Transfer Assessment Process
(Guidance for the Transfer Panel, PGR Tutor and Administrator)
(2017-18)
(Updated February 2018)

1. Background

(a) Purpose of the transfer assessment

The assessment at the "transfer" stage is intended to identify whether the individual Postgraduate Researcher (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. It has, however, no direct bearing on whether the PGR will be successful at final examination.

(b) Evidence upon which the decision on transfer is based

The transfer assessment panel require access to the following information (via GRAD)):

- PGR's Transfer Report[1]
- A planned schedule for completion of the thesis within the standard period of study[2] (for example by a using a Gantt chart)
- Training Plan and record of training undertaken

---

[1] The Faculty Protocol will provide details of the required format for the PGR's Transfer Report.
[2] http://students.leeds.ac.uk/info/10124/during_your_research/765/duration_of_study

1

- PGR's pre-transfer report which includes a report on progress to date, information relating to ethical review and data storage arrangements and a statement of academic integrity[3]
- Reports on the PGR's progress from the supervisor(s) (the first formal progress[4] and pre-transfer stage reports)

All PGRs must undergo a transfer interview and this should take the form of a *viva voce* examination. It is expected that PGRs will be present in Leeds for their transfer with all members of the transfer panel in attendance. This equally applies to any repeat transfer assessment should one be required.

Practice-led PGRs have additional requirements for transfer, these are listed in the practice-led section below.

(c) Composition of the transfer assessment panel

The University's Code of Practice for Research Degree Candidatures <u>requires</u> that the decision on transfer is taken by a transfer assessment panel 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 panel. At least two members of the 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.[5]

In those areas where the transfer panel comprises one independent assessor together with the supervisor(s), an independent chair must also be appointed when a second transfer viva is deemed to be necessary

Best Practice for the composition of the Panel

The Graduate Board is of the view that best practice is for the decision on transfer to be taken by a Panel comprising individuals independent of the supervisory team. The supervisor, whilst not involved in making the decision on transfer, has a key role to play and should be given the opportunity to contribute to the process and express their view. In some areas it is recognised that, for sound academic reasons, it may be difficult to identify two individuals, independent of the supervisory team, who both have sufficient subject expertise to constitute the panel. In such circumstances it is acceptable for the Panel to comprise two members, one with the appropriate subject expertise and the other an experienced PGR supervisor and/or examiner. This would ensure confidence in the level of independence in the decision making process and balance both the practice considerations and academic aspects.

Principal Panel Member (for GRAD purposes)

One member of the Panel must be designated in GRAD as the 'Principal Panel Member'. This cannot be one of the supervisors and must be someone independent of the supervisory team (normally the individual acting as the independent assessor)). This person will receive the task and notification to complete the joint report of the panel after the viva in GRAD. Only the 'Principal Panel Member' can input and edit the report in GRAD on behalf of the other panel members.

---

[3] For Leeds Trinity and York St John Universities the relevant forms are available on the <u>SES website</u>
[4] For full-time PGRs at six months (or earlier) and in the case of part-time PGRs at nine months (or earlier)
[5] The Faculty Protocol will include details of the constitution of a transfer assessment panel within the Faculty and/or its constituent Schools

(d) Use of an External Assessor (individual from outside of the University)

In exceptional cases, consideration may be given by the Graduate Board's Programmes of Study and Audit Group for the use of an External Assessor on the transfer assessment panel. Such cases might, for example, include situations where it is not possible to identify a member of staff at Leeds who has relevant expertise and who is unconnected with the supervision of the PGR[6].

(e) Faculty/School specific guidance on the transfer process

Faculties/Schools should make available to PGRs written guidance on the transfer process including details of local deadlines for submission of the transfer report, the evidence upon which the decision is based and the composition of the transfer panel within the particular Faculty concerned. Guidance will be included in the Faculty Protocol for the implementation of the University Code of Practice for Research Degree Candidatures.

Faculty Protocols are available on the Student Education Service website.

Where the Faculty Graduate School Committees identifies specific requirements (eg discipline specific questions) not covered in the University's Joint Report of the transfer assessment panel these may be addressed in the Feedback/General Comments section of the Form. Careful consideration must be given, however, to ensure that PGRs are not set additional hurdles at the transfer stage.

2. Preparing for Transfer

Organisational Development and Professional Learning will be offering workshop training and development opportunities for PGRs in preparing for your transfer for the 17/18 academic year. Online provision is currently under development and will be available for the 18/19 academic year. Workshop booking details are available on the **ODPL website.**

3. Transfer Interview

The University does not have any specific requirements regarding the length of the Transfer Interview. The expectation is that the Transfer Interview (and any second interview (if required)) will be conducted at the University with the PGR and all members of the Panel present. If a PGR is unable to be present in the UK at the appropriate time for the transfer assessment they may, in exceptional circumstances, be permitted a suspension to their period of study, until they can attend an assessment in the UK. The University does not permit the use of Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) (eg skype) for the transfer assessment. PGRTs/PGRAs should contact PGRO for advice when significant difficulties with the attendance of all panel members are encountered.

(a) Before the Transfer Interview

PGRs should be given the opportunity either before or during the transfer interview to discuss their progress and supervision in the absence of the supervisor(s).

---

[6] In sending forward recommendations for the appointment of an External Assessor, Faculties/Schools will be required to provide the following information for consideration: details of the current employment of the proposed assessor (the normal expectation is that they will be senior members of the academic staff of a UK University or other UK higher education establishment). Where an External Assessor is approved for appointment, the relevant Postgraduate Research Tutor is responsible for ensuring that the Assessor is fully briefed upon the regulations and procedures of the University of Leeds. It is **not possible** for the same individual to act as the External Assessor at transfer stage and as the External Examiner for the final examination of the PGR.

(b) Transfer Interview

One member of the transfer assessment panel (usually the Chair) should:

Prior to the PGR being present:

- ask panel members for their initial impression, but no decision should be made at this stage, nor should the PGR be told the likely outcome;

- clarify any division of responsibility amongst the panel regarding the focus of the questions eg panel member X will concentrate on methodology, member Y on the planned schedule for completion of the thesis etc. However, it is usually the case that there will be some overlap.

On the arrival of the PGR:

- welcome the PGR and introduce panel members;

- aim to put the PGR at their ease as far as possible (seating, welcome, introductions)

- explain the purpose of the transfer assessment, go through the format for the transfer interview and how things will work;

- the PGR should be told that they may request a break(s) during the assessment and that they may consult their copy of the submission (which may be annotated with notes/post-it-notes) during the assessment if it helps them

- explain the possible recommendations the transfer assessment panel can make (see possible recommendations section below);

- explain that success at the transfer stage has no direct bearing on whether the PGR will be successful at final examination it simply confirms that the transfer assessment panel is satisfied that the PGR and the project has the potential for success. To qualify for a doctoral award a PGR must meet the required learning outcomes for the degree and satisfy the examiners that his/her achievement is of sufficient merit and that the thesis contains evidence of originality and independent critical ability and matter suitable for publication;

- if appropriate explain to the PGR that after the interview they will be asked to withdraw from the meeting whilst the panel confers on their decision before asking them to return;

- ask the PGR if they have any questions and advise them to seek clarification should any part of the process or questioning be unclear;

During the Interview (Meeting)

- give the PGR the opportunity to make a brief presentation of their work;

- wherever possible, transfer panel members should pose succinct and focussed questions and avoid multi-part questions which are more difficult for the PGR to remember. Instead, where possible, ask one question at a time and use follow-up questions as necessary;

- allow the PGR time to collect their thoughts and develop responses to the questions posed by the panel;

- at the close of the interview ask the PGR if they feel the interview has covered all points they were expecting or if there is anything further they wish to raise;

- Although the transfer interview will normally run continuously, the Panel may wish to suggest a break in the case of longer transfer interview (for example should an interview reach two hours).

- In the event of a PGR becoming distressed, the Panel are advised to offer the PGR a break in order to compose him/herself before continuing. If a PGR is unable to continue, the Panel should contact PGR & Operations for advice.

4. Supporting Disabled Postgraduate Researchers

Disabled postgraduate researchers, their supervisors and the transfer assessment panel, can access a wide range of support from Disability Services [7]. The process for identifying and agreeing support and reasonable adjustments for the transfer assessment is set out in a separate document. This document, which is intended to provide a single point of reference for PGRs and staff in Disability Services, Schools/Faculties and PGR&O:

- Summarises the routine adjustments with clear precedents which can be accommodated without prior approval by PSAG.
- Provides examples of adjustments which may be facilitated with prior approval by PSAG, with a framework and timescale for consideration of these
- Summarises the support available to all PGRs in preparation for assessment.

There are time limits for the transfer assessment and it is therefore important that the need for reasonable adjustments is identified well in advance of the viva process to allow due consideration to be given prior to assessment as to what those reasonable adjustments might be. It is recommended that discussions about any reasonable adjustments for the transfer assessment should begin as part of first formal progress report (approx. month 6 of full-time study) which will be 3-6 months prior to the expected transfer viva date.

5 Reasonable Adjustments and Support for PGR Level Assessment and Examination

Information on any reasonable adjustments should be made available to the panel following discussions between the PGR, the supervisor(s), the Postgraduate Research Tutor and the University's Disability Services. The Chair of the transfer assessment panel will normally take responsibility for facilitating on the day any reasonable adjustments to the oral examination, which will have been agreed upon in advance. These arrangements ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to the oral examination so that the PGR is not disadvantaged by the process for assessment. The same academic standards for transfer to a specific research degree must, however, be upheld.

Further information, including examples of reasonable adjustments, is available on the SES website[8]. Guidance on arrangements can also be sought from Postgraduate Research and Operations (s.throp@adm.leeds.ac.uk).

6. Language/Communication Skills

The language/communication skills of all PGRs should be assessed by the transfer assessment panel at the transfer stage.

The transfer assessment panel should consider, whether writing a thesis at a standard suitable for submission for a research degree and defence of the thesis at an oral examination is a realistic prospect for the PGR. If the Panel reaches the view that this is

---

[7] http://ses.leeds.ac.uk/info/21810/disabled_student
http://ses.leeds.ac.uk/info/21810/disabled_students/918/disabled_postgraduate_researchers
[8] http://ses.leeds.ac.uk/downloads/download/937/pgr_reasonable_adjustments

not a realistic prospect then the Panel should recommend that the PGR be withdrawn.

Post-transfer all PGR's (ie home and international) are expected to continue to develop. From January 2018 the following workshops with be provided through OD&PL:

The Beginning Thesis Writer (up to Transfer)
The Developing Thesis Writer (post-Transfer)
The Finishing Thesis Writer (in the process of producing the thesis document)

7. Mitigating Circumstances

For PGRs the Graduate Board accommodates 'mitigating circumstances' by considering a period of suspension or postponement to the transfer assessment which will delay the deadline for the decision on transfer to be made (please see time limits below).

In order to recommend a PGR for transfer the panel must be satisfied that the PGR and the research project have the potential for success at doctoral level and also whether completion of a thesis within the standard period of study for the programme concerned is a reasonable expectation.

The same academic standards for transfer to a specific research degree must be upheld and mitigating circumstances which may have affected the candidate during their period of study should never lead the examiners to recommend transfer where the required evidence for success has not been demonstrated.

However such factors might be taken into account when determining what support the PGR may need going forward, including whether any suspension or extension of studies should be considered.

8.   Academic Integrity, Safeguarding Data and Ethical Requirements

All PGRs are required to provide information relating to Academic Integrity, Safeguarding Data and Ethical Requirements in GRAD when they submit their transfer report. This information is available to the Transfer Panel in GRAD and should be reviewed by the panel. The information will assist with discussions in the following areas:

(a) Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

All PGRs are required to maintain high standards of academic conduct and, in particular, to avoid conduct amounting to the fabrication of research results or plagiarism. Further information and guidance on academic integrity and plagiarism is available in the Postgraduate Researcher Handbook and the Guide for Research Degree Supervisors.

The procedure for investigating plagiarism in University assessments by PGRs (e.g. an allegation of plagiarism in a PGR's transfer report) are set out on the SES website (*see under complaints, appeals and disciplinary matter*s).

Where plagiarism is suspected in a transfer report the matter must be immediately reported to the Postgraduate Research Tutor and the School/Faculty PGR Administrator. The transfer assessment should be postponed and the allegation investigated by the School/Faculty Graduate School in accordance with the procedure. Further advice and guidance is available from Postgraduate Research and Operations (PGRO).

A sample of PGRs' transfer documents should be checked by the Faculty/School for plagiarism (for example through Turnitin). After PGRs have uploaded their transfer document into GRAD, administrators may download the files which can then be uploaded into Turnitin. The Faculty/School administrator shall inform the Postgraduate Research Tutor that the Turnitin error report is available. The Postgraduate Research Tutor will then take appropriate action if necessary.

(b) Safeguarding Data

PGRs should be aware of and comply with the University's policy for Safeguarding data. Data storage and safeguarding issues should be discussed at the transfer viva, where appropriate, and the transfer assessment panel should be satisfied that such matters are being appropriately addressed. It is the responsibility of the PGR to address any actions identified by the transfer assessment panel for completion.

(c) Engagement in Research Ethics

PGRs should be aware of, and comply with, the University's ethics arrangements.

PGRs are required to provide information about the arrangements they have made for ethical review of their research in GRAD when they submit their transfer report. This information will then be available in GRAD to the transfer assessment panel. Engagement in research ethics should be discussed at the transfer interview, where appropriate and the transfer assessment panel must be satisfied that such matters are being appropriately addressed and a reason for its decision must be given in the panel's report.

The University normally expects the need for any ethical review required by a PGR's work to be identified before transfer. Due to the time it can take to obtain ethical approval for research leaving the seeking of ethical approval until after transfer may prejudice the ability of the PGR to complete the research within the normal period of study. However, the University recognises that there may be, in a limited number of cases, exceptions to this principle.

Where the transfer assessment panel identify that ethical review is required but approval has not been granted, or if it anticipated that ethical review (or further ethical review) will be required in the research, the panel is required to provide further information including details of the steps the PGR has been asked to take. Completion of these actions is the responsibility of the PGR. Where the panel is not satisfied with the arrangements this should be clearly stated on the report form.

9.   Ethical Review of the Research

All PGRs are required to confirm that they are aware of, and comply with, the University's procedures for the review of ethical issues arising from research involving animals; human participants, their data or their tissue; or the potential for significant environmental impact.

The PGR's awareness of the ethical implications of their research, and that ethical approval has been sought and received where necessary, is reviewed at various stages in the candidature including the training needs analysis, the transfer stage and at examination entry.

In some cases it may be beneficial for the transfer assessment panel to have access to the ethics applications so they can see how the PGR intends to deal with the ethical issues of their research. The documents which make up the ethics application typically include the application form, recruitment material, participant information sheet and consent form.

If transfer assessment panel requires access to this documentation they should contact the PGR or their Supervisor in the first instance.

Further information about the University's research ethics policy and requirements for researchers is available at http://ris.leeds.ac.uk/goodpractice.

10.   Time Limits

Faculties/Schools are advised to avoid setting rigid deadlines for transfer which are earlier than those set by the University. They may, however, advise PGRs and their supervisors that it is normal practice within the Faculty/School for the transfer to take place earlier than

the University's deadline and to encourage supervisors to arrange transfers in accordance with local practice. However, where necessary additional time for completion of the transfer process should be permitted provided this is within the timescales set by the University.

It is, however, important that the University's prescribed time limits for transfer are adhered to. Postponement of the transfer assessment beyond the University's timescales requires the permission of the Programmes of Study and Audit Group (or Chair acting on its behalf). Requests for postponements should be submitted to PGRO for consideration on behalf of PSAG.

The University's time limits for transfer (excluding any adjustments for formal periods of suspended study are set out below:

Method of Study	Degree	Transfer interview to be held	Final Decision on Transfer must be taken by no later than
Full-time	Provisional PhD or MD	within the first 12 months of period of study	18 months from the date of commencement of study
Part-time	Provisional PhD	within the first 24 months of period of study	30 months from the date of commencement of study
Full-time	Provisional DClin Psychol, DClinDent, DPaedDent	within the first 18 months of period of study	24 months from the date of commencement of study
Part-time	Provisional DClinDent, DPaedDent	Within the first 30 months of period of study	38 months from the date of commencement of study
Part-time	Provisional MD	within the first 18 months of period of study	24 months from the date of commencement of study
Full-time	Provisional EdD	within the first 24 months of period of study	24 months from the date of commencement of study
Part-time	Provisional EdD	within the first 36 months of period of study	36 months from the date of commencement of study
Split-site	Provisional PhD	As specified in the Programme of Study for Models A, B or C[9]	
Full-time	Integrated degree of PhD and Master	PGRs are accepted for study to the registration category of Postgraduate Research. Upon completion of the first year, the progress of PGRs is reviewed and, where it is satisfactory, registration to a Provisional PhD candidature is permitted. If successful in progressing to Provisional PhD status, PGRs will be required to undergo assessment by a formal transfer assessment panel for transfer to PhD status before the end of the second year of study	

11. Possible Recommendations

The recommendations that may be made by transfer assessment panels are:

---

[9] Split-site doctoral candidates must be present in Leeds for their transfer assessment. This equally applies to a second, or repeat, transfer assessment should one be needed. If a PGR is unable to be present in the UK at the appropriate time for the transfer assessment they may, in exceptional circumstances, be permitted a suspension to their period of study, until they can attend an assessment in the UK

(i)   In the case of Provisional candidatures for doctoral degrees, <u>transfer to doctoral registration</u>;

(ii)   In the case of Provisional candidatures for the degree of PhD, <u>transfer to M Phil registration</u>[10];

(iii)   On the first occasion only that the work is assessed, <u>deferment</u> of a decision about the transfer for a limited period to permit the work to be revised and then reassessed (see time limits above);

(iv)   A decision that the PGR <u>withdraw</u> from a research degree candidature.

Please note that transfer to a Mastership by Research at this stage of a candidature is not permitted.

By the end of the appropriate period (or earlier if possible) the following information is required from the relevant Faculty/School in respect of each PGR:

(i)   whether the PGR should now be registered for the degree of PhD (or other doctoral programme) or MPhil

(ii)

(iii)   the [draft title of the thesis](#)[11]

(iv)   confirmation that the PGR has (a) made satisfactory progress on the agreed training plan, (b) appropriate ethical review arrangements are in place and (c) that data storage and safeguarding issues have been addressed

(v)   any other factors which the Faculty/School wishes to draw to the attention of the Graduate Board.

In addition, for PGRs registered on practice-led programmes only:

(vi)   details of the work that will contribute to their final submission[12].

It is the responsibility of the PGR to complete any actions identified in (iii) (a), (b) or (c) above. The University's Programmes of Study and Audit Group may ask the School to report on progress against the actions at a later point.

12.   Deferral of the Decision

A case for the deferral of the transfer decision can be made by the transfer assessment panel on academic grounds to the Programmes of Study and Audit Group.

The decision on transfer should also be deferred when a realistic plan for completion of the thesis, within the standard period of study, is not evident. The decision should be deferred pending the receipt of a satisfactory plan.

The period of any deferral is normally no more than three months and in any event cannot be more than six months. However, iIn all cases a final decision must be reached within

---

[10] In the case of split-site candidates the option to transfer to MPhil registration is normally NOT available.

[11] Graduate Board provides best practice guidance on thesis titles. This is available at http://ses.leeds.ac.uk/info/22173/research_degree-related_policies/723/thesis_titles_research_students

[12] In addition to the usual requirements for transfer, a practice-led PGR must set out what they expect to include for assessment as the final submission. Please see the relevant section of this document (below) for further advice.

the time limit specified (see time limits above). When the initial transfer assessment is conducted late this will reduce the timescale by which the panel may defer a decision– please see section 13 for further advice.

The PGR must be given, in writing clear guidance on the reasons for deferral of the decision, details of the further work required by the panel and the revised deadline for submission. This guidance should not impede the PGR's use of their own independent critical ability and initiative.

In the event that a decision on transfer is deferred it is normally expected that all members of the transfer assessment panel will be involved in the re-assessment.

It should also be explained to the PGR that they will be required to attend in person a second transfer interview if the panel is not satisfied with the revised material.

All deferred PGRs must be offered a second transfer interview if, after considering the resubmitted work, the panel is of the view that, from the consideration of the written submission, the PGR has not met the criteria for transfer to Doctoral candidature. PGRs and panel members must make themselves available for the second transfer interview within a reasonable period of time.

Deferred PGRs should only proceed to further data collection following careful consideration by their supervisors and/or PGR Tutor.

If a Faculty/School is unable to make a recommendation that the PGR should proceed to either doctoral or MPhil study (where that option is available) within the time limit allowed then the PGR must withdraw. Where a PGR initially registered for a Provisional PhD is recommended to proceed to an MPhil, the studentship awarding body should be informed and the necessary adjustment in funding made.

13.   Postponement of the Decision on Transfer

The regulations require that a decision on transfer will normally be taken by no later than 12 months from the date of commencement of full-time Provisional PhD study (see time limits above).

The Graduate Board is of the view that postponement of the decision because the supervisor(s) believes the PGR is not ready for transfer or because a member of the transfer assessment panel is unavailable should only occur in the most exceptional cases and subject to prior approval by its Programmes of Study and Audit Group.

In all cases a final decision on transfer must be taken within the time limits specified (see time limits above).

When the initial transfer assessment is conducted late this will reduce the timescale by which the transfer assessment panel may defer a subsequent decision. For example, a full-time PGR commencing Provisional PhD study in October 2017 should undergo an assessment for transfer by no later than 30 September 2018. The panel may defer the decision on academic grounds by up to 6 months with a revised deadline for a decision on transfer of 31 March 2019. However, if the first assessment is postponed until late December 2018 the panel no longer has the option to defer the decision by 6 months – it may only defer the decision on transfer by 3 months until 31 March 2019.

14.   Informing the PGR of the Decision

The University recommends that a Faculty/School adopts a consistent approach for all PGRs. This could be that the PGR is asked to leave the meeting whilst the members of the transfer assessment panel deliberate their decision before being called back to the meeting to be informed of the panel's recommendation.

It is important that PGRs receive timely feedback on the outcome of their transfer assessment. For this reason it is expected that the Joint Report of the Transfer Assessment Panel will be completed within 10 working days of the date of the transfer viva and the PGR informed of the decision within this timescale.

Formal notification of the outcome will be sent by PGRO after the Graduate Board's Programmes of Study and Audit Group (PSAG) has considered the report of the panel.

In the event of transfer to full doctoral status
- The PGR will receive formal notification of the outcome via email (from the GRAD system) after the report and recommendation has been approved by PSAG. The joint report of the transfer assessment panel will also be visible in GRAD at that point.

In the event of a deferral of the decision
- It is essential that the PGR is made aware of the revisions that are required by the panel in reasonable time and that the deadline for re-submission of the work is confirmed. It is equally important that the supervisor(s) are aware of this information.
- Once the PGRT confirms the joint report of the transfer assessment panel in GRAD an automated email notification is sent to the PGR with a copy to their supervisor. The PGR is informed that the panel has recommended deferral of the decision on transfer and the report is now available to view in GRAD. They are also advised that they will receive formal notification of the outcome shortly together with confirmation of the deadline for resubmission.
- Once the report and recommendation has been approved by PSAG the PGR will receive formal notification of the outcome via email (from the GRAD system), including the date for resubmission

In the event of transfer to MPhil status
- The PGR will receive formal notification of the outcome via email (from the GRAD system) after the report and recommendation has been approved by PSAG. The joint report of the transfer assessment panel will also be visible in GRAD at that point.

In the event of a recommendation for withdrawal
- The PGR will receive a formal letter from PGRO after the report and recommendation has been approved by PSAG. The joint report of the transfer assessment panel will also be visible in GRAD at that point. The letter will be sent to the permanent home and term time addresses recorded in BANNER.

In the event that the transfer assessment panel becomes concerned about a PGR's wellbeing or behaviour on receiving an adverse academic decision they should inform the PGR's Head of School or Faculty Graduate School Manager who will help refer the PGR to more specialist support services (such as the Student Counselling and Wellbeing Service)

Staff concerned about a PGR can ask for advice by calling Counselling and Wellbeing staff during office hours on extension 34107.

15. **Recording of the Decision (for those outstanding transfers to be completed outside of GRAD)**

From March 2017 it is expected that the transfer process will normally be started and completed in GRAD.

For those remaining transfers which are conducted outside of GRAD the decision on

transfer must be recorded on the University's Joint Report of the Transfer Assessment Panel pro forma and agreed by all members of the Panel. As a minimum the report be signed by either the Chair or Independent Assessor confirming agreement on behalf of all parties. Some Faculties may, however, require reports within their own Faculty to be signed by all members of the panel. In such cases the Faculty will advise members of the panel accordingly and ensure that appropriate checks are put in place before the PGR Tutor authorises the recommendation on transfer. In all cases the PGR must receive a copy of the transfer assessment panel's report. The report will be uploaded to GRAD by PGRO (under 'Project Files' on the PGR's Project Page).

Responsibility of the Faculty Graduate School Office/School Office: Checking the content of the Joint Transfer Report Form (when the process is completed outside of GRAD)

Faculty Graduate School/School administrative staff are responsible for checking that all sections of the form have been completed, relevant signatures obtained and that where the form requests additional information this has been provided by the transfer assessment panel in the appropriate text box.

Responsibility of the Postgraduate Research Tutor: Quality Assurance (when the process is completed outside of GRAD)

- The Postgraduate Research Tutor is responsible for ensuring the quality and appropriateness of the information provided in the joint report of the transfer assessment panel.

- The Postgraduate Research Tutor should ensure, before releasing the recommendation to PGR and Operations, that the recommendation of the Panel is consistent with the content of the form.

- If the Postgraduate Research Tutor is not satisfied with the information contained in the report they should make further enquiries of the transfer assessment panel with the support of the Faculty Graduate School/School Office.

- Postgraduate Research Tutors are asked to bear in mind that the information contained in the report is made available to the PGR via GRAD and is the formal feedback on the transfer process. It should, therefore be written in a format suitable for this purpose.

Responsibility of Postgraduate Research and Operations (when the process is completed outside of GRAD only)

On receipt of a recommendation for transfer to full doctoral status PGR and Operations will check the following information (required for the transfer confirmation letter) before transfer is confirmed:

(a) Recommendation made (page 1)
(b) Thesis title (page 1)
(c) Supervisory team (page 1)
(d) Ethical review information (page 2)

PGR and Operations will continue to check the full report in the case of recommendations for deferral, transfer to M Phil or withdrawal. It will raise any issues for clarification with the School/Faculty before the recommendation is considered on behalf of the Programmes of Study and Audit Group.

The Chair of the Graduate Board has asked PGR and Operations to take a "spot checking" role with effect from February 2015. A random 10% sample of reports is checked each month. Any issues identified are referred to the Chair of the Programmes of Study and Audit Group for consideration.

16. **Role of the Independent Assessor/Internal Examiner**

The Graduate Board has agreed that it is possible for the same individual to act as the Independent Assessor at the "transfer" stage and as the Internal Examiner in the final examination. However, if an Independent Assessor is to subsequently act as an Internal Examiner it was agreed that direct involvement in the academic assessment, monitoring and provision of feedback on the work is not appropriate subsequent to the transfer assessment (for example reading and commenting on academic work submitted by the PGR at the end of years 2 and 3) and prior to the oral examination.

17. **Using GRAD to support the transfer assessment process** (*Information of particular relevance to the PGR Tutor/ Administrator)*

GRAD must be used to support the transfer process.

Dashboards

PGRAs will receive notifications from GRAD throughout the process as and when certain steps are completed. PGRAs and PGRTs should also note that they have access to a number of dashboards form the Graduate School menu in GRAD.

'Transfer Progress' dashboard:

Allows you to monitor the current transfer assessments in your Faculty/School. This dashboard provides an overview summary of the transfers underway in the Faculty/School including the numbers at each stage in the process. Selecting the number will take you through to the individual PGRs at that stage in the process and who the task is currently awaiting action from.

'Transfer Overview' dashboard:

Allows you to monitor where transfer dates are due and the current status of the transfer assessment. This dashboard provides a list of PGRs in your Faculty/School with the deadline for transfer date, the current 'status' (e.g. what stage in the process the workflow has reached) and the date the transfer process was completed (decision date).

'Transfer Meetings' dashboard:

Allows you to monitor where transfer dates are due and whether or not a date has been set for the viva. This dashboard provides a list of PGRs in your Faculty/School with the deadline for transfer date and the date for the transfer viva (if set).

GRAD workflow process

In those cases where the transfer process will be managed entirely though GRAD the following guidance will assist.

STEP 1 (A): Recording the members of the transfer assessment panel

- **PGR Administrators (PGRA) can record the names of the panel members** and expected transfer viva date in GRAD using the 'Project Dates' edit functionality. Details of the transfer assessment panel members can be added independently of the expected viva date. Once completed, this information will display to the Supervisor when they complete the pre-transfer project form. This functionality is available to the PGRA up to the transfer viva date. After the transfer viva date any required changes should be sent to PGRO.s Any transfer assessment panel members and viva date recorded by the PGRA will show on the transfer dashboards immediately.

- **Supervisors will be prompted to add the panel members** and viva date as part of the pre-transfer progress report form in those cases where the PGRA had not already recorded this..

- Please note that one member of the Panel must be designated in GRAD as the 'Principal Panel Member'. This must be someone independent of the supervisory team (normally the independent assessor). It cannot be one of the Supervisors. The 'Principal Panel Member' will receive the task and notification to complete the joint report of the panel after the viva. Only the 'Principal Panel Member' can input and edit the report in GRAD on behalf of the other panel members.

STEP 1 (B): Upload of transfer material by the PGR

- Only the PGR can start the transfer workflow, using the 'Transfer' workflow from the right hand side menu of their project page. PGRs will be required to complete the pre-transfer progress report form, academic integrity, ethics and safeguarding date form and upload the work required for transfer.

- Once the PGR has completed the workflow and submitted the work, a task and email notification will be sent to the main supervisors (copy to the co supervisors).

STEP 2: Supervisor completes the pre-transfer progress report form

- The Main supervisor can access the PGR's submission either via the task menu in GRAD or by clicking on the link in the email

- The Main Supervisor completes the pre-transfer progress report form (this task can be delegated to one of the other supervisors using the 'delegate this task' option on the right hand side menu.

- The supervisor will be prompted to either check the panel member details and viva date as already entered by the PGRA under step 1 (A) or will be prompted to enter the details at this stage if the details have not already been entered by the PGRA. **The workflow cannot progress forward until the panel members and viva date have been entered/confirmed.**

- Once the Supervisor has completed the workflow and submitted pre-transfer progress report, email notifications will be sent to the transfer panel members and the PGRA.

STEP 3: Panel members consider the submission and Viva is held

- The Panel members can access the forms completed by the PGR and the Supervisor via the 'My Assessments' section of GRAD or via the link in the email notification.

STEP 4: Principal Panel Member (Independent Assessor or Transfer Panel Chair and <u>not</u> the supervisor(s)) completes the joint report of the transfer assessment Panel in GRAD

- After the transfer viva date, the Principal Panel Member (who must be independent of the supervisory team) will receive a task and notification to complete the joint report of the panel. Only this person can input and edit the report in GRAD.

- Recommended best practice is that the panel members complete the joint report immediately after the transfer viva whilst all members are still present.

- If this is not possible, it is recommended that after the Principal Panel Member has drafted the report they select 'save for later'. Outside of GRAD the Principal Panel Member can email the other Panel members to let them know the draft report is available to view in GRAD and invite comments. The other Panel members will have the option to view the draft report in GRAD (but not edit it) in the transfer workflow for the relevant PGR. They will need to forward comments on the draft to the Principal Panel Member outside of GRAD. The Principal Panel Member can then edit the report to include any comments before saving and submitting it.

- Once the Principal Panel Member has completed the workflow and submitted the joint report of the panel an email notification will be sent to the Postgraduate Research Tutor.

STEP 5: PGRT reviews the recommendation and report in GRAD

- The PGRT can access the forms completed by the PGR, Supervisor and the Panel via the task menu or via the link in the email notification.

- The PGRT must be satisfied that the transfer assessment has been completed in accordance with the University's Code of Practice for Research Degree Candidatures and of the quality and appropriateness of the information provided and that this is consistent with the overall recommendation made by the transfer assessment panel (see "possible recommendations" above).

- If the PGRT is happy with the report and recommendation they can submit this forward using the green button on the right hand side menu.

- If the PGRT feels that further information is necessary the report can be returned to the Principal Panel Member using the green button on the right hand side menu. Any actions required can be added to the Admin Notes section or sent separately via email. If using the admin notes it is strongly recommended that the Private notes are used for this type of action. The Principal Panel Member can update the report in GRAD and resubmit this to the PGRT

- Once the PGRT has completed the workflow and submitted the joint report of the panel an email notification will be sent to the PGR&O.

STEP 6: Consideration by Programmes of Study and Audit Group

- PGRO will arrange for action to be taken on behalf of the Programmes of Study and Audit Group to consider the transfer recommendation before recording the decision on BANNER and in GRAD.

STEP 7: Consideration by Programmes of Study and Audit Group

- Confirmation of the transfer outcome will be sent to the PGR, their supervisors and the PGRA via GRAD in the formal of an email notification, with the exception of recommendations for withdrawal when a formal letter will still be sent.

- For PGRs recommended for transfer to full degree status the process is now complete. Where the recommendation was deferral of the decision the process moves to step 8.

STEP 8: (If required) Resubmission of the transfer submission by the PGR

- The PGR will receive a 'task' to resubmit the work for assessment. This task will remain until the work is resubmitted.

- The PGR must use the same transfer workflow to resubmit their transfer report for re-assessment. As part of this they will complete the pre-transfer progress report form, academic integrity, ethics and safeguarding date form and upload the work required for transfer.

- Once the PGR has completed the workflow and submitted the work, a task and email notification will be sent to the Principal Panel Member, copied to the other panel members.

STEP 9: Panel members consider the resubmission

- The Panel members can access the forms completed by the PGR and the Supervisor via the 'My Assessments' section of GRAD or via the link in the email notification.
- The Panel members must reach a decision on whether transfer to full doctoral status can be recommended without the need for a second viva, or if a second viva will be needed.

STEP 10 (A): If no second viva is needed

- The Principal Panel Member must indicate this in the transfer record in GRAD. They will then be presented with the shorter, 'section 14' of the joint report to complete. Only the Principal Panel Member can input and edit the report in GRAD. Recommended best practice is that the panel members agree the text for this section via email which the Principal Panel Member can then input and submit.

- Once the Principal Panel Member has completed the workflow and submitted the joint report of the panel an email notification will be sent to the Postgraduate Research Tutor. The workflow then follows the same steps as for the first submission.

STEP 10 (B): If a second viva is needed

- The Principal Panel Member must indicate this in the transfer record in GRAD and record the date of the viva. Only the Principal Panel Member can record the date of the second viva in GRAD.

- After the transfer viva date, the Principal Panel Member will receive a task and notification to complete the joint report of the panel. Only the Principal Panel Member can input and edit the report in GRAD. Please follow the advice above

- Once the Principal Panel Member has completed the workflow and submitted the joint report of the panel an email notification will be sent to the Postgraduate Research Tutor. The workflow then follows the same steps as for the first submission.

18. **Late Transfer Recommendations**

The Graduate Board's Programmes of Study and Audit Group asks that the Head of School be formally requested to investigate the situation when a transfer recommendation for a PGR is more than six months late.

19. **Information Relevant to Practice-led Research Degree Programmes**

Additional information about transfer for PGRs on practice-led research degrees ONLY

(a) Confirmation of practice-led status

The PGR and School should clarify at the transfer stage if the research project is still defined as practice-led. It is not possible to change to a practice-led research degree after transfer.

(b) Transfer assessment

A practice element should be a mandatory submission requirement at transfer assessment, which is indicative of the practice. This could be a contained performance, small installation or concept to demonstrate practice. The PGR must be required to demonstrate the ability to link practice with the written analysis.

(c) Defining the final submission

It is important to identify at transfer stage if the PGR intends to include live performance or practice as part of the final submission and, if this will take place prior to submission of the written element, to facilitate arrangements for the early appointment of examiners (the GRAD Thesis submission (examination arrangements) workflow must therefore be completed at least 3 months prior to the date of the first live practice).

An intention stated at the transfer stage to include live practice in the final examinations will not be binding. If research determines that a live element is no longer required (or dates change), this should be reported as soon as possible and will not have any adverse consequences for the PGR.

However, PGRs who do not declare an intention to include live practice at transfer stage will not be permitted to include live practice as part of the submission.

In addition to the usual requirements for transfer, a practice-led PGR must set out what they expect to include for assessment as the final submission. This must meet the regulations for alternative submissions as set out in the Ordinances and Regulations and Programmes of Study for Research Degrees.

(d) Deferral

In accordance with regulations for a PhD, PGRs could be offered more time to rethink or redo the practice elements. A case for deferral of the transfer decision would have to be made on academic grounds to the Programmes of Study and Audit Group. Cases for deferral must be submitted by School/Institute/Faculty. The period of any extension is normally no more than three months and in any event cannot be more than six months.

20. **Appeals**

PGRs may appeal against an adverse academic decision using the Appeals Procedure for PGR Students.   The appeal must reach the University within 20 working days of the PGR receiving formal confirmation of the decision from PGR&O.

PGRs considering submitting an appeal should be strongly encouraged to seek independent advice and support from the LUU Student Advice Centre (Website: https://www.luu.org.uk/student-advice/ email: advice@luu.leeds.ac.uk. There are also a number of other support services available to PGRs. Details are available on the at SES website http://ses.leeds.ac.uk/info/21800/student_support for further information.

21. **Useful Websites**

The policies, forms and websites referred to in this document can be found on the following links:

Postgraduate Researcher Handbook (here)
http://students.leeds.ac.uk/info/10112/research_degrees/910/research_student_guide

Guide for Research Degree Supervisors (here)
http://ses.leeds.ac.uk/info/22173/research_degree-related_policies/772/research_degree_supervisors

Code of Practice for Research Degree Candidatures and the Faculty Protocols for the Implementation of the Code (here)
http://ses.leeds.ac.uk/info/22173/research_degree-related_policies/674/research_degree_candidatures_code_of_practice

Policy on Safeguarding Data – Storage, Backup and Encryption (here)
http://it.leeds.ac.uk/info/116/policies

Research and Innovation Service: Good Research Practice and Research Ethics (here) http://ris.leeds.ac.uk/goodpractice

Appeals Procedure for Postgraduate Researchers (here)
http://www.leeds.ac.uk/secretariat/student_cases.html

Graduate Training and Support Centre (here)
http://www.sddu.leeds.ac.uk/research-innovation/post-grad-research-students/

Disability Services (here)
http://ses.leeds.ac.uk/info/21810/disabled_students/924/disability_services

22. Further Information

If you require further information about the transfer process please contact:

Sarah Throp (s.throp@adm.leeds.ac.uk)

If you require further information about or using the GRAD to support the transfer process, please contact:

Catherine Mills (c.m.mills@adm.leeds.ac.uk)

ST/CM
Ext 35778
February 2018