

THE UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS  
GRADUATE BOARD

Director of Postgraduate Research Studies (DGRS): Role Description

1. In accordance with the requirements of the University's Code of Practice for Research Degree Candidatures,<sup>1</sup> every academic unit in the University must have a Director of Postgraduate Research Studies (DPGRS),<sup>2</sup> holding strategic responsibility for the recruitment and academic support of PGRs in the unit.
2. Where numbers justify it, one or more Deputy DPGRSs may be appointed. Normally one DPGRS or Deputy DPGRS for every fifty PGRs would be expected. Deputy DPGRSs may also take responsibility for a specific area of activity, such as admission or progression, as outlined below.
3. DPGRSs must be provided with appropriate workload release, normally set at 0.2 FTE.
4. DPGRSs are managed by their Heads of School or academic unit, with a dotted-line report to the Head of the relevant Faculty Graduate School. Working through the Faculty Graduate School and the wider Doctoral College community, they work as a team to ensure that strategy and policy for postgraduate research are implemented effectively. The DPGRS will represent her or his academic unit as a member of the Faculty Graduate School Committee.
5. The DPGRS has a key strategic and operational role within the academic unit, and as such is normally expected to be a member of the unit's senior management team or equivalent or to attend meetings on a regular basis for the discussion of relevant items. S/he will contribute to discussions of PGR strategy and policy, participating in annual planning exercises, and leading on recruitment and scholarship matters in support of the unit's strategic objectives for PGR, and will hold overall responsibility for all PGR matters in the unit, responding, as necessary, to changing Research Council, University, and Faculty policy.
6. More specifically, the DPGRS role should include the following key areas (some of which may be delegated to one or more Deputy DPGRS(s) as outlined below:

**Admissions Activities**

- a. Oversight of admissions processes, including formal approval of the application, supervisory team and research project and, where relevant, scholarship applications.
- b. Enhancement of PGR recruitment and identification of funding sources (working with the unit's Director of Research & Innovation where appropriate).

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<sup>1</sup> Available at:

[http://ses.leeds.ac.uk/download/713/code\\_of\\_practice\\_for\\_research\\_degree\\_candidatures\\_201516](http://ses.leeds.ac.uk/download/713/code_of_practice_for_research_degree_candidatures_201516)

<sup>2</sup> An academic unit is normally a School, but may also be an Institute or Division, where the School or Faculty organises itself into identifiable sub-areas, and where numbers of PGRs justify such sub-division.

### **Facilities/Training**

- a. Provision of up-to-date and relevant induction materials for PGRs, and oversight of unit-specific training sessions where relevant (liaising with OD&PL and the wider Doctoral College team).
- b. Oversight of the provision of appropriate facilities (including working space, IT, equipment, and technical support) for PGRs.
- c. Oversight of the unit's compliance with the Code of Practice for PGRs who teach, in liaison with the Director of Student Education.
- d. Where appropriate, maintenance of unit-level PGR budgets for events and training.
- e. Oversight of awareness of unit-specific health and safety issues, including those connected with external visits and fieldwork, and of research ethics and data management among PGRs and supervisors.

### **On-Course Support**

- a. Oversight of matters relating to registration, progression, suspensions and extensions of study within the academic unit.
- b. Oversight of supervisory arrangements within the academic unit, including ensuring the keeping of accurate records on GRAD and following up any cases where regular meetings appear not to be taking place.
- c. Review of progress reports and acting upon any unsatisfactory reports received.
- d. Provision of pastoral support where required, by offering all PGRs the opportunity for an annual meeting, and by acting as a first point of contact for PGRs with complaints, advising on University procedure as appropriate.
- e. Provision of support to supervisors on issues of difficulty that may arise with PGRs and advising on situations where it may become necessary to request a suspension or extension of study for a PGR, as appropriate.
- f. Liaison with PGR reps and chairing of unit PGR committee where this exists.
- g. Review of all cases of termination of study.
- h. Advising on the appointment of final examiners in consultation with supervisors, oversight of appropriate implementation of examination procedures, and signing off examination entry and examiners' report forms.

### **Policy/Procedural**

- a. Liaison with the Faculty Graduate School Office and with the Doctoral College Operations team.
  - b. Approval of recommendations for the appointment of supervisors (and advisors where relevant) in accordance with the University's Code of Practice.
  - c. Serving as a co-opted member of the Committee on Applications when requested by the Student Cases Team.
  - d. Serving, as required, on one of the sub-groups of the Graduate Board, or on relevant thematic working groups.
  - e. Oversight of the administration of the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) and of the biennial internal PGR analysis exercise, of communication of outcomes, and of the drawing-up of action plans.
7. The DPGRS is expected to maintain her or his knowledge of PGR matters (including University regulations, procedures and processes) by attending appropriate training events and the biannual Doctoral College Forum meetings.

8. The DPGRS should be prepared to undertake other duties relevant to her or his role as directed by the Head of the relevant academic unit or the Head of the Faculty Graduate School.

#### Deputy Director of Postgraduate Research Studies: Role Description

9. An Deputy DPGRS should be appointed where a unit has more than 50 PGRs. In this case the Deputy DPGRS should take pastoral responsibility for a clearly defined group of PGRs within the unit.
10. An Deputy DPGRS may also have oversight of one or more of the other areas listed under 6, above, such as admissions, progress, or support.
11. Strategic oversight of PGR within the unit rests with the DPGRS.
12. Appropriate workload relief must be awarded. This will vary according to the number of PGRs in the unit and the range of duties covered.

#### **Criteria for the Appointment of Directors of PGR Studies**

13. Graduate Board has delegated responsibility for the appointment of Directors of PGR Studies to Faculty Graduate School Committees. Heads of Schools and academic units are asked to send forward recommendations for appointment to the Head of the Graduate School who will, in turn, advise the Doctoral College (Quality Assurance) of new appointments.
14. Appointments should be made in accordance with the following criteria which have been approved by the Graduate Board:
15. Directors of PGR Studies should normally meet the following three criteria:
  - be members of staff holding at least a Grade 8 appointment on an academic career pathway;
  - have previous experience of research supervision at Leeds or elsewhere (which includes supervising at least one doctoral candidate from commencement of study through to successful completion);
  - have previous experience of research degree examination at Leeds or elsewhere in the UK.
16. Where appointees have limited research degree supervision experience at Leeds or are new to the University, the Graduate Board will require the appointee to attend a course on research degree supervision organised by OD&PL if they have not already done so.

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