

Leeds Trinity University Protocol for the implementation of the University of Leeds Code of Practice for Research Degree Candidatures

(with effect from session 2017/18)

Overview

Arrangements exist whereby Postgraduate Researchers (PGRs) may be accepted as candidates for research degrees of the University of Leeds (UoL) whilst registered at Leeds Trinity University (LTU). These arrangements are under the general supervision of the University of Leeds Graduate Board.

The Graduate Board is responsible for securing and enhancing the quality and standards of research degree programmes awarded by the UoL. This document sets out the requirements of the Code of Practice for Research Degree Candidatures at the UoL. It also includes details of the Protocol adopted by LTU for the implementation of the UoL Code. It is, therefore, relevant to PGRs accepted for research degrees of the UoL whilst registered at LTU and their supervisors.

Note to readers: where arrangements for the implementation of the UoL Code specific to LTU are described these are shown in shaded boxes.

1. General

PGRs are an essential part of the research activity at Leeds and its accredited institutions (Leeds Trinity University). 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 UoL and its Accredited Institutions also recognise that some candidates will already have significant skills and research experience. This Code sets out a framework of shared responsibilities between the UoL, LTU, supervisors and candidates 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 research degree candidates the minimum standards they can expect in connection with the supervision of their research degree study at LTU and the UoL. At LTU the Executive is responsible for the provision of the resources to implement the UoL Code of Practice. The UoL Code is supplemented by Protocols covering the practices of individual UoL Faculties and Accredited Institutions. In addition LTU also has a Handbook specifically written for PGRs and their supervisors.

This Leeds Trinity University Protocol is provided as an Appendix to the LTU PGR Handbooks, which are issued to all for PhD and Masters by Research candidates on registration. These are also made available in the PGR zone of the LTU Intranet. The Postgraduate Research Tutor (PGRT) is responsible for its inclusion in the Handbook, distribution to relevant staff and PGRs, and web-mounting.

2. Management Structure

- 2.1 The Dean of Postgraduate Research Studies at the University of Leeds 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/Accredited Institution has in place an adequate management structure for handling postgraduate matters. For the UoL there should be at least one PGRT (see note 2) in each School (see note 1) who (subject to the overall responsibility of the Chair of the Research Committee 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 (PGRO). At LTU overall strategic responsibility for postgraduate research degrees rests with the Chair of the Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee.

LTU will appoint one individual to undertake a role equivalent to that of the PGRT within a School at the UoL. Deputy PGRTs may be appointed to assist the lead PGRT and take responsibility for specific duties in relation to postgraduate research candidatures.

In all cases 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/Accredited Institution Protocol for the Implementation of the UoL Code of Practice for research degree candidatures.

Postgraduate Research Degrees are managed by the Research Degrees Sub-Committee, chaired by the PGRT, with the assistance of the Research Office Administration team and central Student Admissions staff. The PGRT has operational responsibility for the administration of Research Degree Programmes (RDPs) at LTU. The PGRT reports to the Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee (RKEC), a committee of the Academic Board, which is in turn responsible to the Academic Board for the quality of Research Degree programmes. The Research Office Administrators provide secretarial and administrative support to the PGRT and are responsible for liaising with central Student Administration on behalf of the PGRT at LTU regarding progression and award. The PGRT works with the Director of Research and School Research Leads who have broad responsibility for the development of research cultures within their respective Schools.

Postholders in AY2017-18

PGRT and Chair of the Research Degrees Sub-Committee: Professor Graham Roberts
Deputy PGRT: Professor Rosemary Mitchell (with responsibility for Masters by Research PGRs)

Deputy PGRT: Dr Martin Barwood (with responsibility for PGR training)

Director of Research: Professor Trevor Batten

Chair of Research & Knowledge Exchange Committee: Professor Carlton Cooke

Research & Knowledge Exchange Administrator and Secretary of the Research Degrees Sub-Committee: Elaine Brook

Student Records & Assessment Officer: Sarah Mumby

Postgraduate Researcher Administrator: Deanne Sharp.

Reporting and discussion of matters of policy are the responsibility of the LTU Research Degrees Sub-Committee Committee, which reports annually to RKEC, and

- (i) Advises RKEC on matters of policy and general principles with regard to the administration of research degrees and individual candidatures.
- (ii) Ensures compliance with the Accreditation Agreement between LTU and the UoL.
- (iii) Keeps under review PGR recruitment and monitoring procedures
- (iv) Receives (as reserved business) and monitors reports on the progression of PGRs registered at LTU and of LTU staff who receive financial support to undertake research degrees at other institutions.

RKEC also considers reports from the PGRT on discussions at the UoL Graduate Board, and, where appropriate, meetings of the Board's sub-groups, and other associated meetings and events. RKEC has overall responsibility for the internal quality assurance of RDPs at LTU, and monitors congruence with the UoL's regulations and the QAA Quality Code.

3. Admission

- 3.1 The minimum requirements for entry to research degree study are stated on the UoL website as well as in the [Ordinance and Regulations](#) for research degrees. Applications for admission to postgraduate research will be considered under arrangements specified by LTU. The consideration of applications will normally be undertaken by the PGRT and potential supervisor. An acknowledgement should be sent on receipt of an application and the PGRT 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 note 4). Where practicable, an interview will 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 UoL (e.g., 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.

Enquiries from potential research degree candidates are channelled through central Student Admissions at LTU to the PGRT, who responds to general queries (eg about the availability of funded studentships) and passes on enquiries relating to possible opportunities to study particular areas or topics to Heads of Schools, who consult with colleagues about the availability of relevant expertise before responding to the PGRT, who in turn communicates with the enquirer. Full details of entry requirements and the application process are given in the Admissions Policy, which is available on the Research Degrees section of the LTU website <http://www.leedstrinity.ac.uk/research/research-degrees> . Applicants are required to complete and submit the LTU Application for Research Degree Study form, together with a brief outline research proposal (ideally 500-1000 words) to enable LTU staff to make a judgement as to the facilities for effective supervision available at LTU and also the quality of work being produced by the applicant at the point of application. Formal applications are given provisional consideration by the PGRT and then passed on to the relevant Schools for consideration, which involves consultations between academic staff, including the Head of School regarding suitability and potential supervisor(s). All recommendations for admission will be considered by a minimum of two members of the academic staff; this will normally be in the form of an interview panel consisting of the proposed supervisor, PGRT and chaired by a senior research active member of staff. Where decisions are taken to recommend acceptance of applicants, the nominated supervisors, under oversight of the PGRT, arrange for the completion of the necessary paperwork, including the agreement to act as a UoL co-supervisor, where required. Formal communications with the UoL's PGRO are managed by the PGRT; via the PGR Administrator.

- 3.2 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) 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](http://ses.leeds.ac.uk/info/22168/student_support-related_policies/646/ordinances) http://ses.leeds.ac.uk/info/22168/student_support-related_policies/646/ordinances . Graduate Board will be advised of any decisions taken. RPL 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 UoL'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 minimum English Language entry requirement for Research Degree study at LTU is an IELTS (Academic) overall score of 6.5 with at least 6.0 in each component, or TOEFL score (internet-based test) of at least 92 overall with at least 21 in listening and reading, 23 in speaking and 22 in writing.

- 3.4 Formal offers of admission, which will include any conditions to be met prior to entry, can be made only by the UoL's PGRO acting on behalf of the UoL's Graduate Board. The PGRT 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 UoL Code of Practice on Research Degree Candidatures will be drawn to the attention of candidates with their offer of admission.

Communications to candidates making formal offers of admission to a research degree programme, including any conditions to be met prior to entry, can only be made by LTU following approval by the UoL Graduate Board. The PGRO at UoL will communicate with the LTU PGRT on behalf of the Graduate Board.

4. Supervision

- 4.1 At LTU it is the responsibility of the PGRT (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 UoL 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 UoL, 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/Accredited Institution Protocol.

At LTU responsibility for ensuring supervisors are not overloaded rests with the Research Degrees Sub-Committee, which receives bi-annual reports on the progress of LTU PGRs prepared by the PGRT.

- 4.3 The responsibilities of a supervisor may be summarised as follows:
- (i) ensuring that the PGR is introduced to the facilities of LTU and the UoL 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 PGRT, Head of School and Chair of the Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee (see note 8), that the PGR has access to the necessary facilities for the research, including access to facilities such as printing, photocopying and facilities commensurate with the requirements of the research.
- (v) approving a timetable of work and endeavouring to see that it is followed. Supervisors should emphasise to PGRs that the UoL 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 to assist the PGRs 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, and supporting them with any relevant Research Governance requirements and ethical procedures and ethical review;
- (xi) making PGRs aware of the relevant LTU's Research Data Management and Information Technology Security policies;
- (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/Accredited Institution 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.
- (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 PGRT, 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 PGRT 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 PGRT 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 UoL should be taken into account;
- (xxiii) keeping the PGRT informed of any absences likely to impact upon time available for supervisory duties;
- (xxiv) sending forward recommendations for the appointment of Examiners to the PGRT;

- (xxv) ensuring that the PGR is aware of the UoL 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 LTU PGRT 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.
- 4.4 In circumstances where supervisors leave the UoL or LTU they must ensure that, prior to their departure, the PGRT is notified. In this situation, the Post graduate Research Tutor (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 UoL or LTU for an extended period, the PGRT (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 two months, arrangements will normally be put in place to identify an alternative supervisor or co-supervisor to ensure continuity of supervision is maintained.
- 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 LTU (and where appropriate, the UoL), 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 sections 4.8 and 4.9 below);
 - (v) ensuring, in partnership with the supervisor, that there are written records of formal supervision meetings;
 - (vi) to submit, when requested, regular written summaries of overall progress to their supervisors or, where appropriate, PGRT or Head of School;
 - (vii) to comply with normal working arrangements in the Faculty/School or Accredited Institution;
 - (viii) to discuss with their supervisor whether any teaching or other work undertaken will adversely affect the time available for the conduct of the research and make appropriate arrangements;
 - (vix) to comply with Health and Safety requirements;
 - (x) to comply with any ethical requirements or appropriate Research Governance;
 - (xi) to comply with the LTU Data Management and Information Security policies;
 - (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 UoL and LTU 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 UoL and LTU and abide by the regulations specified for the use of these facilities;
 - (xvi) to assist the UoL and LTU 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 PGRT 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 PGRT or appropriate senior member of staff within the 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 UoL's requirements.
- 4.7 PGRs are encouraged to maintain 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). Heads of School are encouraged to specify the minimum number of meetings required in the relevant areas subject to meeting the minimum requirements specified by the UoL 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. Full-time PGRs will continue to be entitled to a minimum of 10 supervision meetings a year (and part-time candidates a minimum of 5 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 candidate to initiate these meetings and 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 at the UoL:

Model 1: Co-supervision

Either (a) one main supervisor together with a Research Support Group of between 2-3 (which may include individuals who are external to the UoL and LTU); the Research Support Group is advised to meet with the PGR every 6 months to review progress and to discuss this with the PGR.

or (b) one main supervisor with a co-supervisor(s) (who may be external to the UoL).

Model 2: One main supervisor together with a Mentor/Adviser (who may also attend supervision meetings and must be a member of staff of the UoL) 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.

LTU operates 2 supervision models:

(1) joint supervision arrangements in which PGRs have a supervision team comprising a main supervisor based at LTU and a second supervisor who is from the UoL. Additional LTU co-supervisors may be appointed if appropriate.

(2) joint supervision with a main supervisor and co-supervisor who are both supervisors drawn from LTU. At least one of the supervisors will hold "model 1" status¹

- 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 PGRT (see note 14) 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 PGRT is the supervisor a nominee, normally the Director of Research should be appointed. There should be a mechanism in place within the School/Faculty/Accredited Institution, which is clearly publicised, to enable PGRs to seek independent sources of advice when a PGR/supervisor relationship is not working well.

At LTU PGRs are offered annually the chance to meet with the PGRT without their supervisors, to review progress and raise any matters of concern. The LTU PGRT will contact PGRs on each anniversary of their registration to offer them an opportunity for such a meeting. For MA(Res) and MSc(Res) PGRs the meeting will be with the Deputy PGRT with responsibility for Masters by Research. In addition the PGRT will hold bi-monthly PGR Forums, to which all PGRs are invited.

- 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 by LTU. 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, School, or Accredited Institution. 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 Supervisor 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.

At LTU regular reports on PGR progression are required; these are presented to the Research Degrees Sub-Committee for review. LTU's reporting processes require reports on admission, transfer and examination to be presented to the first Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee meeting after the event. Interim 6th and 12th monthly review reports are presented for both full-time and part-time PGRs throughout their candidature to the next meeting of the Research Degrees Sub-Committee. The

¹ Some LTU PGRs commencing study prior to 01 August 2016 may, in addition, be appointed a UoL mentor

Committee considers the reports and where there are matters of concern arising, recommends the appropriate action to the supervisors.

In addition to the 6 month supervisor's progress report and the transfer report (see below) post-transfer progress reviews will be held annually on the anniversary of registration. These will include a summary of progress on the research and plan for completion submitted by the PGR followed by a review meeting with the supervisor(s) and PGR present. The report of the review meeting will be considered by the Research Degrees Sub-Committee.

- 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 or Accredited Institution, 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 School, Faculty or Accredited Institution's Protocol. 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 of 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 UoL's prescribed time-limits for 'transfer' decisions are adhered to. These time limits are prescribed by the UoL for each doctoral programme of study and are published in the relevant programme of study specification on the University of Leeds website http://ses.leeds.ac.uk/info/22168/student_support-related_policies/646/ordinances . 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 UoL's prescribed time limit permits 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 candidate withdraw from a research degree candidature.

At LTU transfer reports will normally be submitted within 10 months of commencement for full-time study, to enable the process to be completed with the 12 months stipulated by the UoL's regulations; part-time PGRs will normally submit reports within 22 months of commencement to ensure that transfer is completed by 24 months.

The Transfer panel is composed of either the PGRT (normally) or Chair or Deputy Chair of the Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee (in the chair) the LTU main supervisor, and at least one Independent Assessor who has not been involved in the supervisory team. The Independent Assessor should be a subject specialist

(usually drawn from the academic staff at LTU, but who might be an academic from the UoL or in exceptional cases, with permission from Graduate Board's Programmes of Study and Audit Group from another institution). Co-supervisors are invited to be in attendance, but are not deemed to have formal membership of the panel for the purposes of assessment and decision on transfer.

The transfer report should, as a minimum, contain the following elements:

- Outline of the proposed research project, identifying clearly the proposed title, the main research question and sub-questions
- A discussion of the methodology to be employed to answer the research question, including reference to the sources to be used, the potential problems inherent in these sources, and the way the research process will be designed to overcome them.
- A critical analysis of the existing literature on the question, justifying the usefulness of the proposed research and indicating how it is hoped it will contribute to existing debates or understandings.
- A brief schedule, identifying how it is proposed the work will be undertaken and completed.
- A sample of writing which draws on initial research activities and demonstrates the PGR's ability to present research findings and draw appropriate conclusions from them.
- A bibliography of resources to be used for the research.
- An appendix containing any other relevant materials (e.g. questionnaires, consent forms, ethical approvals).

(In total this package of materials to be around 5,000-8,000 words.)

Where appropriate, and necessary to give the Transfer panel a sufficient view of the nature, scope and practicality of the project, and the PGR's ability to undertake it, additional materials might be added by the PGR to these minimum requirements. This may include a short presentation by the PGR (e.g. PowerPoint).

In addition the candidate will be required to submit an Academic Integrity Form.

- 6.3 The decision on transfer must be recorded in writing, agreed by all 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 PGRT, as appropriate (see note 8) (i) should keep a comprehensive record of the PGR's 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) shall have overall responsibility for ensuring that the formal assessment and monitoring of progress takes place and that any emerging issues are addressed.
- 6.5 The PGRT, as appropriate (see note 8) is strongly encouraged to make provision for research PGRs to present their work regularly at seminars involving staff and other research PGRs.
7. PGR Representation, Feedback and Channels of Communication and Complaints
(see also 5.2 above)
- 7.1 The PGRT (see note 8) should ensure that PGRs, are represented on the postgraduate or other relevant staff-student committee and on the Research and Knowledge Exchange 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.

PGRs have a representative on the Research Degrees Sub-Committee and the Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee. There is also an annual PGRs' forum to which feedback is invited from all PGRs, which is reported to the Research Degrees Sub-Committee for consideration and action.

- 7.2 PGRs wishing to make a complaint should first do so by using the complaints procedure provided by LTU, as follows.

PGRs who are dissatisfied with any aspect of their supervision or with facilities available for their research are encouraged to first consult with their supervisor or the PGRT on an informal basis. If they are dissatisfied at the outcome of that consultation, they should then make use of the LTU Complaints Procedure. A copy of any formal submission should also be provided to Postgraduate Research and Operations at the UoL for information (which will forward a copy to the UoL's Complaints Officer). Should a PGR remain dissatisfied by the LTU response to a complaint, they may ask the UoL's Complaints Officer to consider any outstanding concerns. If the complaint cannot be resolved by the UoL, the PGR may choose to contact the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education.

- 7.3 The UoL has in place a procedure governing the consideration of postgraduate research appeals (which is published on the UoL website).

The procedure for considering appeals against inadequate academic progress can be found at http://www.leeds.ac.uk/secretariat/student_cases.html.

- 7.4 The UoL 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 LTU Protocol.

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, Schools or Accredited Institutions 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 Accredited Institution's Computing network and internet
- Access to a printer for work prescribed by the Accredited Institution
- Access to a photocopier for work prescribed by the Accredited Institution
- Access to a telephone for work prescribed by the Accredited Institution

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 the PGRT and the Research Degrees Sub-Committee

The responsibilities of the PGRT and the Research Degrees Sub-Committee 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 research PGRs
- To ensure that there are appropriate procedures in place at LTU to consider appeals by research PGRs as set out in the procedures governing postgraduate research PGRs which is published on the UoL website
- The delegation, where relevant, of responsibilities for postgraduate matters to appropriate individuals (for example Deans or the PGRT)
- To recommend supervisors to the Graduate Board
- To make alternative and acceptable supervision arrangements when a supervisor leaves the UoL or LTU
- 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 UoL in this Code)
- To ensure that a comprehensive record of the research degree candidature of all PGRs is maintained
- To ensure that postgraduate research PGRs are represented on relevant 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 UoL 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 or Accredited Institutions 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 UoL procedures together with the criteria for the recognition of different levels of achievement. These instructions are widely available within the UoL **and made available to staff at LTU where appropriate.**

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 UoL 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 UoL appeals procedure (see 7.3 above) must be provided to the candidate.

UoL 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, Faculties and Accredited Institutions.

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 UoL with authority to register research degree candidates (Leeds Trinity University and York St John University) who will each also have their own Protocol for the Implementation of the UoL Code of Practice. Some Faculties within the UoL may admit and register PGRs through a Faculty Graduate School.
2. Heads of Schools recommend the appointment of PGRTs 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. However, where applicants do not satisfy the minimum stated requirements for acceptance as a PGR the decision may be made by the PGRT, acting alone.
5. The UoL'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. As part of the process of establishing a training plan the written and spoken English language of all PGRs whose first language is not English will be assessed by their supervisor(s) in accordance with the Traffic Light Language Development Scheme https://www.leeds.ac.uk/arts/info/20056/language_centre. The purpose of the assessment is to identify those PGRs who have been classed as suitable for admission but who would benefit from further core language development.
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 UoL and must have undertaken appropriate UoL 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 accepted that gaps between meetings of more than 8 weeks to occur (or 12 weeks for part-time PGRs)
14. The Head of School or PGRT 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 candidates the equivalent point will be after nine months.