear and effective method for report and discussion of individual matters and matters of policy (see note 3) which must be described in the relevant Faculty Protocol for the implementation of the University Code of Practice for research degree candidatures.

Arrangements within the Faculty of Mathematics and Physical Sciences for handling PGR matters

The Faculty of MaPS consists of four Schools

- School of Chemistry
- School of Food Science and Nutrition
- School of Mathematics
- School of Physics and Astronomy

Research degrees in all the above Schools are regulated by the Faculty Graduate School Committee (FGSC), which reports to Graduate Board of the University. Responsibility for PGR matters within each School rests with the Postgraduate Research Tutor (PGRT) via the Head of School. Schools are encouraged to have at least two PGRTs, though the distribution of roles between PGRTs within a single School is at the School's discretion.

Each School is expected to hold regular PGR Staff/Student forums or committees, the membership of which should include the PGRT(s) and PGR representatives.

The Faculty delivers a suite of research degree programmes, including PhD, Masters by Research and Centres for Doctoral Training.

Local Postgraduate Research policy and statutory reporting is governed by the Faculty Graduate School Committee (FGSC) and satisfies, as a minimum, the University's requirements set by Graduate Board. Individual PGR matters are normally handled by the Postgraduate Research Tutor, and exceptionally by the Director of Postgraduate Research Studies. Individual PGR matters within CDTs may initially be handled by the Director of the Programme, however formal processes are managed by the PGRT or Director of Student Education as appropriate.

All administrative actions expected at School/Faculty level are provided by the Student Education Service (SES) Graduate School Office (GSO), which is located across all four Schools. Details of the local SES GSO Officers, their locations, and the relevant email addresses are listed on the GSO website: http://www.maps.leeds.ac.uk/intranet/graduate-school.html

3.   **Admission**

3.1   The minimum requirements for entry to research degree study are stated on the University web site as well as in the Ordinance and Regulations for research degrees. Applications for admission to postgraduate research will be considered under arrangements specified by the Faculty Graduate School Committee. The consideration of applications will normally be undertaken by the Postgraduate Research Tutor and potential supervisor. An acknowledgement should be sent on receipt of an application and the Postgraduate Research Tutor should ensure that the application is considered expeditiously. At least two members of staff will be involved in the consideration of each application which meets the minimum entry requirements (see notes 4(a) and 4(b)). Where practicable, an interview should take

place for those applicants for whom an offer of admission is under consideration. The suitability and qualifications of all applicants should be carefully considered in the light of the entry requirements for the particular degree programme and other requirements of the University (eg English language requirements). Appropriate expertise for supervision and adequate resources must be available (e.g. equipment, library collections, and computing facilities and software) for the proper conduct of the research and applicants should be accepted only where appropriate expertise for supervision and adequate resources are available. Arrangements must be in place to consider any potential ethical issues.

> The Faculty adopts the University's minimum academic entry requirements.
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> Candidates must provide an indication of proposed research area/supervisor, transcripts of previous degree qualification gained, recent CV, details of at least two academic referees, and proof of English language (where appropriate).
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> An interview should take place for those applicants for whom an offer of admission is under consideration. Interviews should where possible be carried out by at least two staff members, including the potential supervisor. Where practicable, interviews should be on a face-to-face basis, however, interviews may be by video conference. Telephone interviews should only be used in exceptional circumstances.
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> Interviews should test the candidate's understanding of the field of research, depth of knowledge of the topic proposed, relevant research skills, and communication skills. Further guidance is provided on the GSO staff website including Interview Record proforma (which is also provided direct to interviewing academic colleagues): http://www.maps.leeds.ac.uk/intranet/graduate-school.html
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> A written record of the interview will be attached to the applicant's admissions file for viewing as part of the decision making process.
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> Academic staff should provide a recommendation for an offer via the GSO using the accepted procedure (i.e. completion of an internal Supervisor Recommendation form, the template for which is provided on the website and direct to interviewing academic colleagues), for approval by the PGRT. Formal offers will be produced by a designated University officer.

3.2   Accreditation for Prior Learning (APL) will be considered in respect of the taught components of a research degree programme only. Applications will normally be made at the time of admission and considered by the relevant Faculty/School in accordance with the procedure set out in the programme of study specification . Graduate Board will be advised of any decisions taken. APL is not permitted, in any circumstances, against the research thesis or thesis preparation components.

3.3   Where the applicant's first language is not English, steps should be taken to ensure (for example from the results of tests taken by the applicant) that he or she has a sufficient grasp of the language to embark on the research, bearing in mind the demands of the discipline and the University's Regulations (see note 5). Where PGRs have satisfied the English language requirements, but further English language training needs are identified after admission, it should be ensured that appropriate arrangements are made (see note 6) and these are included in the training needs analysis and training plan (see 4.3 (vi) and 4.6(i) below.

The Faculty adopts the University's minimum English language entry requirements with the following exceptions:

- School of Food Science (except Nutritional Epidemiology) – IELTS 6.5 (with not less than 6.0 in any skill area)
- School of Food Science - Nutritional Epidemiology only – IELTS 7.0 (with not less than 6.5 in any skill area)

3.4 Formal offers of admission, which will include any conditions to be met prior to entry, can only be made by Postgraduate Research and Operations acting on behalf of the University's Graduate Board. Postgraduate Research Tutors should make clear recommendations on matters such as the need for preliminary or additional courses and the charging of bench fees so that these can be specified in the offer and brought to the attention of the PGR and sponsors where relevant (see note 7). A summary of the University Code of Practice on Research Degree Candidatures will be drawn to the attention of candidates with their offer of admission.

The GSO will maintain regular contact with candidates throughout their application. Between offer and registration, supervisors are expected to also maintain contact with their offer holders to ensure likelihood of registration.

4. Supervision

4.1 It is the responsibility of the Dean of the Faculty, the Faculty Director of Postgraduate Research Studies or the Head of the School (see note 8) to recommend suitable supervisors for appointment by the Graduate Board (see note 9). Where co-supervisors are appointed, one is to be identified as the main supervisor. The Graduate Board requires members of staff to attend a course on research degree supervision organised by the University before being recommended for appointment as a supervisor.

4.2 Supervisors will be provisionally appointed at the time that a PGR receives a formal offer of admission by the University, and this will be confirmed or, where appropriate, alternative arrangements made when the PGR registers. Where only one supervisor is appointed for a PGR an Advisor will also be appointed by the Head of School (see note 8). It is normally the responsibility of the Head of the School to ensure that no supervisor is overloaded with supervisory responsibilities and the position of individual members of staff should be reviewed regularly. Where this responsibility rests elsewhere, the position must be clearly explained in the Faculty Protocol (see note 10).

Arrangements for ensuring that no supervisor is overloaded with supervisory responsibilities rests with the relevant Head of School, with support from the PGRTs relevant to that school and the from the GSO.

All PGRs are expected to have a Main Supervisor and at least one additional Supervisor (following the University of Leeds model 1(b) for supervision – see Section 5.1 for more detail). Requests to allow Sole Supervision will only be considered on a case by case basis by the Director of Postgraduate Research Studies.

4.3 The responsibilities of a supervisor may be summarised as follows:

(i) ensuring that the PGR is introduced to the facilities of the Faculty or School and the University that are relevant to the research and that he or she is fully aware of relevant Health and Safety regulations (see note 11);

(ii)   assisting the PGR in defining the topic which is to be tackled in the course of the research. It is vital that this should give sufficient scope for investigation appropriate to the degree, but not be so large a topic that it cannot be mastered within the normal period of the candidature. Where the research is sponsored by an outside body, the terms of such sponsorship must be carefully considered;

(iii)   assisting the PGR to clarify the research question which the study seeks to address, and to establish details of the research programme, such as resources required and, where appropriate, the experimental design;

(iv)   ensuring, in consultation with the Head of School (see note 8), that the PGR has access to the necessary facilities for the research;

(v)   approving a timetable of work and endeavouring to see that it is followed. Supervisors should emphasise to PGRs that the University attaches great importance to the timely completion of research;

(vi)   conducting, with the PGR, a training needs analysis within one month of commencement of study and agreeing a training plan;

(vii)   reviewing the training plan regularly (at least annually) and assisting the PGR in identifying other training needs and in reflecting upon their personal development, for instance by reference to the Statement on Learning Outcomes;

(viii)   where the programme contains subject specific modules, directing the PGR through the relevant programme of courses;

(ix)   seeking to ensure that the PGR receives available research training (e.g. by attendance at courses) which may be necessary or appropriate in the individual case;

(x)   making PGRs aware of any relevant Research Governance requirements and ethical procedures and ethical review;

(xi)   making PGRs aware of the University's Policy on Safeguarding Data – Storage, Backup and Encryption ;

(xii)   agreeing a supervisory programme with the PGR and arranging regular meetings with the PGR throughout the programme of study (including the overtime period) (see 4.8 and 4.9 below);

(xiii)   ensuring that, where appropriate, the PGR is aware of the Faculty/School arrangements for reviewing transfer to full degree registration and that appropriate guidance on preparing for transfer is provided;

(xiv)   preparing regular reports on the PGR's progress (see 6.1 below);

(xv)   Ensuring, in partnership with the PGR, that there are written records of formal supervisory meetings on the University's system for maintaining a record of the research degree candidature;

(xvi)   commenting within a reasonable time on written work submitted by the PGR;

(xvii)   otherwise advising generally on the research and preparation of the thesis;

(xviii)   alerting the Postgraduate Research Tutor, in a timely manner, to any situation where it may become necessary to request a suspension or extension of study for a PGR;

(xix)   reporting to the Postgraduate Research Tutor any suspected instance of research misconduct including plagiarism;

(xx)   ensuring that the PGR receives written feedback on the assessment of progress, and to draw to the attention of the PGR problems when they arise, (where necessary this should be done in writing);

(xxi)   taking action to bring to the attention of the Postgraduate Research Tutor any concerns about a PGR's unsatisfactory progress;

(xxii)   reading and commenting on the whole of the draft thesis prior to submission provided that it is made available by the PGR in reasonable time. It is essential that a timetable for submission of the draft thesis is agreed with the PGR in advance of the maximum time limit which allows the supervisor a reasonable length of time to carry out this duty and for the PGR to act on any comments received. Any planned periods of absence by the supervisor from the University should be taken into account;

(xxiii)   keeping the Head of School informed of any absences likely to impact upon time available for supervisory duties;

(xxiv)   sending forward recommendations for the appointment of Examiners to the Faculty/School Postgraduate Research Tutor;

(xxv)   ensuring that the PGR is aware of the University arrangements for the examination of research degree theses; and the time limits for submission and ensuring that the PGR receives appropriate guidance about the oral examination including, where requested, a "mock viva";

(xxvi)   reporting to the Faculty/School when there has been no contact with an individual PGR or when there has been a pattern of absences which is affecting the PGR's progress or causing concern for the PGR's well-being in accordance with the University's attendance monitoring policy;

(xxvii)   Ensuring that the PGR is aware of the University Publication and Research Data Management policies and knows that these apply to publications in press at the time the PGR leaves the University.

The Faculty of MaPS has outlined the following additional responsibilities:

(xxviii)   The supervisor is responsible for ensuring that a regular record of attendance by the PGR is maintained on the University's system, as dictated by that system, throughout the research degree candidature.

PGRs in both their standard and overtime periods must attend regular formal monthly meetings with their supervisor and submit corresponding reports. Supervisors should comment and approve these monthly reports, confirming that a formal supervision meeting has taken place. A minimum of 10 reports per year must be submitted (6 for Part-time PGRs).

Supervisors are required to report to the Graduate School Office when there has been no contact or missed supervision meetings with individual PGRs for a month (unless absence has been authorised for illness or other suspension, etc.), or where there is a pattern of absences which is affecting the student's work or causing concerns for the PGR's wellbeing. The GSO will inform the PGRT and investigate directly.
http://www.maps.leeds.ac.uk/intranet/graduate-school.html

Supervisors should also maintain contact with PGRs who are away from the University on Fieldwork or other research business, and must record such contact in the system. A formal risk review should be completed before fieldwork is undertaken and kept in the PGR's record. If international PGRs undertake fieldwork overseas for a period of one month or more, supervisors must:

   a. Inform the GSO of the dates and location of fieldwork for Home Office reporting purposes, and
   b. Continue to record their academic engagement and progress. This may take place by skype, telephone, email or a combination. Auditable records of supervision must be kept in the University's system for maintaining a records of the research degree candidature.

Where a Tier 4 visa-holder in their overtime period wishes to return overseas the supervisor must alert the Graduate School Office to ensure the necessary authorities are informed.

(xxix)   The supervisor should encourage the PGR to present their work for publication in high impact, peer reviewed journals and conferences.

(xxx)   supervisors should refer concerns over PGRs' academic performance promptly to the PGRT; such concerns will be managed by the PGRT with the support of the GSO within the framework of the University's Unsatisfactory Academic Performance Procedure (UAPP)

4.4   In circumstances where supervisors leave the University they must ensure that, prior to their departure, the Head of School is notified. In this situation, the Head of the School (see note 8) must satisfy himself / herself that alternative and acceptable supervision arrangements are recommended to the Graduate Board.

4.5   Where the supervisor is likely to be absent from the University for an extended period, the Head of School (see note 8) should ensure that some appropriate arrangements are made for advising the PGR and that the progress of a PGR is not detrimentally affected by the absence of the supervisor. Where the absence exceeds three months, an alternative supervisor or co-supervisor must be appointed.

4.6   PGRs have responsibilities as follows:

   (i)   To reach agreement with the supervisor on an appropriate training plan;

   (ii)   to carry out research effectively, to attend the University, to present work regularly and to an adequate standard in an appropriate form and against an agreed timescale taking into account any holiday entitlement;

   (iii)   to prepare issues they wish to discuss at supervision meetings and to seek out the supervisor as problems arise;

(iv)   to agree to a supervisory programme, to maintain regular contact with their supervisor(s) and to attend for formal supervision meetings throughout the programme of study (including the overtime period) (see section 4.8 and 4.9 below);

(v)   ensuring, in partnership with the supervisor, that there are written records of formal supervision meetings on the University's system for maintaining a records of the research degree candidature;

(vi)   to submit, when requested, regular written summaries of overall progress to their supervisors or, where appropriate, Research Support Group, Postgraduate Research Tutor or Head of School;

(vii)   to comply with normal working arrangements in the School;

(viii)   to discuss with their supervisor whether any teaching work undertaken will adversely affect the time available for the conduct of the research and make appropriate arrangements;

(ix)   to comply with Health and Safety requirements;

(x)   to comply with any ethical requirements or appropriate Research Governance;

(xi)   to comply with the University's Policy on Safeguarding Data, Storage, Backup and Encryption;

(xii)   to take measures to attend appropriate training courses, personal development programmes and research seminars in consultation with their supervisor;

(xiii)   to be familiar with the regulations and procedures of the University relevant to research degree candidatures and to comply with them;

(xiv)   to ensure that they complete registration and make payment of fees at the appropriate times;

(xv)   to make use of relevant facilities provided by the University and abide by the regulations specified for the use of these facilities;

(xvi)   to assist the University in keeping their personal record up to date by cooperating fully with administrative procedures;

(xvii)   to promptly draw to the attention of the supervisor or Postgraduate Research Tutor when there is a situation where it may be necessary to request a suspension or extension of study. If appropriate, documentary evidence should be provided (eg medical certificate);

(xviii)   to consult with the Postgraduate Research Tutor or appropriate senior member of staff within the Faculty or School, in confidence, if they have serious concerns about the PGR/supervisor relationship;

(xix)   to discuss with the supervisor, in good time where possible, should they wish to be away from their research activity for a substantial period (eg in the case of a full-time PGR for more than five working days);

(xx) to make available to the supervisor for comment, within an agreed timescale, the whole of the draft thesis prior to submission;

(xxi) To ensure that at all times they observe high standards of academic conduct and integrity and are aware of the consequences of failure to observe the University's requirements.

(xxii) To comply with the requirements of the University Publication and Research Data Management policies, noting that these will also apply to publications in press at the time the PGR leaves the University and to any associated data.

The Faculty of MaPS has outlined the following additional responsibilities:

(xxiii) Induction

All new PGRs are expected to attend a series of School and Graduate School induction activities and specific training. They will also be invited to attend the University Welcome event

Induction events will take place throughout the year, and PGRs are expected to attend the first available course.

(xxiv) Time commitment

PGRs are expected to spend at least 37½ hours per week on their research degree (20 hours for part-time study), and have an annual vacation entitlement of up to 25 days (plus additional days when the University is closed). PGRs must obtain permission for vacation or other absence from their supervisor in advance.

(xxv) Attendance monitoring

Full-time PGRs in their standard period must attend and record at least 10 formal supervision meetings per year (6 for part-time) by completing the University's system for maintaining a records of the research degree candidature.

PGRs who are away from the University on Fieldwork or other research business should also maintain contact with their supervisor, and must record such contact in the system.

PGRs in their overtime period must also attend and record the formal meetings, as for standard period PGRs, until submission. If a Tier 4 visa-holder in their overtime period wishes to return overseas they or their supervisor must alert the Graduate School Office to ensure the necessary authorities are informed.

Attendance regulations for international PGRs may be subject to change subject to the University's responsibilities under Home Office guidelines.

(xxvi) Academic Progress

PGRs failing to make reasonable academic progress may be subject to the University's Unsatisfactory Academic Performance Procedure: http://students.leeds.ac.uk/info/10124/during_your_research/772/unsatisfactory_academic_progress_procedure

(xxvii)   External organisations

PGRs must not approach organisations or individuals external to the University in connection with their research or on behalf of the University without the permission of their supervisor. PGRs must obtain explicit permission before using University of Leeds headed paper for correspondence.

(xxviii)   Health and Safety

The Faculty of Mathematics and Physical Sciences is committed to high standards of health, safety and welfare. It is Faculty policy to maintain a safe environment for all staff, PGRs and visitors by raising health and safety awareness; instilling a positive safety culture; and, by promoting cooperation between all members of the Faculty with regard to safety initiatives.

All PGRs are expected to behave at all times in a way which is consistent with the above statement. In addition, PGRs are expected to undertake specified training and induction activities.

Approval for any fieldwork must include the completion of a risk assessment, authorised by the relevant member of staff. More details can be found on the Faculty Health & Safety website:
http://www.maps.leeds.ac.uk/intranet/health-and-safety.html

(xxix)   Leaving the University

When PGRs permanently leave their School, either during or on completion of their programme of study, they must comply with the protocol in existence for their specific School.

(xxx)   Meta data collection

As part of the induction process, during the annual meetings, and at the point of exit, PGRs will be required to complete specific forms enabling the GSO to collect meta data on the format of research developed and collected, issues experienced, plans going forward, etc. Templates will be provided for completion at these stages.

4.7   PGRs are encouraged to keep Personal Development Plans.

4.8   The requirement is that a full-time PGR will have a minimum of 10 supervision meetings (see note 12) a year. The relevant number for part-time PGRs is 6 a year. Whilst the pattern and timing of meetings will vary according to the precise stage of the candidature and between subject areas it is expected that meetings will be held regularly throughout the standard period of study with gaps between meetings of no more than 8 weeks for full-time PGRs (or 12 weeks for part-time PGRs) (see note 13). Faculty Directors of Postgraduate Research Studies are encouraged to specify the minimum number of meetings required in the relevant areas subject to meeting the minimum requirements specified by the University in this Code. Notes should be kept of all formal supervision meetings.

4.9   In order to keep the research on course for submission before the maximum time limit, it is expected that supervisory contact will continue during any overtime period after the end of the standard period of study and that the supervisor will continue to monitor progress. For those in the overtime period the University appreciates that

supervision meetings may be in the format of reading and commenting on draft chapters of the thesis prior to submission. Full-time PGRs will continue to be entitled tono less than 10 supervision meetings a year (and part-time candidates no less than 6 a year). The meetings must be recorded and may take place in a variety of forms (for example in face to face meetings when the PGR is in the UK or by other means such as video conferencing, telephone, Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) (eg skype) or email where appropriate). It is the responsibility of the PGR to provide the supervisor(s) with written drafts of the thesis for comment by the supervisor within an agreed timescale.

5.   Supervisory Support

5.1   There are 2 main models of supervision :

Model 1:   <u>Co-supervision</u>

<u>Either</u> (a) one main supervisor together with a Research Support Group of between 2-3 (which may include individuals from outside the School or external to the University); the Research Support Group is advised to meet with the PGR every 6 months to review progress and to discuss this with the PGR.

<u>or</u> (b) one main supervisor with a co-supervisor(s) (who may be external to the University).

Model 2:   One main supervisor together with a Mentor/Advisor (who may also attend supervision meetings and must be a member of staff of the University) from whom advice might be sought and to whom problems might be referred.

The model of supervision adopted for a particular candidate may change during the period of study.

In the Faculty of Mathematics and Physical Sciences the preferred model of supervision is Co-supervision; one Main supervisor together with a Mentor/Advisor will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances, and only with the agreement of the Director of Postgraduate Research Studies.

5.2   Whatever model of supervision is adopted there should be a procedure in place for offering PGRs the opportunity to meet, at least annually, in the absence of the supervisor(s), with the Postgraduate Research Tutor or Head of School (<u>see note 14</u>) to review progress, discuss this with the PGR and to enable the PGR to comment upon the nature of the supervision received and to draw attention to any matters of concern.   Where the Postgraduate Research Tutor/Head of School is the supervisor a nominee should be appointed. There should be a mechanism in place within the School/Faculty, which is clearly publicised, to enable PGRs to seek independent sources of advice when a PGR/supervisor relationship is not working well.

All PGRs within the standard study period are invited to meet with their PGRT in the absence of their supervisor(s) on an annual basis. An appointment will be arranged for approximately the mid-point of each year to which the PGR is expected to attend.

PGRs are encouraged to raise any concerns they have with a member of their Supervision Team in the first instance, or their PGRT either through their annual appointment or separately requested meeting.

PGRs are also encouraged to report any concerns during their candidature to the GSO. The GSO will refer the PGRs to appropriate support, including the PGRT where appropriate.

5.3   Regular reports should be made by the supervisor and by the appropriate supervisory support team on the PGR's progress as required in the Code of Practice.

6.   Formal assessment and monitoring

6.1   There should be regular written reports by the supervisor on the PGR's progress. As a minimum, there should be a report at the mid-point of the first year of the candidature (see note 15), at the transfer stage and at least annually thereafter. In the case of annual reviews the reports may be prepared by an independent assessor in consultation with the supervisor or by the supervisor depending on the practice adopted within the Faculty. The Reports should include a review of progress on the agreed training plan. Reports should be considered by the Faculty Graduate School Committee, the Postgraduate Research Committee or other formal body adopted by the Faculty or School. It is essential that the PGR should be given clear information in writing on the assessment of progress. Where progress is deemed to be unsatisfactory, the PGR should be interviewed by the Postgraduate Research Tutor and the supervisor and specific instructions and objectives given. The PGR should be advised that failure to meet those requirements may lead to a recommendation for the termination of the candidature.

Formal Progression Points

First Formal Progress Report

PGRs are asked to complete and submit the above report form through the University system by the end of month 4 (full-time) or month 9 (part-time), together with a written report (either a literature review or summary of research completed so far). Guidance on the content is provided on the Schools' PGR websites

Transfer see below.

Post-Transfer Progress Review

End of Year 2 (FT) or Year 4 (PT)
This is a "light touch" review including an informal interview, and should not be viewed as an additional "Transfer"

Supervisors identify an independent reviewer for approval by PGRT, preferably one associated with the Transfer assessment to provide continuity. In recommending reviewers, supervisors should be aware that under University policy a member of staff involved as a reviewer *after* the Transfer cannot subsequently act as Internal Examiner for the Thesis.

PGRs complete and submit the relevant form through the University's system together with:

- Either a short research paper (draft or recently published), or a reflection on progress to date; this might include completed chapters / laboratory work, and conference attendance;

- A submission plan for the final Thesis (maximum one side of A4) to include:

- A description of the research to be completed
- Project risks/ mitigation
- A statement of their confidence of submitting on time
- A thesis plan (maximum one side of A4) outlining the chapters and sub-headings

- NB. There is no standard format for these reports. The student should make clear progress over the last 12 months and plans for the future.

The independent reviewer and supervisor will hold a short interview with the candidate and submit a report on the appropriate form.

End of Year 3 (FT) or Year 5 (PT)

The expected completion date is the end of the standard period of study, i.e. the end of month 36 (FT) or month 60 (PT). PGRs who do not submit at this stage must complete the end-of year report.

PGRs complete and submit the relevant form through the University's system together with:

- Either at least one Thesis chapter or a short paper (draft or recently published)
- An updated submission plan for the final Thesis (maximum one side of A4) to include:
  - A description of the research to be completed
  - Project risks/ mitigation
  - A statement of their confidence of submitting on time
  - A thesis plan (maximum one side of A4) outlining the chapters and sub-headings

The independent reviewer and supervisor will hold a short interview with the candidate and submit a report on the appropriate form.

At the end of all other years of study

PGRs complete and submit the relevant form through the University's system together with:
- A reflection on progress to date, this might include completed chapters / laboratory work, and conference attendance;
- An updated submission plan for the final Thesis (maximum one side of A4)

The independent reviewer and supervisor will hold a short interview with the candidate and submit a report on the appropriate form.

PGRT Approval

Reports on a PGR's progress should be considered by the relevant PGRT, if necessary reporting to the School's Research Committee if there are problems with progress. It is the responsibility of the PGRTs within the Schools to act on the supervisor's and any other assessor's reports and ensure that any recommendations (e.g. additional training) have been implemented; such issues are best dealt with at the School level. The GSO will monitor that such reports are taking place and are being followed up.

All progression actions are expected to be completed in good time, ensuring prompt progression and registration of the PGRs wherever possible.

6.2 Research candidatures which are intended to lead to a Doctoral award are subject to a process whereby the PGR is formally assessed and, if successful in the assessment, is 'transferred' to a specific degree category after an initial, provisional stage. The assessment at the 'transfer' stage is intended to identify whether the individual PGR and the research project have the potential for research at Doctoral level and also whether completion of a thesis within the standard period of study for the programme concerned is a reasonable expectation. PGRs are required to submit reports within a time scale prescribed by the School/Faculty, which are considered by assessment Panels which must comprise a minimum of two individuals and include at least one independent individual who has not been involved in the supervisory support arrangements for the PGR. These arrangements, however, do not preclude a member of the supervisory team from serving as a member of the assessment Panel. At least two members of an assessment Panel (including the independent assessor) should be from the same or from a cognate subject area or discipline to the work submitted by the PGR and at least one member must have previous research degree supervision or examination experience. The decision on transfer should be based on evidence as prescribed by the Faculty Protocol for the implementation of the Code of Practice. This must include the agreed training plan, record of training and information about skills development, ethical issues with the research and periodic reports by the supervisor(s). The PGR must provide a written submission which will include a planned schedule for the work and might also include a synopsis of the work already carried out, a sample chapter and other written or experimental work. The PGR must be interviewed by the assessment Panel and this should take the form of a viva voce examination. It is important that the University's prescribed time-limits for 'transfer' decisions are adhered to. These time limits are prescribed by the University for each doctoral programme of study and are published in the relevant [programme of study specification](#) on the University website. The decisions that may be made by transfer panels are:

(i) in the case of Provisional candidatures for Doctoral degrees or Postgraduate Research candidatures, transfer to Doctoral registration;

(ii) in the case of Provisional candidatures for the degree of PhD or Postgraduate Research candidatures, transfer to M Phil registration;

(iii) on the first occasion that the work is assessed, and provided that the University's prescribed time limit allow, deferral of a decision about transfer for a limited period to permit the work to be revised and then reassessed;

(iv) a decision that the PGR withdraw from a research degree candidature.

Transfer Report

PGRs should submit their Transfer Report of no more than 50 pages via the University's system for maintaining a record of the research degree candidature by the end of month 10 (full-time) or month 22 (part-time).

The PGR's transfer report should address the following issues, which will be discussed at the panel interview:

- Research focus,
- originality,
- literature review,
- any training undertaken
- work completed,

- research methodology,
- progress,
- research plan,
- training requirements,
- draft thesis outline

Additional issues may be addressed as appropriate.

Detailed advice and guidance on the content is provided in the relevant School handbook and on the website (link).

Transfer Viva

Vivas should be held no later than the end of month 11 (full-time) or month 23 (part-time), and recommendations must be forwarded to Graduate Board within 12 months of the commencement of the PhD studies.

Transfer Panel

Supervisors are asked to recommend a Transfer Panel comprising of at least two assessors for approval by the Postgraduate Research Tutor. In accordance with the University's regulations, at least one assessor must be independent of the supervision process and it is recommended by the Faculty that this member should act as the Chair.

Supervisors may act as assessors if this is the practice in the individual School but an additional member must then be co-opted onto the Panel. In this case, part of the meeting must take place without the supervisor present, to allow the PGR the opportunity to make any comments on supervision in confidence.

Transfer Panels are asked to comment on quality of report, quality of performance in examination, technical ability, appropriateness of research to the desired qualification, effort and commitment, verbal and written ability, and potential for research at Doctoral level. This feedback is expected through the relevant progression system.

Approval should only be given for Transfer to PhD where the Transfer Assessment Panel is confident that the candidate is likely to complete their research work within 36 months (full time/split-site Model A and B) or 60 months (part-time/ split-site Model C) of formal start date and submit a successful PhD thesis within 48 (full-time/ split-site Model A and B) or 84 months (part-time/ split-site Model C).

The PGR will be informed of the recommendation of the Transfer Assessment Panel both verbally immediately following the viva examination and via written notification within one week of the recommendation being received by the PGRT.

6.3   The decision on transfer must be recorded in writing, agreed by all the members of the assessment Panel and signed by either the Chair or the independent assessor, and will contain a brief assessment of the PGR's progress. In all cases the PGR must receive a copy of the decision made by the assessment Panel in writing.

6.4   The Faculty Director of Postgraduate Research Studies or Head of the School, as appropriate (see note 8): (i) should keep a comprehensive record of the PGR's

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candidature, including notes of supervision meetings, reports, the agreed training plan and records and other information (for example, medical certificates) having a bearing on the PGR's progress; (ii) have overall responsibility for ensuring that formal assessment and monitoring of progress takes place and that any emerging issues are addressed.

6.5 The Faculty Director of Postgraduate Research Studies or Heads of Schools, as appropriate (see note 8) are strongly encouraged to make provision for PGRs to present their work regularly at seminars involving staff and other PGRs.

7. PGR Representation, Feedback and Channels of Communication and Complaints (see also 5.2 above)

7.1 The Faculty Director of Postgraduate Research Studies or Heads of Schools, as appropriate (see note 8) should ensure that PGRs, are represented on the postgraduate or other relevant school staff-student committee and on the Faculty Graduate School Committee and that adequate opportunity is given to discuss issues affecting them. PGR representatives will not be involved in the consideration of matters relating to individual PGR cases.

> The GSO will ensure the arrangements for PGR Representatives to be selected from amongst the PGR community across the Faculty of MaPS. PGR Representatives will become members of the FGSC and of the committee which considers PGR matters in their School for all policy matters.

7.2 PGRs should make use of the University Student Complaints Procedure (which is published on the University website) if they are dissatisfied with any aspect of their supervision or with facilities available for their research. They should be encouraged first to consult the supervisor or the Postgraduate Research Tutor and, after the outcome of that consultation, to make use of the University Complaints Procedure, where appropriate.

7.3 The University has in place a procedure governing the consideration of PGR appeals which is published on the University website.

> **Complaints:**
>
> If PGRs are dissatisfied with any aspect of their supervision or with facilities available for research and cannot reach a satisfactory outcome with their supervisor, then in the first instance they should approach the PGRT in their School and if they remain dissatisfied after the outcome of that consultation, to make use of the University Complaints Procedure (as outlined in the PGR Handbook), where appropriate.

7.4 The University regularly surveys PGRs about their experience and satisfaction with arrangements and facilities for research degrees and all PGRs are invited to participate.

8. Minimum standards of facilities provision for full-time PGRs

As a general principle, the Graduate Board has specified that access to facilities such as printing, photocopying and common room facilities for PGRs should be commensurate with the requirements for the research. A clear statement on these matters should be included in the Faculty Protocol for the implementation of the Code of Practice.

Issues related to the appropriate resources for the proper conduct of the research (e.g. equipment, library collections and computing facilities and software) must be considered prior to the acceptance of the PGR (see 3 above).

Faculties and Schools should provide the following for all full-time PGRs who request or require them:

- Sufficient flexible work and storage space
- Opportunities for interaction with fellow researchers and academic staff
- Access to the University's Computing network and internet
- Access to a printer for work prescribed by the School
- Access to a photocopier for work prescribed by the School
- Access to a telephone for work prescribed by the School

Scientific equipment and computing facilities commensurate with the requirements of the specific project will be made available.

Similar facilities should be made available for those studying under split site arrangements whilst they are resident in Leeds and for part-time PGRs, where appropriate.

9. **Responsibilities of Deans of Faculty, Faculty Directors of Postgraduate Research Studies, Heads of Schools**

The responsibilities of Deans (or where they have been delegated to Faculty Directors of Postgraduate Research Studies or Heads of Schools) may be summarised as follows:

- To ensure that an adequate management structure and procedures are in place for handling postgraduate research matters
- To ensure that minimum standards of facilities are available to PGRs
- The delegation, where relevant, of responsibilities for postgraduate matters to appropriate individuals (for example Heads of School or Postgraduate Research Tutors)
- To recommend supervisors to the Graduate Board
- To make alternative and acceptable supervision arrangements when a supervisor leaves the University
- To ensure that no supervisor is overloaded with supervisory responsibilities and to review the position regularly
- To specify the minimum number of supervisory meetings within their area (subject to meeting the minimum requirements specified by the University in this Code)
- To ensure that a comprehensive record of the research degree candidature of all PGRs is maintained
- To ensure that PGRs are represented on relevant Faculty and School committees

10. **Assessment processes for research qualifications**

The Graduate Board prescribes arrangements whereby the criteria, regulations and learning outcomes for the award of different types of research degrees are clear, rigorous and widely available.

The Graduate Board publishes eligibility criteria for the appointment of Examiners. As a minimum two appropriately qualified Examiners are appointed for each candidate with at least one Examiner being external to the institution. Internal Examiners are required to attend a University training course before acting in this capacity. No member of staff who has been substantially involved in the research may serve as an Internal Examiner. Responsibility for the consideration and review of recommendations from Schools for the appointment of Examiners is delegated by the Graduate Board to its specialist Examinations Group, which monitors the frequency of appointments of examiners.

In order to ensure consistency within the examination process Examiners receive written instructions on the relevant University procedures together with the criteria for the recognition of different levels of achievement. These instructions are widely available within the University.

After the submission of the thesis all candidates for research degrees are required to undergo an oral examination with the appointed Examiners and:

- the examination should normally take place within a maximum time scale of three months from the date of the dispatch of the thesis to the Examiners;

- the Examiners must prepare separate, independent written reports before the viva and, following the viva, a joint report which contains a recommendation in accordance with the stipulated University criteria;

- a supervisor may be an observer at the examination at the request of the PGR and if not present must be available for consultation with the Examiners if required;

- the Examiners should advise the candidate informally of the recommendation being sent forward, normally within 24 hours of the completion of the oral examination. The details will depend upon the precise recommendations being sent forward. Where appropriate, information about the University appeals procedure (see 7.3 above) must be provided to the candidate.

University Monitoring

The Graduate Board requires its Examinations Group to monitor and review all aspects of the examination, including the selection of examiners, the implementation of the procedures, the nature and details of the reports and the overall performance of candidates and staff within Schools and Faculties.

Endnotes

1. The expression 'School' within this Code includes any unit admitting and registering PGRs. This will also include the two institutions accredited by the University with authority to register research degree candidates (Leeds Trinity University and York St John University) who will each also have their own Code of Practice. Some Faculties within the University may admit and register PGRs through a Faculty Graduate School.

2. Heads of Schools recommend the appointment of Postgraduate Research Tutors to the Faculty Graduate School Committees, with the appointments being confirmed by the Graduate Board.

3. Where the Faculty or School organises its research programme into identifiable sub-areas it may be convenient to have more than one postgraduate tutor and research committee.

4(a). However, where applicants do not satisfy the minimum stated requirements for acceptance as a PGR candidate the decision may be made by the Postgraduate Research Tutor, acting alone.

4(b). Consideration of applications to some Doctoral Training Partnerships may involve academic staff from partner institutions and at least one member of academic staff from the University.

5. The University's minimum English language entry requirements for admission of PGRs whose first language is not English are the British Council IELTS band score 6.0 (with not less than 5.5 in any component) or internet based TOEFL (iBT) overall 87 with not less than 20 in listening, 21 in writing, 20 in reading and 22 in speaking. Some Schools may require levels of achievement that are higher than the stipulated minimum.

6. All PGRs whose first language is not English are required to take a University test in English on arrival and results are reported to the Graduate Board. This should NOT be regarded as an 'admission test' – its purpose is to identify those PGRs who have been classed as suitable for admission but who would benefit from further tuition in English.

7. Bench fees represent the PGR's contribution towards specific school costs generated by the PGR's research. It is important that the nature of these fees should be conveyed to the PGR and to sponsors and they should be itemised.

8. Or the individual to whom responsibility has been delegated.

9. All those appointed as supervisors must meet the criteria specified by the University and must have undertaken appropriate University training.

10. It is not possible in a general Code of this nature to specify a maximum number of PGRs per member of staff. However, it is expected that if a member of staff has a heavy load of research supervision, this would be allowed for in allocation of teaching and administrative duties.

11. Such matters will commonly be handled by the supervisor.

12. When PGRs are abroad or at other institutions in the UK formal supervisory contact may take place by other means (eg telephone, video conferencing, Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) (eg skype), email).

13. During periods of fieldwork, when it may not be possible to hold regular supervision meetings or where the location of the PGR does not allow for supervisory meetings to continue, it is acceptable for gaps between meetings of more than 8 weeks to occur (or 12 weeks for part-time PGRs)

14. The Head of School or Postgraduate Research Tutor may delegate responsibility for attending the annual review meeting to a senior member of the academic staff who is not part of the supervisory team.

15. In the case of part-time PGRs the equivalent point will be after nine months.

PGRO/ST, Ext 35778, 02/03/17