

Research Supervisors' Handbook

Effective from 1 January 2014

Research Supervisors' Handbook

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Glossary of Terms

Throughout, the following abbreviations have been used:

HESA = Higher Education Statistical Agency

QAA = Quality Assurance Agency

RI = Research Institute

RC = Research Centre

FRC = Faculty Research Committee

DOS = Director of Studies

URC = University Research Committee

APR = Annual Progress Review

PGRT = Post-graduate Research Tutor

RASC = Research Awards Sub-committee (a sub-committee of URC)

Research Forms

IMPORTANT: For document control purposes and to ensure that the form that you complete is the most up-to-date, please only download forms as and when required from the STaR Office website <https://www.wlv.ac.uk/current-students/student-support/star-office/research-forms/>

Introduction

The University's regulations for postgraduate research degree programmes are available to students and staff as hard copy and on the University of Wolverhampton web-pages. This handbook serves to amplify the regulations and where appropriate, the handbook is supplemented by subject-specific guidance provided by approved research degree units.

It covers MPhil, PhD, MD and the research phase of professional doctorate programmes. All research students are expected to be conversant with the handbook and to apply its principles in full.

This handbook is printed for your convenience but may be updated periodically. To view the most up to date version please see the University's [Academic Regulations webpage](#).

Academic Standards and Enhancement of the Quality of Research Programmes

The University Research Committee (URC) is empowered by Academic Board to oversee the management of the University's research students. As part of this remit URC aims to ensure that all University of Wolverhampton research students are located in high quality environments with a community of active researchers providing robust research training. To achieve this all research students are managed by a Faculty Research Committee (FRC). This ensures provision of appropriate support and guidance to enable research students to complete their programmes on time, and provides an environment in which students, supervisors, examiners and other staff involved in research degree programmes are aware of and are committed to fulfil their responsibilities.

Each approved unit demonstrates:

- the pursuit of high quality research in cognate areas by a community of academic staff and postgraduates;
- supervisors with the necessary skills and knowledge to ensure the successful completion of students' research programmes;
- access to the facilities and equipment necessary to enable students to complete their research successfully.

Monitoring the Success of Postgraduate Research Programmes

The University Research Committee evaluates performance in each of its Faculty Research Committees and reviews ongoing student performance as part of the annual monitoring process, including:

- submission and completion times and rates;
- pass, referral and fail rates;
- withdrawal rates;
- appeals and complaints, the reasons for them, and how many are upheld;
- comments from examiners;
- recruitment profiles;
- feedback from research students, and where possible from employers, sponsors and external funders;
- where it is available, data on employment and career destinations of former students.

FRCs and the URC each compile annual reports in which statistical and other information relating to postgraduate research programmes is considered and acted upon. The URC annual report is considered by Academic Board. There is student representation on URC and all FRCs.

The Research Environment

Each research unit provides students with a stimulating environment that includes:

- opportunities and encouragement to exchange and develop ideas with people at appropriate levels who are also engaged in research and/or pursuing established research programmes;
- ready access to academic colleagues and others able to give advice and support;
- adequate learning and research tools, including access to IT equipment, library and electronic publications;
- opportunities for students to develop peer support networks where issues or problems can be discussed informally;
- supervision that encourages the development and successful pursuance of a programme of research;
- guidance on ethical pursuit of research and the avoidance of research misconduct, including IPR breaches
- support to develop research-related skills that contribute to the student's ability to complete the programme successfully, including an understanding of research funding and the commercial exploitation of research
- opportunities to develop personal and employment-related skills to complement the advice on career development available through the University's Careers and Guidance Service
- access to welfare and support facilities that recognise the particular nature of research degree study;
- the opportunity for effective student representation, and for addressing students' feedback including complaints;
- sufficient monitoring to ensure that where a project is undertaken in collaboration with another organisation, the standards of both organisations are maintained;
- the opportunity for students to develop intellectual maturity and encouragement to reflect on their own learning about research and on research outcomes

Section 1: Supervision and supervisors' responsibilities

Supervisory Teams

Each research student has a Director of Studies and at least one other supervisor, working together as part of a supervisory team. Students must have sufficient opportunities for contacting and receiving advice and guidance from their supervisors throughout their programme. The nature and frequency of this contact is agreed at the outset of the research degree programme. Between them, the Director of Studies and other members of the supervisory team will ensure that research students receive sufficient support and guidance to facilitate their success. The breadth of experience and knowledge across the supervisory team should mean that the student always has access to someone with experience of supporting research student(s) through to successful completion of their programme. At least one member of the supervisory team will be currently engaged in research in the relevant discipline(s), to ensure that the direction and monitoring of the student's progress is informed by up to date subject knowledge and research.

'Supervision' of candidates for the award of PhD by Published Works is carried out by an 'Academic Advisor' rather than a Supervisor. The Academic Advisor should not only have appropriate academic standing in the discipline and substantial supervision, but also, ideally, examining experience at the level of PhD. Please refer to the Research Degree regulations for further guidelines on the award of PhD by Publication.

Selection of Supervisors

Supervisors are identified for each research degree student at the point of application. The Post Graduate Research Tutor will be responsible for assessing the applicant's Expression of Interest in conjunction with at least one other suitably qualified Supervisor. Supervisors are drawn from the Register of Supervisors (see below). Following the assessment the Post Graduate Research Tutor will make an offer or reject the application. (For further information regarding the research degree admissions process see the research operations manual).

A Register of Research Supervisors should be maintained by each Faculty and updated periodically to reflect the qualifications and experience of each Supervisor. This register holds essential information about the Supervisor's research areas and research activity, qualifications, research supervision and examining experience, etc.

All members of the supervisory team should normally possess qualifications equivalent to at least the level of registration of the student, together with an established and current research record in a relevant field. The Faculty Research Committee will consider exceptions in the case of proposed members of the supervisory team who have professional expertise germane to the project. A candidate for research degree (whether registered at the University of Wolverhampton or elsewhere) is not normally eligible to act as a member of the supervisory team for another research degree candidate.

A supervision team shall normally also have the combined minimum levels of training and/or experience in the supervision of research students as follows:

- Successful completion of the 'Introduction to Research Supervision at UoW' for supervisors of research students plus one successful completion to the level of registration of the student (MPhil or PhD level); or
- Supervision of not fewer than two candidates to successful completion of MPhil or PhD, as compatible with the level of registration with the student (see above).

Where a member of staff is new to the University or has not recently (i.e. within three years) supervised research students s/he must participate in the 'Research Supervisor Development Programme (RSDP)'. All experienced supervisors must attend supervisor briefings annually to ensure that they remain conversant with the regulations.

The Director of Studies normally has the prime responsibility to supervise the candidate on a regular and frequent basis, and to ensure that all monitoring procedures, examination arrangements, and changes to the programme of study are completed in accordance with the University regulations and the relevant Research Handbook. The Director of Studies is normally a member of the academic staff of the University, although exceptionally it may be necessary for a supervisor who is not a member of staff to assume the role of Director of Studies, subject to the approval of the Faculty Research Committee (FRC). If approval is granted for this, a second supervisor from the University academic staff must also be a member of the supervision team, and will assume the monitoring roles normally associated with the Director of Studies.

Unless otherwise stated, the Director of Studies is the main point of contact for the student. It should be clear to the student who the relevant contact is if the Director of Studies is not available – normally this is the second supervisor. In addition, all Faculties have designated members of academic staff who are independent of the supervisory team and are able to provide general advice and support.

In the case of illness or other temporary inability to supervise, other members of the supervisory team normally provide ongoing supervision and support until the return of the absent Director of Studies or other supervisor. However, if a supervisor is not able to continue supervising on a permanent basis, where possible the Chair of the FRC or the Director of the Research Institute will appoint an appropriate substitute supervisor to assume the role.

The University recognises that on rare occasions a student/supervisor relationship may run into difficulties. Where possible all endeavours should seek to resolve any differences. If this proves impossible, by mutual agreement between the student and the Chair of the FRC, supervisory responsibilities can be changed, subject to the availability of equivalent supervisory expertise. Any such change may be at the request of either the student or a supervisor and is subject to the agreement of any external sponsor. Any proposal for a change in supervision arrangements shall be made to the Chair of the FRC or the Director of the Research Institute on the 'Application for Change to Supervisory Team' form.

Where students are experiencing difficulties in relation to supervision and feel that they cannot discuss this with one of the supervisory team they should raise the issue with their Postgraduate Research Tutor in the first instance.

Development and Support for Supervisors.

All supervisors have opportunities to develop appropriate skills and subject knowledge to enable them to support, encourage and monitor research students effectively. The University recognises that supervisors need appropriate expertise for their role and that they should engage in development of various kinds to equip them to supervise students. All new supervisors will participate in specified staff development activities to assure their competence in the role.

Existing supervisors will demonstrate their continuing professional development through participation in a range of activities organised by research units and designed to support their work as supervisors. To assure consistency, the University, through its research units, encourages supervisors working in industry or professional practice to participate in developmental activities offered by the institution. The on-going professional development of research supervisors will be maintained and reviewed periodically by the Dean of Research to assure the currency and competency of supervision at the University.

The Responsibilities of Supervisors

Supervisors and students need to be fully aware of the extent of one another's responsibilities, to enable both to understand (i) the supervisor's contribution to supporting the student and (ii) where the supervisors' responsibilities end.

Supervisors' responsibilities include:

- provision of satisfactory guidance and advice on the conduct of the student's research programme;
- regular monitoring of the progress of the student's research programme;
- maintaining regular contact with the student and ensuring his/her accessibility to the student when s/he needs advice. This will normally involve face to face contact at least monthly, but may also involve telephone or email contact depending on the student's location and mode of study;
- maintaining appropriate records of supervisory meetings and interim correspondence
- input into the assessment of a student's development needs;
- provision of timely, constructive and effective feedback on the student's work, including his/her overall progress within the programme;
- provision of advice and guidance to enable the student to conduct his/her research with probity and according to ethical principles, and advice on the implications of research misconduct;
- ensuring that the student is aware of institutional-level sources of advice, including careers guidance, health and safety legislation and equal opportunities policy;

- provision of effective pastoral support, referring the student where appropriate to other sources of such support, including advisers in 'The Gateway @ the George' (for example, counselling, careers or the Student Enabling Centre), Registry staff and others within the student's academic community;
- help for the student to interact with others working in the field of research, for example, encouraging the student to attend relevant conferences and supporting him/her in seeking funding for such events;
- where appropriate, to provide encouragement and advice to submit conference papers and articles to refereed journals;
- identification of suitable examiners and their nomination to the Research Awards Sub-committee (RASC) at least three months prior to the expected date of submission of the thesis. In practice, this should be midway through year 3 of a full-time PhD programme (pro rata for part-time);
- maintenance of supervisory expertise, including the appropriate skills to perform the role satisfactorily, supported by relevant continuing professional development opportunities.

Supervisors should be sensitive to the diverse needs of individual students, including international students, and the associated support that may be required in different circumstances. An awareness of the range of advice and support available to students, and knowledge of how students can access it, is an important part of the supervision process.

Limits to the Number of Research Supervisions Undertaken by Individual Members of Staff.

The University recognises that research students are best served by supervisory teams with sufficient expertise, experience and commitment to fully support each student and his/her research. In this context it is important to ensure that individual members of staff do not carry excessive supervisory loads. To help monitor this, the University Research Committee operates a 'points' system that applies to all research degrees including Professional / Practitioner Doctorates.

The system is based on a simple points allocation:

- For full-time students - One point is allocated for each second supervisor role and two points for Director of Studies.
- For part-time students – half a point is allocated for each second supervisor role and one point for Director of Studies.

The maximum number of points allocated to any member of staff is 10. However, on reaching the threshold of 6 points, the question of whether extra supervisory commitment is in the best interests of both the research student and supervisor is considered, as is the potential to reduce the demand on existing staff by extending the available pool of supervisors. The Chair of the FRC or Director of the Research Institute has the authority to limit the maximum number of supervision points to optimise supervisor and student performance, within the 6-10 point band.

Proposals to increase supervision points outside the 6-10 range must be considered and approved by the Chair of the FRC. Such proposals may only be approved where the workload commitments of individual staff members allow additional supervisions and only when either or both of the following conditions have been met:

- The supervisor has a track record of successful and timely completions of the type and level of research degree being considered.
- An alternative supervision allocation statement has been outlined in the course documentation (e.g. in the case of Professional/ Practitioner Doctorates) and approved by Faculty Research Committee

The system aims to maximise performance in the best interests of supervisors, researchers and the University research community. It recognises that the demand placed on supervisors varies with their roles. The Director of Studies has more responsibility and time-commitment to the individual research student, particularly with the requirement to take a lead role in the completion of monitoring and progress forms. Time-commitment also varies through the life cycle of the research degree project. The initial project design and implementation phase and the writing-up stage towards the end of the programme can be particularly time-consuming. To ensure effective supervision, when a research student makes contact for advice or guidance, supervisors should normally respond within a maximum of seven days.

Section 2: Monitoring and Supporting Student to Timely Completion

Timescales for the registration of research degrees

Supervisors have a key role in ensuring timely submission and completion of research degree programmes. The University's regulations set expectations in relation to successful completion periods. In the case of the PhD and Professional/Practitioner Doctorates the maximum periods of registration are four years full-time (eight years part-time). In the case of the MPhil the maximum registration period is two years full-time (four years part-time). (See tables below)

Full Time Students	Normal	Maximum
PhD	3 years	4 years
Professional /Practitioner Doctorate	3 years	4 years
MPhil	18 months	2 years
Higher Master's Degree	1 year	2 years
Pre-Research programme	6 months	6 months

Part Time Students	Normal	Maximum
PhD	4 years	8 years
Professional /Practitioner Doctorate	4 years	8 years
MPhil	2 years	4 years
Higher Master's Degree	2 years	4 years
Pre-Research programme	6 months	6 months

Leave of absence, Parental Leave and Jury Service

The University's regulations set expectations in relation to successful completion periods. In the case of the PhD and Professional/Practitioner Doctorates the maximum periods of registration are four years full-time (eight years part-time). In the case of the MPhil the maximum registration period is two years full-time (four years part-time). If students do not submit their thesis within the maximum period of registration, they will not be allowed to submit late and will be asked to withdraw from the research degree. If students are in receipt of a bursary they may also be required to pay back the fees for non-completion.

However the University realises that there are circumstances when students are temporarily not able to continue with their studies for a period of time, because of a change in personal circumstances. In these circumstances they may take a break from the research degree and resume studies when circumstances allow.

If this scenario applies then students should discuss with their supervisor whether taking a temporary 'leave of absence' from their studies is appropriate.

The maximum length of period of absence taken at any one time is 12 months. The maximum total period over the research degree is 24 months. If students take the maximum 12 months then they must return to their research studies for a minimum of 3 months before taking any further periods of leave of absence.

Periods of leave undertaken due to statutory childcare (including maternity leave, paternity leave, shared parental leave and adoptive leave) will not be counted towards the maximum total period of 24 months, although the maximum registration period will be amended accordingly.

After agreeing this option with their supervisor, students must apply for a leave of absence via their e: Vision account. The student will have to confirm that they will not be undertaking any research activities whilst on leave of absence. The student will need to give the reason why they are requesting leave of absence and the date that they believe that they will return to their studies. Leave of absence will not be granted retrospectively.

Please note that you will need to provide a detailed explanation for taking leave of absence.

Although the University reserves the right to ask for evidence to support a request for Leave of Absence, it would not normally do so. However when a request is made that would take the total period of Leave of Absence to over 2 years (because of the parental leave clause), then evidence will be sought confirming that the student is eligible for parental leave.

If a leave of absence is approved, liability to pay tuition fees will cease from the point of leave of absence and will be reactivated on the date of return. Students in receipt of a university bursary will not receive any payments whilst on leave of absence. International students on a Tier 4 visa will be required to return home whilst on leave of absence and their visa is likely to be curtailed.

Requests to take a leave of absence and the decision to grant this or not, will be reported to the Director of Studies and Faculty Postgraduate Research Tutor. It will also be reported to the Faculty Research Committee and at the relevant University Committee.

Any leave of absence will be granted in month-long blocks and then added to the registration period. Whilst on a leave of absence, students will have restricted access to University services and facilities, including their Supervisor in respect of research work, but they are encouraged to keep in touch with their Supervisor for pastoral support. Leave of absence should not be used to cover holiday leave, research visits, fieldwork visits, etc.

If a student has an outstanding debt to the University that they cannot clear before the enrolment deadline date, then they must take a Leave of Absence.

Whilst on a Leave of Absence, any outstanding debt remains due and may be referred to a Debt Collection Agency. Any outstanding debt must be cleared in order for a student to re-enrol.

Please note that if a leave of absence is approved, doctoral students are still required to complete the Annual Progress Review Form.

Returning from a Leave of Absence

Students are expected to notify the University at the end of the leave of absence that they wish to return to their studies. Alternatively, at this time, they may request an extension to the Leave of Absence provided it does not extend the period of leave beyond the limits outlined in regulation 9.3.

International students are advised to contact the Visa & Immigration Support Officer for advice about their visa before returning to their studies.

Students returning from a period of Leave of Absence may wish to liaise with the Student Support and Wellbeing Team or the University's Counselling Service to ensure that the University is aware of any relevant circumstances for which they may be able to provide support.

If a student fails to return from a Leave of Absence and enrol within 14 calendar days of the expected date of return they will be considered to have withdrawn and will be de-registered from the course.

Jury Service

Eligible students may be summoned by HM Courts and Tribunal Service for jury service during their studies. It is up to the student to establish whether they can either accommodate the request for jury service or whether it is not reasonable at the time. In these circumstances, they must return the 'Reply to the Jury Summons' and ask for jury service to be deferred to a later date or to be excused altogether.

If a request for deferral is turned down, there is the right of appeal when appearing in court to serve on the jury as the presiding judge has the discretion to excuse jury members who they deem to have compelling reasons not to serve at that point.

If the initial request for excusal has been refused the student is advised to discuss this with their Director of Studies who can provide a supporting statement outlining why they should be excused (e.g. if the trial is likely to be longer than the statutory two weeks which would impact on current field or lab based research or that the service would conflict with a submission deadline or viva).

Periods of leave undertaken due to statutory jury service will not be counted towards the maximum total period of 24 months, although the maximum total period of 24 months, although the maximum registration period will be amended accordingly.

Exceptional requests to extend maximum registration period

There may be very exceptional circumstances when a student cannot submit their thesis within the maximum period of registration, but the leave of absence process outlined above is not appropriate. This may be either a) because they have already exceeded the maximum length of absence or b) they need a longer period to complete their research because of a setback for which the University takes full responsibility (e.g. equipment failure).

It must be stressed, however, that extensions to maximum registration are only granted in very exceptional circumstances. Extensions will not be granted for what might be considered 'unexceptional' circumstances such as everyday life events, work pressure, financial difficulties, academic failure, and poor project/time management). It should also be noted that extensions will not be granted retrospectively.

Any request for an extension should be discussed with the Director of Studies in the first instance. If the Director of Studies supports the request then s/he will need to make a formal request with supporting evidence to the Dean of Research and Academic Registrar (or their nominees). The request and the decision made will be communicated to the student by the Director of Studies and formally recorded by the STaR Office. It will be reported to the Research Awards Sub Committee and, where relevant, the Professional Doctorate Award and Progression Board.

If successful, a new maximum registration date will be calculated that takes account of the period granted by the Dean of Research. Students are still liable for fees for any extended period of registration. If the request is unsuccessful, the student should submit their thesis on or before the date of the original maximum registration. If this date has already passed, the student and the Director of Studies will receive a letter to inform them that the student will be withdrawn from the programme.

Change to Mode of Study

Students may apply for a change to their mode of study via eVision. They must seek advice from their supervisory team before proceeding with an application to change the mode of study.

The change to mode of study request must be submitted to the Student, Transnational and Research (STaR) Office.

Withdrawal of Registration

There may be circumstances where students feel that they are no longer in a position to continue their research and will be unlikely to resume in the foreseeable future. In these cases they can withdraw from registration by completing the withdrawal task via their eVision account and submitting it to the Student, Transnational and Research (STaR) Office.

The FRC also has the authority to recommend that the registration be withdrawn if satisfactory progress has not been made. This would normally occur after a failure to abide by the 'Proceed with Caution' procedures. Such procedures may be invoked in cases such as an unsatisfactory progression, or an unsatisfactory Annual Progress Review form or its non-completion.

Purpose and forms of monitoring

The main purpose of the monitoring process is to provide encouragement and support to students to enable them to complete research programmes successfully within an appropriate timescale. The purpose and frequency of monitoring arrangements need to be clear from the outset, so that both the student and the supervisor can plan adequately for them, prepare relevant documents and consult other individuals as appropriate. Should a student's progress not be satisfactory, the monitoring process includes provision to ensure that support is available for the student to make improvements.

Students and supervisors should be aware of:

- the implications of the possible outcomes of review meetings;
- the criteria to be used for making decisions about a leave of absence or withdrawal of a student's registration;
- the circumstances in which student appeal processes may be used.

There are three distinct types of review:

- **Regular review meetings** where the student and members of the supervisory team meet to discuss matters relating to the research and to review progress
- **Annual progress review (APR)** of the student's progress and forward planning.
- **Progression stage** confirming the programme of study by the end of 21 months full-time study (45 months part-time)

Regular review meetings

Students and supervisors are expected to meet informally, and frequently enough to address the student's need for general guidance. The University expects monthly supervision meetings for full time students and at least 6 for part time students. However these arrangements made between the student and supervisor allow some flexibility provided that both are satisfied that adequate support is being provided for the student and there are sufficient opportunities for formally monitoring progress. Notes should be taken at these meetings (See Records of Meetings below) and the record of meetings should form part of each student's personal development portfolio (see Skills Development below)

Students and supervisors are jointly responsible for ensuring that regular and frequent contact is maintained and there will be times when the student, as well as the supervisor, needs to take the initiative. The nature and frequency of contact between student and supervisor(s) will vary, depending on the duration of the programme, the way the research is being conducted and the amount of support needed by the student. Taking account of these variables, the following should be agreed by and clear to both student and supervisor(s) from the start of the programme:

- the minimum frequency of scheduled meetings between student and supervisor and supervisory team, and the purpose of such meetings;
- guidance on the nature and style of the student/supervisor interaction, including discussions about academic and personal progress.
- the action to be taken if progress is unsatisfactory (see Appendix A, the "Proceed with Caution" procedure)

Records of Meetings between Supervisors and Students

Students and supervisors are expected to keep appropriate records of the outcomes of meetings and related activities. Records of all formal meetings between students and supervisors must be kept securely. As a minimum requirement the record of each meeting should state: the date, time, venue, those present, a brief summary of progress made, reflection on any problems that have arisen and an action plan/targets for the next meeting. The record should include discussion of skills development as well as progress on the research project. The records should be entered into the eVision Supervision Log.

Recording student engagement on e:Vision

Where there is no electronic record of a supervision meeting taking place at the expected interval, an automatically generated reminder letter may be sent to supervisors to ensure that regular contact is made with the student. This may be followed up with a letter to the student at a later stage if there has been no further record of a meeting. The

logging of supervision meetings is particularly important for International Tier 4 Students who may be required to provide proof of attendance to UK Visas and Immigration.

The following timeline is the process in place for ensuring that the student remains compliant. (Please note that if a student has returned to their home country then they should update their address via e:Vision. Students currently undertaking research overseas are still expected to maintain regular contact with their supervisor, but these must be logged as skype/email/telephone.)

Following enrolment	students are e-mailed with an overview of process
No recorded engagement after 40 days	e-mail sent to Director of Studies
No recorded engagement after 50 days	e-mail sent to Director of Studies and student
No recorded engagement after 60 days	'Final warning' e-mail to Director of Studies and student
No recorded engagement after 70 days	e-mail to student, supervisor and STaR Office with a series of tasks culminating in a curtailment decision being made by the UKVI Compliance and Oversight Panel

For information on how to access and use the eVision Research Supervision log please see [Appendix G](#).

Paper-based or electronic documents may supplement electronic records. Where they are paper-based, signatures should confirm agreement of the record and a copy should be held by the student and (at least one of) the supervisory team, usually the Director of Studies. In general, it should be the student's responsibility to compile the records and to store these in her/his personal development file, whether paper-based or electronic.

Supervisors must maintain full records of all meetings and brief notes of other interactions (including email exchanges) in case needed as part of future monitoring/review that may be required by the Faculty Research Committee or University Research Committee.

Formal Annual Review of Student Progress

The University has an established annual process for reviewing student progress that involves members of academic staff who are independent of the supervisor(s) and the student.

Faculty Research Committees (FRC s) are responsible for monitoring students' progress and are required to respond to any identified problems. They must be satisfied that individual students are making progress with their research and are on target to complete on time before approving progression to the next year of the programme. Students are required to provide details of progress with their research, of any issues they wish to bring to the attention of their supervisory team and a plan of work for the following year. Only students in certain categories do not need to give full details; a simple statement will suffice. These are students who:

- have submitted their thesis and are awaiting examination;
- have been examined but are completing minor amendments or are awaiting conferment;
- are currently on suspension; or
- have been on leave of absence for the majority of the year and have therefore made very little progress.

The APR Process

Each year, every research student is issued with an Annual Progress Review Form. **ALL** research students **MUST** complete this form each year until their award is conferred. The Students should give a summary of progress made on this form with an indicative programme of the following year's work. They may also highlight any problems they wish to bring to the attention of the Director of Studies. **Please note that the University considers it good practice for students and their DoS to complete the relevant part of the Annual Progress Review Form together during one of their regular supervisory meetings.** Failure to return the Annual Progress Review Form will automatically invoke the 'Proceed with Caution' procedure.

In accordance with QAA guidelines, FRCs designate two independent members of staff to interview each student as part of the annual review. Supervisors should check with the FRC as to the exact procedure followed in your Faculty, as this can vary according to the discipline.

The first Annual Progress Review will take place in the 9th month of study and then every 12 months thereafter, until the student enters the final year of registration, when the Annual Progress Review will take place 6 months before the maximum registration date. The tables below shows the month of study in which Annual Progress Review will take place.

APR for Full Time Students	Month of Study
First Year	9
Second Year (APR and Progression)	21
Third Year	33
Fourth Year	42

APR for Part Time Students	Month of Study
First Year	9
Second Year	21
Third Year	33
Fourth Year (APR and Progression)	45
Fifth Year	57
Sixth Year	69
Seventh Year	81
Eight Year	90

Indicative word count at each APR for full time Research Student:

Indicative word counts are stated below. These are guiding figures, in the form of a range, to the expected word counts at each stage of the Annual Progress Review. Where word counts are significantly below the guides given here, students should provide an outline of the work that they have undertaken.

Year of APR	Written Work – Guide for Anticipated Word Count (with no upper limit)	
Year 1	Sciences	7,200 - 9,000
	Arts, Social Sciences & Humanities	14,400 - 18,000
	Arts with Portfolio of work	3,200 - 4000
Year 2	Sciences	18,000 - 22,500
	Arts, Social Sciences & Humanities	36,000 - 45,000
	Professional Doctorate Sciences	10,000 - 12,500
	Professional Doctorate Arts, Social Sciences & Humanities	16,000 - 20,000
	Arts with Portfolio of work	8,000 - 10,000
Year 3	Sciences	27,000 - 33,750
	Arts, Social Sciences & Humanities	54,000 - 67,500
	Professional Doctorate Sciences	15,050 - 18,750
	Professional Doctorate Arts, Social Sciences & Humanities	24,000 - 30,000
	Arts with Portfolio of work	12,000 - 15,000
Year 4 If appropriate	Sciences	36,000 - 45,000
	Arts, Social Sciences & Humanities	62,000 - 90,000
	Professional Doctorate Sciences	20,000 - 25,000
	Professional Doctorate Arts, Social Sciences & Humanities	32,000 - 40,000
	Arts with Portfolio of work	20,000 (Max 45,000)

Indicative word count at each APR for part time Research Student

Year of APR	Written Work – Guide for Anticipated Word Count (20% margin with no upper limit)	
Year 1	Sciences	3,600 - 4,500
	Arts, Social Sciences & Humanities	7,200 - 9,000
	Arts with Portfolio of work	1,800 - 2,000
Year 2	Sciences	7,200 - 9,000
	Arts, Social Sciences & Humanities	14,400 - 18,000
	Arts with Portfolio of work	3,200 - 4,000
Year 3	Sciences	12,600 - 15,750
	Arts, Social Sciences & Humanities	25,200 - 31,500
	Professional Doctorate Sciences	7,000 - 8,750
	Professional Doctorate Arts, Social Sciences & Humanities	11,200 - 14,000
	Arts with Portfolio of work	4,550 - 7,000
Year 4	Sciences	18,000 - 22,500
	Arts, Social Sciences & Humanities	36,000 - 45,000
	Professional Doctorate Sciences	10,000 - 12,500
	Professional Doctorate Arts, Social Sciences & Humanities	16,000 - 20,000
	Arts with Portfolio of work	8,000 - 10,000
Year 5	Sciences	22,300 - 27,900
	Arts, Social Sciences & Humanities	44,640 - 55,800
	Professional Doctorate Sciences	12,400 - 15,500
	Professional Doctorate Arts, Social Sciences & Humanities	19,840 - 24,800
	Arts with Portfolio of work	9,920 - 12,400
Year 6	Sciences	27,000 - 33,750
	Arts, Social Sciences & Humanities	54,000 - 67,500
	Professional Doctorate Sciences	15,050 - 18,750
	Professional Doctorate Arts, Social Sciences & Humanities	24,000 - 30,000
	Arts with Portfolio of work	12,000 - 15,000
Year 7 If appropriate	Sciences	31,320 - 39,150
	Arts, Social Sciences & Humanities	58,140 - 78,300
	Professional Doctorate Sciences	17,400 - 21,750
	Professional Doctorate Arts, Social Sciences & Humanities	27,840 - 34,800
	Arts with Portfolio of work	13,920 - 17,400
Year 8 If appropriate	Sciences	36,000 - 45,000
	Arts, Social Sciences & Humanities	62,000 - 90,000
	Professional Doctorate Sciences	20,000 - 25,000
	Professional Doctorate Arts, Social Sciences & Humanities	32,000 - 40,000
	Arts with Portfolio of work	20,000

The suggested type of activities that should take place at each APR year are listed below:

For full-time Research Student

Year of APR	To be completed by end of month	Activity
Year 1 For PhD students only	9	APR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit an APR Progress Report • Evidence of draft thesis – <i>e.g.</i> draft of Literature Review and Methodology Chapter (see written work word count). • Outline of the proposed thesis structure • 10 minute (maximum) presentation of research programme to assessors with discussion
Year 2 For PhD students only	21	APR and Progression <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit APR Progress Report • Evidence of thesis in draft (see word count below) • 10 minute (maximum) presentation of research programme to assessors and discussion. • Commentary on work against the proposed thesis structure • Statement of anticipated contribution to knowledge • An indicative references/bibliography • Statement of how the work will meet the Learning Outcomes for a PhD/Professional Doctorate
Year 3 For both PhD and Prof Doc students	33	APR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit APR Progress Report • Evidence of thesis in draft (see word count below) • Mock viva against written work • Commentary on work against the proposed thesis structure • Statement regarding anticipated or identified examiners
Year 4 If appropriate For both PhD and Prof Doc students	42	APR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit APR Progress Report • Full draft or Submitted thesis • Statement of how any comments/ suggested amendments from mock viva have been addressed. • Statement on viva date

For part-time Research Student

Year of APR	To be completed by end of month	Activity
Year 1 For PhD students only	9	APR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit an APR Progress Report • Evidence of draft thesis (see written work word count). • Outline of the proposed thesis structure • 5 minute presentation of research programme to assessors with discussion
Year 2 For PhD students only	21	APR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit an APR Progress Report • Evidence of draft thesis – i.e. draft of Literature Review and Methodology Chapter (see written work word count). • Commentary of thesis against proposed outline of proposed thesis structure • 10 minute presentation of research programme to assessors with discussion
Year 3 For both PhD and Prof Doc students	33	APR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit an APR Progress Report • Evidence of draft thesis see written work word count). • Commentary of thesis against proposed outline of proposed thesis structure • 10 minute presentation of research programme to assessors with discussion
Year 4 For both PhD and Prof Doc students	45	APR and Progression <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit APR Progress Report • Evidence of thesis in draft (see word count below) • Presentation of research programme to assessors • Commentary on work against the proposed thesis structure • Statement of contribution to knowledge • Bibliography • Statement of how the work will meet the Learning Outcomes for a PhD/Professional Doctorate
Year 5 For both PhD and Prof Doc students	57	APR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit an APR Progress Report • Evidence of draft thesis (see written work word count). • Commentary of thesis against proposed outline of proposed thesis structure • 10 minute presentation of research programme to assessors with discussion
Year 6 For both PhD and Prof Doc students	69	APR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit APR Progress Report • Evidence of thesis in draft (see word count below) • Mock viva against written work • Commentary on work against the proposed thesis structure • Statement regarding identified examiners
Year 7 If appropriate For both PhD and Prof Doc students	81	APR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit an APR Progress Report • Evidence of draft thesis – (see written work word count). • Commentary of thesis against proposed outline of proposed thesis structure • Statement of how any comments/ suggested amendments from mock viva have been addressed.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 minute presentation of research programme to assessors with discussion
Year 8 If appropriate	90	APR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submit APR Progress Report Full draft or Submitted thesis Statement on viva date If available viva outcome, corrections & statement on progress against corrections
For both PhD and Prof Doc students		

The FRC will consider the Annual Progress Review Form and recommend:

- proceed as proposed
- proceed subject to changes/amendments being made (may require a change in the research degree sought)
- subject to 'proceed with caution' process
- complete as MPhil
- withdrawal

The latter two should be preceded by the 'Proceed with Caution' procedure.

APR paperwork is to be returned to the student within a month of the APR having taken place.

The recommendation goes forward to Registry, which monitors the progress of all students. Successful APR means you will be able to enrol via e-vision for the next academic year.

Where a student has not made satisfactory progress, the student is made subject to the 'Proceed with Caution' procedure (see Appendix A). The Director of Studies will discuss progress with the student and if an action plan to resolve any difficulties cannot be achieved s/he may recommend withdrawal of registration. Students cannot be enrolled for a subsequent year until annual monitoring has established, to the satisfaction of the Chair of the FRC, that acceptable progress has been made. Likewise any student who is a debtor cannot enrol and must be subject to the 'Proceed with Caution' procedure until the situation is resolved.

Following the completion of annual progress review Faculty Research Committees are required, by the due date, inform the STaR Office of the status of each research student and whether they are eligible to proceed.

Role of the Independent Assessors and the Faculty Research Committee (FRC)

Two independent assessors will be nominated by the FRC, to review the application, together with the evidence provided and the oral presentation or other identified activities. In addition the Assessors will select 2500 words from the submitted evidence to read and assess this for the quality and rigour of the presented work. Assessors should take their lead on what work to select to assess from the work reviewed in the student's APR form. The independent assessors provide evaluative comments and a recommendation as to the outcome of the APR, which is then considered by the appropriate FRC. Where the independent assessors highlight concerns or criticisms, these must be addressed by the PGR and their supervisor prior to recommendations being forwarded to the FRC. The FRC will consider the Annual Progression Review application.

Progression stage

The progression stage will normally take place by the end of 21 months (45 months for part time students) from date of registration. At this point there should be sufficient evidence to assess the student's performance and potential to complete at the appropriate level. Failure to submit the required evidence within these periods will result in the student being made subject to the 'Proceed with Caution' procedure (see Appendix A). *Note that students taking a Professional Doctorate are deemed to have made satisfactory progress on successful completion of the taught programme and are therefore exempt from the Progression Stage.*

An overview of the process:

- 1) The student completes the 'Annual Review and Progression' form and gives an oral presentation on the achievements on his/her research programme and future research plans. The supervisory team and the independent internal assessors appointed by the Chair of the FRC should be present during the presentation.
- 2) The independent assessors review all aspects of the application and make a recommendation to the FRC.

3) The FRC considers the outcome

The application is made on the 'Annual Review and Progression' form and students will provide appropriate evidence (see below) to support their application. The 'Progression Stage' requires the following information:

- the progress made against the proposed thesis structure (see proposed word counts against thesis)
- the academic quality of the work assessed by the Independent Assessors
- a statement of the hypothesis and/or research question(s), including their potential to make an original contribution to knowledge and understanding in the field
- an outline of the academic and intellectual context in which the hypothesis is located
- a description of the methodology employed
- a statement of ethical concerns presented by the proposed research and how these have been or will be addressed
- a comprehensive bibliography
- a statement of the award sought (MPhil or PhD)
- a statement outlining how the confirmed programme will meet the learning outcomes for the award sought
- a detailed timetable of work and objectives for the next 12 months, and an indicative timetable and objectives for any periods beyond that.
- The evidence provided (or cited) by students in support of their application will include:
- examples of written work such as draft chapters, essays, literature reviews or conference papers to demonstrate their ability to work at the appropriate level
- evidence of successful delivery of presentations, externally or internally, for example to specialist and non-specialist audiences
- engagement with the University's skills development programme and the opportunities provided through personal development planning.

Evidence Required

The evidence provided (or cited) in support of the application will include:

- examples of written work such as draft chapters, essays, literature reviews or conference papers to demonstrate the ability to work at the appropriate level
- evidence of successful delivery of presentations, externally or internally, for example to specialist and non-specialist audiences
- engagement with the University's skills development programme and the opportunities provided through personal development planning.

Role of the supervisors at the Progression stage

Students should complete the 'Annual Review and Progression' form and discuss this during a supervisory meeting. The DoS should complete two questions on the form: i) that they have read the APR Report ii) that they agree or disagree with the self-appraisal.

The supervisors may also wish to add commentary on the candidate's progress themselves, in the designated box, but this remains optional.

Role of the independent assessor and the Faculty Research Committee at the Progression stage

The independent assessors, nominated by the FRC, review the application, together with the evidence provided and the oral presentation. The independent assessors provide evaluative comments and a recommendation as to the outcome of the application, which is then considered by the appropriate FRC. Where the independent assessors highlight concerns or criticisms, these must be addressed with the supervisors and yourself prior to recommendations being forwarded to the FRC. The FRC will consider the Progression application and recommend:

- proceed as proposed
- proceed subject to changes/amendments being made (may require a change in the research degree sought)
- subject to 'proceed with caution' process
- complete as MPhil

Section 3: Skills Development

The Personal and Professional Development of Research Students

The Researcher Development Statement (RDS) sets out the knowledge, behaviours and attributes of effective and highly skilled researchers appropriate for a wide range of careers. The Researcher Development Statement is derived from the Researcher Development Framework (RDF), a major new approach to researcher development, which aims to enhance our capacity to build the UK workforce, develop world-class researchers and build our research base (see Appendix B).

The University subscribes to the RDF and acknowledges the importance of acquiring research and other skills during research degree programmes in order to enhance students' ability to complete the research programme successfully and on time. Such skills are significant in the research graduate's capability for sustaining learning throughout his or her career, whether in an academic role or in other employment.

During the application process students have the opportunity to identify their development needs through a research skills analysis. Applicants who are registered on the Pre Research Degree Programme follow a programme of skills development based on their research skills needs analysis. During this period (up to 6 months) these students will be supported by a range of academics including potential supervisors and, where appropriate, English language tutors. Once registered on a Research Degree programme subsequent development is undertaken in consultation with supervisors. However, all research students are encouraged to take ownership and responsibility for their own learning, during and after their programme of study. The University's skills development programme is outlined below.

Students' Skills Development Programme

The University recognises that some research and other transferable skills may be present on commencement (for example in the case of some mature students), explicitly taught, or developed during the research programme. Supervisors are expected to conduct a skills assessment at the start of each research degree programme to identify students' skills development needs, taking account of their different circumstances and the diversity of the research student population.

Personal and professional development opportunities for research students are spread throughout the duration of the research degree. The extent to which research students are required to take advantage of these opportunities will normally be negotiated through the supervision process, taking account of subject and individual needs.

Key features of skills development at the University are as follows:

- Research skills development workshops are mapped to the Vitae Research Development Framework (RDF) in line with the recommendations of QAA and the Research Councils.
- A comprehensive induction for all students to provide students with a good understanding of the research degree programme and its significant landmarks
- Generic workshops co-ordinated by The Doctoral College with discipline-specific support from Faculties, Research Institutes and Faculty Research Committees
- An identified generic skills co-ordinator in each Faculty Research Committee
- Student ownership of the process, with supervisor involvement as a key to success
- The student-supervisor relationship at the centre of the process with regular meetings to assess individual research skills development needs
- Access to generic and subject-specific skills development opportunities, with the opportunity to review and reflect on progress at regular intervals
- Personal development and action planning an integral part of the overall programme
- Tangible sources of evidence (progress files: on line RDF planner reports, paper based records and or FRC student records) used as a basis for robust annual monitoring and progression.

Records of activity and achievement will contribute to each student's personal development portfolio considered at Annual Progress Review.

Where postgraduate students are provided with opportunities for teaching (for example, acting as demonstrators in laboratories, or teaching small groups), appropriate guidance and support will be provided. If the student's teaching activity also extends to assessing students, the training they receive must reflect this. Where possible, students who undertake teaching will do so as part of a teaching team and will benefit from the peer support provided.

To ensure that students' needs are being met, the University reviews its research and generic skills training as part of the quality assurance mechanisms for research programmes.

Records of Personal Development

It is good practice for students to reflect on their learning, supported by frameworks developed by the institution for recording personal development. Research students at the University of Wolverhampton have the opportunity to use the Vitae Research Development Framework Planner (see Appendix B) for recording and reflecting on personal development and other achievements, including research and other skills. In addition, students are expected to discuss with their supervisors the ethical implications of their work (see section 'Good Research Conduct' below)

Students, who, on entry to the research programme, are unfamiliar with keeping records of their progress and development can access guidance and support from their Director of Studies. Workshops on the use of RDF planner are provided as part of the skills development programme for research students and supervisors.

Demonstrable progress with personal development planning is required as a part of the annual monitoring and research programme action planning cycle, and at the 'Progression Stage'.

Good Research Conduct

It is the supervisor's responsibility to ensure that the student conducts his/her research in accordance with the following:

Research Ethics

Research that involves systematic collection and / or storage of sensitive data taken from human participants will require ethical approval and / or be subject to restrictions under the Data Protection Act (1998). In these cases, students should seek ethical approval from the Faculty and, where appropriate external Ethics Committee(s). Ideally, this should be done at the time of submission of the Research Proposal, but occasionally the ethical dimensions of a project may only become clear as it develops. In any case, ethical approval MUST be granted BEFORE the research is begun, so it is necessary for supervisors to advise students to complete the appropriate forms and submit them as soon as possible to avoid delays in the research programme.

The ethical implications of the research should be kept under review as the project progresses, and additional ethical approval must be sought should this become necessary during the progress of the project. Supervisors should ensure their students know and understand the ethical implications of the research and to obtain appropriate ethical approval as necessary.

Ethical Principles:

The University and researchers should adhere to the following principles:

- Excellence
- Honesty
- Integrity
- Cooperation
- Accountability
- Training and Skills
- Care, Safety and Respect

More detail can be found on the Research Policy Unit's [Ethics Guidance webpages](#) where you will also find the handbook for Ethical Approval & Practice Procedures

University of Wolverhampton Staff engaged in MPhil/PhD research

If a member of staff leaves the University of Wolverhampton while engaged in MPhil/PhD research, they must follow the below processes:

1. If continued access to and use of resources is understood to be necessary, permission must be sought and approved by the Dean of Faculty in discussion with the Associate Dean of Research.
2. All staff engaged in MPhil/PhD research must reapply to their Ethics Committee for the continuation of their research.
3. Where student data is being used as part of the research the continued access and utilisation of the data must be expressly approved by the Academic Registrar after discussion with the Dean of Faculty and then approved by the Ethics Committee. This is true even if the member of staff transfers their studies, based on this data, to another HEI.
4. The same process of renewal of permissions will also apply to data relating to the wider university experience, in respect to surveys conducted on staff (academic or otherwise), and engagements with resources / learning spaces provisions.

Health and Safety

It is essential that your students familiarise themselves with safety codes, regulations and advice which apply to their studies and all other activities in the University. Supervisors should advise students to comply with these at all times. If your student's research is carried out in a laboratory or similar environment, they have a personal responsibility to follow safe working practices at all times. As a Director of Studies you should set out the health and safety procedures and check the written record of the work students have carried out to ensure that they are following safe procedures. Guidelines that are specific to your research activity will be provided by your Faculty.

Collection and Retention of Data

There should be clarity at the outset of the research programme as to the ownership of, where relevant:

- data and samples used or created in the course of the research;
- the results of the research; and
- any ideas, designs or inventions generated through the research programme.

Researchers should keep clear and accurate records of the procedures followed and the approvals granted during the research process, including records of the interim results obtained as well as of the final research outcomes.

Data generated in the course of research should be kept securely and in accordance with all legal requirements and ethical principles, such as those prescribed under the Data Protection Act, the requirements of learned or professional bodies, the requirements of University of Wolverhampton's IPR statements. Research data should be kept intact for any legally specified period and otherwise for at least three years from the end of the project. Data should be stored in a secure and auditable format, in a form that would enable retrieval by a third party

Copyright and Intellectual Property Rights

Copyright and Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) may be important to students and in the final project. You should be familiar with the University's [copyright](#) and [IPR](#) statements on the website and advise your students accordingly.

The University's Research Degree Regulations (4.7-4.9) require that 'an electronic copy of the theses (E-theses) is deposited in the University's online repository (WIRE) thereby publishing the thesis online so it can be accessed by scholars and others anywhere in the world.

Third party copyright material used in the thesis (e.g. material created by someone else such as photographs, maps, extracts from another work etc.) must be either cleared for deposit with the copyright holder or removed from the thesis before deposit.

This does not affect the inclusion of fully referenced third party material in the thesis submitted for examination purposes, it only applies to the deposit of the thesis into WIRE. This material can remain in the hardcopy, examination

version of the thesis as long as it is considered unpublished.

Prior to depositing the thesis, please ensure that your student reads the online guidance on preparing the thesis for deposit on WIRE (<https://www.wlv.ac.uk/lib/research/preparing-your-thesis/>) for information on how to identify copyrighted material that needs to be cleared or removed from the deposited version of the thesis.

As author, the student will own the copyright for the thesis, unless they have agreed to transfer or assign copyright to a funder or sponsor.

In accordance with the University Of Wolverhampton Publications Policy, all e-theses made publically available in WIRE will be published under a [Creative Commons](#) Attribution Non-Commercial Non-Derivative (CC BY-NC-ND) licence, which will allow others to download and share the work as long as they credit the author, but does not permit the work to be changed in any way or used commercially. If a more permissive licence is required, for example, due to funding requirements, this can be requested on deposit.

Improper Conduct and Plagiarism

Research students are required to conduct their research to the same standards of honesty and probity as all researchers. As a supervisor, you should remind students of the significance of declaring that material being submitted for publication or presented for assessment at any stage in your research degree programme is their own work.

These are serious offences and the University takes a very critical view of anyone who brings the Institution into disrepute. In most cases, students who are found guilty of such offences will be immediately withdrawn from their course of study. Further details on various levels of offence, penalties imposed and the procedure followed can be found in Appendix F – Procedure for the Investigation of Academic Misconduct by Research Students.

Section 4: Feedback

The Collection, Review and Response to Feedback

Constructive feedback from all concerned with research degree programmes is regarded as a valuable contribution to quality enhancement. The University encourages feedback in the following ways:

- Examiners: examiners' reports and the comments therein form part of the University's evaluation of the quality of its research degree programmes.
- Examination Chairs: feedback is sought on the conduct of all *viva voce* examinations and on examiners' comments.
- Supervisors: supervisors have the opportunity to feed comments on the progress of individual students and on the University's processes and procedures through representation at Faculty Research Committee. Feedback obtained from participants in the research supervisor development programme is used to ensure its relevance and fitness for purpose. In addition, research supervisors are invited to take part in the national surveys such as the Principal Investigators and Research Leaders Survey (PIRLS) and Careers in Research Online Survey (CROS).
- Students: there are arrangements for student representation on all Faculty Research Committees or other local committees and on the full University Research Committee. As part of ongoing quality assurance and monitoring procedures there are annual meetings with students from all Faculty Research Committees in which their views are actively sought. Reports from this monitoring are to be presented annually to University Research Committee. Finally, all students have the opportunity to make observations on their experiences through the Post graduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) and questionnaires issued on completion of their research degree programme.
- Research Administrators: Registry convenes an informal research administrators' forum to act as a mutual support network and to share problems and successes. The feedback obtained from the forum helps to ensure the dissemination of good practice.
- Sponsors: Faculty Research Committees are expected to seek the views of external sponsors as part of their normal ongoing review processes.

A summary report, drawing together all aspects of the feedback obtained through the mechanisms outlined above is to be presented annually to the Research Degrees Sub-committee and thereafter disseminated to Faculty Research Committees (and Research Institutes), and through student representation on these Boards to the student community.

Section 5: Assessment of the thesis

The University has articulated clear learning outcomes for the awards of MPhil, PhD, Professional and Practitioner Doctorates, PhD by Published Work (See below). In each case the criteria for success (i.e. the 'assessment criteria') are the achievement of the learning outcomes for the relevant award. In setting the criteria for research programmes, the University drew upon the qualification descriptors for doctoral and master's degrees in the QAA *Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications* and the definitions arising from the Bologna Process. The PhD by Published Work is assessed using the same criteria. The criteria used to assess research degrees are available to students, staff and external examiners in the Research Degree Handbooks for Students, Examiners and Supervisors. They are also on the University's web pages.

Criteria and learning outcomes

The nature of the candidate's research studies will depend to some extent on the academic discipline concerned. However, regardless of subject, all research degree theses should be examined on the basis of the following learning outcomes:

Learning Outcomes for the Award of MPhil

- Critical investigation and evaluation of a topic through individual research and analysis, which is at, or informed by findings at, the forefront of knowledge in the discipline and which is expressed in a work of publishable quality;
- Evidence of thorough and current knowledge of the specific field to which the topic of the thesis belongs, as well as an understanding of the intellectual context in which that topic is located;
- Demonstration of a comprehensive understanding of appropriate research methodologies;
- Demonstration of originality in the application of knowledge;
- Demonstration of ability to analyse critically one's own findings and those of others;
- Demonstration of ability to formulate a hypothesis or research question(s);
- Demonstration of ability to design, plan and implement a research programme to test, explore and evaluate the hypothesis or question(s).

Learning Outcomes for the Award of PhD, PhD by Publication, and Professional Doctorate

- *For PhD and PhD by Publication* - Substantial critical investigation and evaluation of a topic or set of related topics resulting in an independent and original contribution to knowledge and understanding in the field to which the topic belongs, and which is expressed in a work of publishable quality;
- *For Professional / Practitioner Doctorates* - Substantial critical investigation and evaluation of a topic or set of related topics resulting in an independent and original contribution to practice and understanding in the field to which the topic belongs, and which is expressed in a work of publishable quality;
- Originality is demonstrated through the discovery of new facts or methodologies, through subjecting known facts or methodologies to new insights derived from investigation, and/or through the revision, confirmation or adaptation of existing theories or methodologies to the new circumstances described in the thesis;
- Evidence of systematic, thorough, current and detailed knowledge of the specific subject area of the research as well as the general context in which that subject area is located;
- Evidence of knowledge of an appropriate range of research methodologies and a critical evaluation of their merits;
- Evidence of an ability to develop new hypotheses or research questions that have the capacity to extend the frontier of knowledge of the discipline;
- Evidence of an ability to design, plan and implement a research programme to test, explore and evaluate these hypotheses or questions;
- Evidence of an ability to analyse critically one's own findings and those of others.

Length and contents of thesis

The text of the thesis should normally not exceed the maximum length for the type and subject of the research degree as outlined in Appendix E. This word limit includes endnotes, footnotes and bibliography, but excludes essential ancillary data.

The thesis may contain work previously published by the candidate, and reference to such publication should be made in the thesis. Where publications are jointly authored by the candidate and others, the candidate's contribution to the publication must be specified.

Published work, supporting narrative, and evidence submitted for the award of PhD by Publication may vary in number and length according to the subject.

Submission of thesis

Procedure for the formatting and submission of the thesis is outlined in Appendix E.

The supervisors' responsibilities around the examination stage

Supporting the writing of the thesis and the 'writing up stage'

The Director of Studies should read and comment on draft chapters and the overall draft thesis. S/he should advise the student as to the readiness of the thesis for submission.

Students may apply for a reduced fee at the 'writing up stage' on the Application for Writing Up form. The writing up stage may only be approved when the Director of Studies is satisfied that the student has completed all field work, data collection and analysis and that no further use will be made of equipment or laboratories. Directors of Study are required to complete a section of the students' Writing Up application form to confirm this. This application is considered for approval by the Post Graduate Research Tutor. The maximum period for reduced fee at writing up stage is 12 months. Any student who does not submit the written thesis within this period will revert to full fees regardless of mode and location of study, provided they are within the maximum registration period.

If it is found that a student is still undertaking substantive research activities or making insufficient progress in writing up their thesis then they could be reverted to 'full fee' status. In such cases, a pro-rata fee would apply.

Nomination of examiners

At least 3 months before the submission of the thesis is expected, the Director of Studies should propose on the 'Nomination of Research Degree Examiners' (NOMEX) form the arrangements for the candidate's examination. The Director of Studies has responsibility for obtaining the required information from the proposed examiners and transferring the relevant details to the NOMEX Form and accompanying CV template. It is good practice for Supervisors to discuss potential examiners with their students prior to submitting the NOMEX form.

The forms are submitted to the Faculty Research Student Board (RSB) in the first instance. The RSB will carry out a series of checks to assure the examination team are knowledgeable and research active in the field of the thesis, are experienced in terms of examining at research degree level, and are independent of the candidate and the supervisory team (see Appendix C: Criteria for the Appointment of Research Degree Examiners and Appendix D: External Examiners (Research Degrees) - Process for Checking Right to Work in the UK).

Once approved by the Faculty Research Student Board, the NOMEX is then sent via Registry to the Research Awards Sub-Committee (RASC) for final approval. Decisions are communicated to the DoS by Registry and reported to the relevant FRC and any other relevant Faculty staff.

Viva voce preparation

It is good practice for research students to be offered support to prepare them for the *viva voce* examination. This may involve a 'mock' viva with suitably qualified staff. The internal examiner must have no part in any such mock examination.

Viva and post viva responsibilities

A candidate's supervisor may not be proposed as an internal examiner. However, at the request of the candidate and with the agreement of the examiners, a candidate's supervisor may be allowed to attend the examination in the capacity of observer. Any such request must be made in writing to the STaR Office at the point of submission of the thesis. The supervisor must take no part in the assessment of the thesis or the conduct of the oral examination, and must leave the room when the examiners discuss their views and recommendations.

It is good practice for one of the supervisors to be available to the candidate on the day of the viva for support and reassurance. Following the viva, it may help the candidate to have a debriefing session, in which questions and issues that arose in the viva can be discussed and Examiners' recommendations and suggestions considered.

On receipt of the list of minor corrections or recommendations for resubmission, it is a good idea for supervisors to work through each point with the student and to advise on what is required and how to address each point. It is essential that the student submits the revised or reworked thesis within the timescales. Supervisors should ensure students do so. If a further viva is required, the supervisor may also arrange for a mock viva to take place.

Appendices

Appendix A: The 'Proceed with Caution' Procedure

The 'Proceed with Caution' procedure is intended to give early warning that a research degree programme is at risk of either not achieving the learning outcomes or such delays as to make timely completion unlikely. It may be instigated at any point if it can be demonstrated that a student has not achieved agreed targets or is not in regular contact with the supervisory team.

A student is identified as 'Proceed with Caution' if there is evidence that:

- they are making insufficient academic progress for their mode of study; or
- they lack a commitment to the research project, as demonstrated by repeated failure to produce agreed interim outcomes, to attend supervisory sessions and/or to attend a prescribed programme of related studies.

As soon as the Director of Studies identifies a student as 'Proceed with Caution' for any of the reasons given above, they should immediately (i) notify the Chair of the Faculty Research Committee and (ii) write to the student detailing the reasons for concern and inviting the student to attend an emergency session to discuss the situation and to devise an action plan where appropriate. The emergency session should normally be scheduled within two working weeks of the date that the Director of Studies wrote to the student, and should be attended by a representative of the FRC who has not been associated previously with the project. The student may be accompanied by a friend or student representative.

A summary of the emergency session, including any action plan or revisions to the research programme, should be agreed by the Director of Studies and the student, and kept by the Director of Studies as part of the record of supervision. The FRC should be notified of the outcome of the emergency session and may instigate any further monitoring procedures it deems necessary.

If a student fails to respond to the letter, fails to attend the emergency session, or is unable to address satisfactorily the concerns of the Director of Studies so that an action plan can be agreed, the Director of Studies may, with the agreement of the other members of the supervisory team, recommend to the FRC that the student be withdrawn. Students have a right of Appeal against any such decision (see Appendix 7).

A recommendation to withdraw must be preceded by the implementation of the 'Proceed with Caution' procedure outlined above.

Appendix B: Researcher Development Statement and Framework

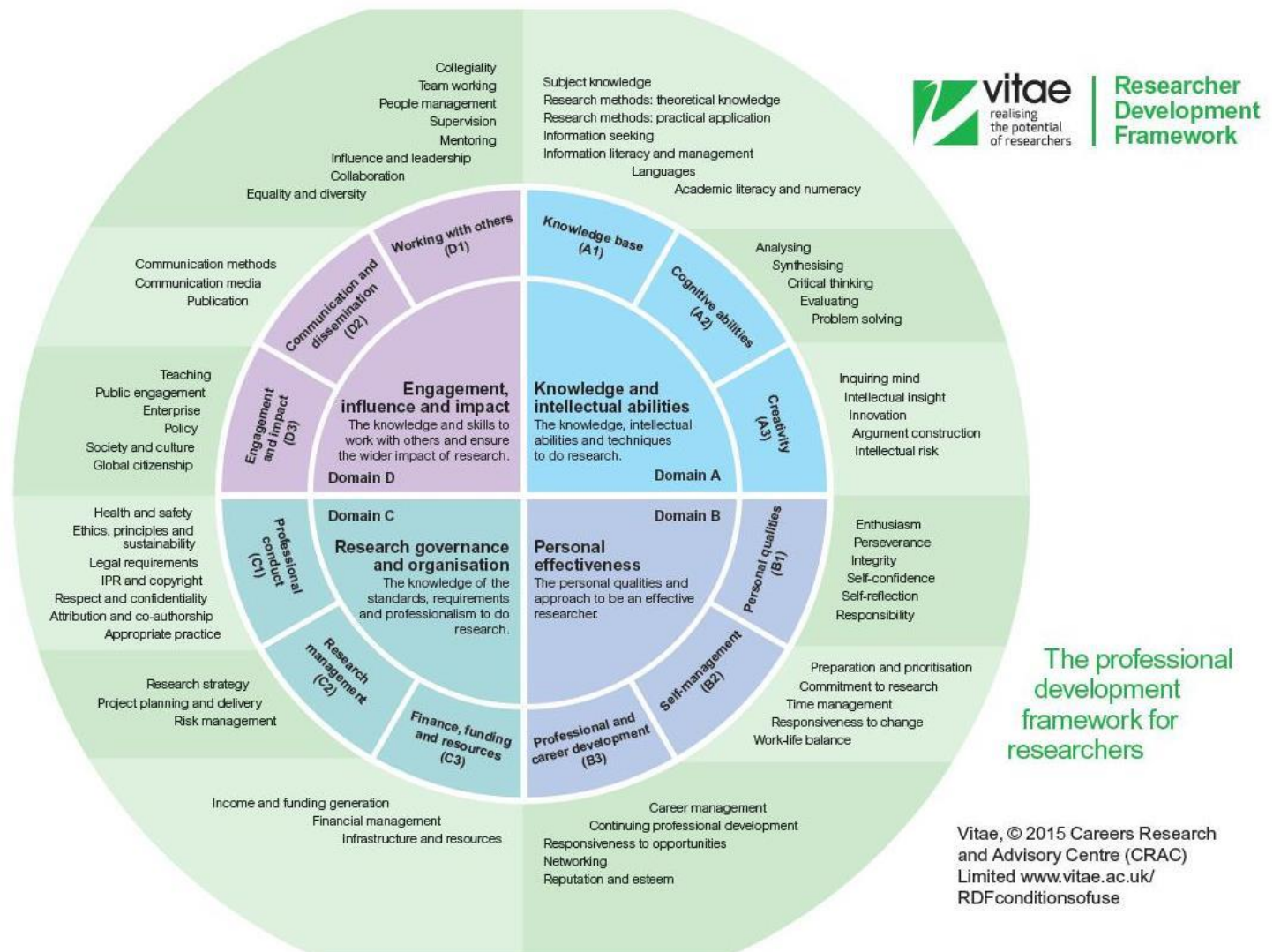
Researcher Development Statement

The UK is committed to enhancing the higher-level capabilities of the UK workforce including the development of world-class researchers. Researchers are critical to economic success, addressing major global challenges, and building a leading knowledge economy.

The Researcher Development Statement (RDS) sets out the knowledge, behaviours and attributes of effective and highly skilled researchers appropriate for a wide range of careers. The RDS is for policy makers and research organisations which provide personal, professional and career development for researchers in higher education. The Researcher Development Statement is derived from the Researcher Development Framework (RDF), a major new approach to researcher development, which aims to enhance our capacity to build the UK workforce, develop world-class researchers and build our research base.

The RDF is structured in four domains encompassing the knowledge, intellectual abilities, techniques and professional standards to do research, as well as the personal qualities, knowledge and skills to work with others and ensure the wider impact of research. Within each of the domains are three sub-domains and associated descriptors, which describe different aspects of being a researcher.

For more information on the Researcher Development Framework and associated Statement go to www.vitae.ac.uk/rdp



Appendix C: Criteria for the Appointment of Research Degree Examiners

1. GENERAL

- 1.1 At least two examiners must be appointed for each thesis presented for examination, at least one of whom must be an external examiner. It is normal practice to appoint one internal and one external examiner. However, if the student is or has been, within the 12 months prior to the submission of the thesis, a member of University staff, two external examiners and an internal examiner must be appointed.
- 1.2 To ensure the good standing of University of Wolverhampton Research Degrees, the examiners appointed for each student must be able, and be seen to be able, to make an independent assessment of the student and their thesis.
- 1.3 The supervisors may wish to consult the student for their views on individuals who might act as examiners, but the student's supervisors are responsible for nominating suitable examiners and should do so well in advance of the student submitting their thesis, so as to avoid subsequent delays in the examination process. Nominations should not be made unless the proposed examiners have informally agreed to act.
- 1.4 In support of the University's commitment to equality and diversity, supervisory teams are asked to consider, where possible, the gender and ethnicity balance of the examiners when making nominations.
- 1.5 All examiners must be formally appointed by the Research Awards Sub-Committee (RASC) following review by Research Student Boards (RSBs) within the Faculties/Research Institutes. The RSB advises on the academic expertise and suitability of the nominees; whilst RASC checks for any potential conflicts of interest the student or supervisor may have with the nominees.
- 1.6 Once examiners have been approved, the STaR Office will write to the examiners confirming their appointment. Under no circumstances should an examination proceed until the examiners have been formally appointed by the University.
- 1.7 Examiners should respect the confidentiality of the examination process and should under no circumstances discuss their views regarding the quality of the thesis or the content of their independent Pre-Viva Report and recommendations therein with the student, the other examiner(s), the supervisory team or the course leader (in the case of Professional Doctorates). These discussions are only appropriate to be had between examiners at the pre-viva meeting where Pre-Viva reports are exchanged.
- 1.8 Examiners should respect the confidentiality of the material they are examining. In some circumstances where students are sponsored by a company or industrial body, the examiners may need to sign a specific confidentiality agreement, as required by the sponsor.
- 1.9 Where a student is required to resubmit their thesis, the same examiners will normally undertake the re-examination, other than in exceptional circumstances (e.g. if an examiner has since retired and no longer wishes to participate).

2. CRITERIA FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF BOTH THE INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL EXAMINER:

- 2.1 Examiners should normally hold a degree in a cognate or relevant discipline that is at least equivalent to the degree that they are examining.

- 2.2 Probationary staff shall normally not be appointed to examine research degrees. However, the University does not wish to exclude recently appointed lecturers, individuals early in their career or individuals with appropriate professional backgrounds from industry from examining and where such individuals are appointed, the other examiner must be an experienced examiner.
- 2.3 It is accepted that examiners may be acquainted with the supervisors, and sometimes the student, and this in itself is not a bar to acting as an examiner. However, there must not be a personal link between the examiners and the candidate (see 2.5).
- 2.4 The examiners appointed should not have had any significant research or other contact with the candidate or supervisors which might inhibit a completely objective examination.
- 2.5 Supervisory teams should disclose details of any situations which have the potential to impair the ability of the examiner(s) to make a fair and impartial assessment of the student's thesis. A non-exhaustive list of potential sources of conflict is provided below:
- Nominated examiners' substantial involvement in the student's research, for example direct and sustained input/advice into the work being examined. Acting as an independent assessor during the Annual Progress Review should not compromise the ability of an individual to act as internal examiner, unless they undertake a more active role in the student's research.
 - Close personal relationships between the nominated examiner and the student, supervisors or other nominated examiner(s), for example this would include partners, spouses and close family relationships.
 - Close professional relationships between the nominated examiner and the student, supervisor or other nominated examiner, for example line management relationships, joint holding of grants, co-authorship of papers, or working in the same Institution in the case of two external examiners. This may be mitigated by the size and relative independence of the research team.
 - Nominated examiner(s) having acted as personal tutor to the student;
 - The work of the nominated examiner(s) is the focus of the student's research;
 - In cases where the student's research has involved collaboration with or funding of research by an external party, the nominated examiner(s) must be independent of that relationship;
 - Nominated examiner(s) having direct commercial interest in the outcomes of the research;
- 2.6 The existence of a potential conflict of interest should not necessarily be a bar to the appointment of a nominated examiner. However, Faculties, examiners, supervisors and students are required to declare any potential conflicts which may affect the integrity of the examination process at the point of nomination, or in the case of situations that only become apparent after examiners have been appointed, as soon as reasonably possible.

3. CRITERIA FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF THE INTERNAL EXAMINER

- 3.1 The internal examiner is a member of academic staff of the University of Wolverhampton and must hold a substantive appointment of at least 0.2 FTE or be regularly engaged as a Visiting Lecturer for more than 50% of their time.
- 3.2 The internal examiner is responsible for making the necessary arrangements for the oral examination, should be able to assess the thesis and contribute to the oral examination, and must have a sound knowledge and understanding of University regulations and procedures governing the viva voce.
- 3.3 The internal examiner must have completed the formal 'Examining a Research Degree' course within the last three years before being recommended for appointment as an internal examiner for the first time.

- 3.4 The internal examiner is normally a member of academic staff of the students' department, although it may be appropriate for the internal examiner to be drawn from another academic department/Faculty.
- 3.5 The internal examiner should not have had an active role in considering a candidate's progression stage. Staff members who may have attended seminars/presentations given by the candidate may be nominated as internal examiners provided they have taken no part in the progression decision.

4. CRITERIA FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF THE EXTERNAL EXAMINER

- 4.1 The external examiner is the subject specialist. External examiners must have recent, significant and demonstrable expertise in the student's field of research in order to provide an in-depth analysis of the thesis and in order to provide a rigorous viva voce examination.
- 4.2 Except where there is a strong practitioner/ industrial focus to the research, the external examiner will normally hold a substantive academic appointment in a university or higher education establishment.
- 4.3 If the topic of research spans a number of different disciplines, the faculty may wish to nominate a second external examiner to ensure that the combined expertise of the examining team covers all aspects of the student's work.
- 4.4 The external examiner shall normally have prior knowledge and experience of research degree examinations and standards through previous examination experience. In exceptional circumstances an external examiner who is recognised as an expert in their subject discipline, but who has little or no formal examining experience, may be appointed as long as the combined proposed examining team has experience of 3 or more previous examinations.
- 4.5 The external examiner must be completely independent of both the University and any collaborating establishment. For this reason, honorary/Emeritus members of the University's staff are not permitted to be appointed as external examiners. Former members of the University's staff are eligible for appointment as an external examiner; however a period of at least 3 years must have elapsed before a former member of the University's staff may be appointed as an external examiner, subject to the other criteria being met.
- 4.6 An external examiner is not normally permitted to act in connection with the examination of a second research degree student at this University within a period of 12 months. The University Research Committee discourages the frequent use of external examiners except in exceptional cases and will ensure that the same external examiner is not approved so frequently that their familiarity with a research group might be considered to prejudice objective judgement.
- 4.7 Where a student is either sponsored by, receiving supervision from, or undertaking work in an industrial establishment, academic institution or company, RASC will not approve an individual employed by that organisation for appointment as an external examiner.
- 4.8 Where the proposed external examiner does not meet the above criteria, the supervisor must make a strong case for appointment. In such cases: either
- (i) the internal examiner must be very experienced in doctoral examinations at this University; **or**
 - (ii) a second external examiner who is experienced in research degree examinations should be appointed
- 4.9 The appointment of a nominated external examiner is subject to verification of their right to work in the UK.

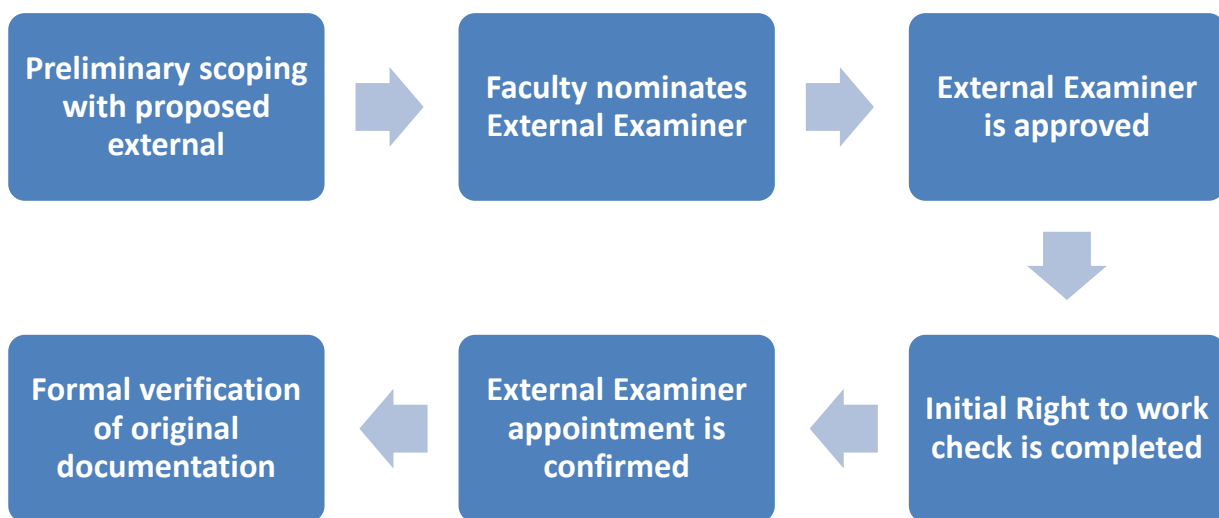
Appendix D: External Examiners (Research Degrees) - Process for Checking Right to Work in the UK

1) Overview

The law on preventing illegal working is set out in sections 15 to 25 of the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 which came into force on 29 February 2008. Employing someone who is not allowed to work in the UK is illegal, and the University is required to carry out checks on everyone it employs. This includes checks on External Examiners who are contracted to perform a specific service, even if they are already employed by other UK institutions. These checks apply to ALL External Examiners including UK nationals.

There could potentially be severe consequences for the University if it is found to be employing an illegal worker and checks on that person's right to work in the UK have not been properly carried out. The Home Office's UK Visas and Immigration Service (UKVI) monitor this and failure to follow correct procedures could result in the University's licence (to sponsor international students for Tier 4 visas) being revoked.

This document sets out in detail how to manage such checks. An overview of the process is presented below.



2) Process for Checking Right to Work in the UK

a) Preliminary Scoping

Preliminary scoping of a potential External Examiners right to work in the UK takes place during initial conversations between the Director of Studies (DOS) and the proposed examiner as part of the nomination process. When completing the Nomination of Research Degree Examiners form (NOMEX) the DOS is required indicate to the best of their knowledge as to whether the proposed external examiner has the right to work in the UK. The DoS should also check that the proposed External Examiner is prepared to post to the University their evidence that they have the Right to Work in the UK before the thesis is dispatched to them. This should help identify to the Faculty Research Student Board any potential issues at an early stage in the nomination process before the NOMEX is forwarded to the Research Awards Sub Committee (RASC) for approval.

b) Examiner Approval

RASC approves the nomination of the External Examiner but the appointment is not confirmed until their right to work in the UK has been verified.

c) Verification

The Student Transnational and Research Office (STAR) will contact the External and request that they provide a copy of acceptable documentation for right to work checks. The STAR Office receives the physical RTW evidence (e.g. passport), video calls the External Examiner to verify identification and returns the documentation by special delivery.

d) Confirmation of External Examiner Appointment

STAR Office will only send a thesis that is to be examined to the external examiner once right to work documents have been received and verified and the appointment confirmed.

3) Record Keeping and Review

The STAR Office maintains records of all External Examiner nominations, appointments and right-to-work verifications (including when appointments and right to work expires). These details are held on a database alongside verified copies of original documents which will be retained securely for two years after expiry of the appointment.

Following the Viva Voce the STAR Office will check whether the External's appointment is still current or has expired before sending additional materials for examination i.e. minor amendments or a resubmission.

4) Acceptable Documentation for Right to Work Checks

The following information is drawn from the Home Office document "Right to work checks: an employer's guide" (last updated 2 July 2021), as published at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/right-to-work-checks-employers-guide>

Further guidance is also available via www.gov.uk/check-job-applicant-right-to-work

Appendix E: Format of thesis

Preliminary matters

- The thesis shall be presented in English.
- There shall be a table of contents and associated page numbers at the front of the thesis.
- There shall be a one page abstract of approximately 300 words included at the start of the thesis which shall provide a synopsis of the thesis stating the nature and scope of the work undertaken and of the contribution made to the knowledge of the subject treated.
- The thesis shall include a statement of the candidate's objective and shall acknowledge published or other sources of material consulted (including an appropriate bibliography) and any assistance received.
- Where a candidate's research programme is part of a collaborative group project, the thesis shall indicate clearly the candidate's individual contribution and the extent of the collaboration.
- The candidate shall be free to publish or exhibit material in advance of the thesis but reference shall be made in the thesis to any such work. **If any part of a candidate's work is published, the necessary elements of the copyright must be retained, so as to enable the final thesis to be made openly accessible online through WIRE (Wolverhampton Intellectual Repository and E-Theses) and shared with the British Library's EThOS service.**
- Where the thesis contains copyright protected material, the thesis will contain a copy of the written permission to publish the copyrighted material.
- Where the thesis contains copyright protected material, this should be fully acknowledged and the thesis will contain a copy of the written permission to publish the copyrighted material in the appendices.
- The thesis will include evidence that the appropriate ethical approval has been granted.

Restrictions on access to a Thesis

If the thesis includes materials which are: politically, commercially, personally or industrially sensitive, or protected materials relating to questions of national security the student may request that access to it be restricted for a period of time. A thesis shall not be restricted in this way in order to protect research leads. In some cases, where an industrial sponsor funds a student's studies or the research project on which the student is working, the contract which the University has drawn up with an industrial sponsor will stipulate any such a restriction.

An application for restricted access must be made at the earliest opportunity and at the latest when the examiners are appointed via an approved NOMEX form. An application should be submitted to the STaR Office using the form '[Application for Restricted Access of a Research Degree Thesis](#)'. Each application is considered by the Dean of Research in accordance with the grounds outlined in regulation 4.9. The period approved shall not normally exceed two years from the date of conferment of the Award. Where a shorter period would be adequate the Dean of Research shall not automatically grant the maximum two year period.

Where the Dean of Research has agreed that the confidential nature of the candidate's work is such as to preclude the thesis being made openly accessible online through WIRE (Wolverhampton Intellectual Repository and E-Theses) (and Collaborating Establishment, if any) and via the British Library's EThOS service, the thesis shall, immediately on completion of the programme of work, be retained by the University on restricted access and, for a time not exceeding the approved period, shall only be made available to those who were directly involved in the project. A data only record will appear in WIRE (including author, title, keywords etc.) until the restricted access period has expired. The copies of the thesis submitted for examination shall remain the property of the University but the copyright of the thesis shall be vested in the candidate.

Format requirements for the thesis submitted for examination

The following requirements shall be adhered to in the format of the thesis submitted for examination:

Word count

The text of the thesis should normally not exceed the following maximum length for the subject or type of research degree see table below. This word limit includes endnotes, footnotes and bibliography (except where specified otherwise below) but excludes essential ancillary data.

Subject Area	MPhil	PhD
Science, Engineering and Technology	25,000 words	45,000 words
Arts, Social Sciences, Education and Business	45,000 words	90,000 words
Creative and Performing Arts (where the thesis is accompanied by a portfolio of original, creative work, the following range applies)	20,000 -25,000 words	20,000 - 45,000 words
Professional Doctorate in Biomedical Science (DBMS)	-	25,000
Professional Doctorate in Education (EdD) Professional Doctorate in Health and Wellbeing (DHW) Professional Doctorate in Counselling Psychology (PsychD)	-	40,000*

**The word limit applies to the body of the thesis but excludes the reference list / bibliography, notes and appendices.*

(Essential ancillary data should not normally exceed 20% of the length of the thesis. Where such data exceeds 20% of the length of the thesis, the consent of the examiners will be sought.)

- Theses shall normally be in A4 format. In exceptional cases the University Research Committee may give permission for a thesis to be submitted in another format where it is satisfied that the contents of the thesis can be better expressed in that format;
- Copies of the thesis shall be presented in a permanent and legible printed form. Any copies produced by photocopying must also be permanent and legible. The size of character used in the main text, including displayed matter and notes, shall be font size 12. You may use font style Arial, Tahoma or Verdana.
- The thesis may be printed on one or both sides of the paper which shall normally be white, of good quality and sufficiently opaque to avoid show-through;
- The margin at the binding edge of the page shall not be less than 40mm; other margins shall not be less than 15mm;
- Spacing of text should be consistent with clarity; in the main body of the text, this should normally be double-spaced.
- Pages shall be numbered consecutively through the main text including photographs and/or diagrams included as whole pages;

The title page shall give the following information (see specimen later):

- the full title of the thesis;
- the full name and qualifications of the author;
- that the degree is awarded by the University;
- the award for which the degree is submitted in partial fulfilment of its requirements;
- the Collaborating Establishment(s), if any;
- the month and year of submission; and
- statement of copyright.

Theses must be submitted for examination in a secure temporarily bound form.

Submission of the final thesis

Following successful examination the STaR Office will request submission an electronic copy/copies of the thesis, the e-thesis, for deposit in (Wolverhampton Intellectual Repository and E-Theses). Once the e-thesis is deposited in WIRE it is published online so it can be accessed by scholars and others anywhere in the world.

It is the responsibility of the candidate to send a copy of the thesis to any Collaborating Establishment.

The format of the e-thesis should be as follows:

- A single merged file as either a Word document or PDF file, in the following order:
 - Title Page
 - Abstract
 - Table of Contents
 - Acknowledgements (optional - unless there is formal collaboration in which case this is required)
 - Chapters in sequential order
 - Bibliography
 - All paginated sequentially
- Submitted to Registry either
 - e-mailed as an attachment to a specified address (details issued following successful examination)
 - sent or handed in on a CD
 - sent or handed in on a memory stick
 - Any non-text elements should be submitted as a separate file

The e-thesis should be submitted along with signed and dated hard copies of the:

- (i) E-Thesis Deposit Agreement
- (ii) Thesis title page
- (iii) a Declaration Document

Prior to submitting the e-thesis, candidates should ensure that they read the online guidance (<https://www.wlv.ac.uk/lib/research/preparing-your-thesis/>) on preparing the thesis for deposit on WIRE for information on how to identify copyrighted material that needs to be cleared or removed from the deposited version of your thesis.

Third party copyright material used in the thesis (e.g. material created by someone else such as photographs, maps, extracts from another work etc.) must be either cleared for deposit with the copyright holder or removed from the thesis before deposit.

This does not affect the inclusion of fully referenced third party material in the thesis submitted for examination purposes, it only applies to the deposit of the thesis into WIRE. This material can remain in the hardcopy, examination version of the thesis as long as it is considered unpublished.

Candidates must also ensure that personal or sensitive data that relates to identifiable individuals has also been removed from your thesis before deposit (<https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-data-protection/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation-gdpr/key-definitions/what-is-personal-data/>.)

Further advice and assistance with clearing third party material or removing personal data can be sought from the University's Scholarly Communications team at wire@wlv.ac.uk.

If material has been removed from the version of the thesis that will be deposited, the candidate will need to submit two copies of the thesis for deposit, which are clearly identified in the file name as 'full unedited version' and 'redacted version'. The full examination version will then be archived under embargo (not published online) and the redacted version will be published online.

The full unedited version must be identical to the copy submitted for examination, save for any amendments approved by the examiners, and the redacted version (if applicable) must have copyrighted material or personal data removed.

Appendix F: Procedure for the Investigation of Academic Misconduct by Research Students.

The University's procedure for research students is closely modelled on that used for undergraduates and students on taught postgraduate programmes.

1. Definitions

A research student is defined as a student of the University who is enrolled on a research degree programme leading to the degrees of Master of Philosophy (MPhil), Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) or a Master's degree by research. Students studying for a professional doctorate who are in the thesis phase of their study programme are also defined as research students for the purposes of this procedure.

Cheating

Cheating is defined as any attempt by a candidate to gain unfair advantage in an assessment by dishonest means, and includes e.g. all breaches of examination rules, falsifying data, commissioning of an assessment form a third party.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the act of taking someone else's work and passing it off as your own. This includes incorporating either unattributed direct quotation(s) or substantial paraphrasing from the work of another/others/or yourself.

Collusion

Collusion occurs when two or more students (and/or researchers) collaborate to produce a piece of work to be submitted (in whole or part) for assessment and the work is presented as the work of one student alone, without due acknowledgement of the contribution of others.

In the context of all three definitions: where research students are working in closely related fields to one another, or are supported by technical staff, it is important that each student takes care not to claim deliberately or inadvertently that a given piece of work carried out by someone else is their own work. Due acknowledgement must always be made to the contributions of others, whether in work submitted for assessment, presented at a conference or placed in the public domain through publication or any other medium.

2. Where a case of academic misconduct as defined above is suspected in a piece of work* contributing to a research award of the University, the matter must be referred to the relevant Director/Head of the Research Institute/Centre or Dean of Faculty (or nominee), who will determine whether a *prima facie* case exists to investigate the matter further. The Director/Head/Dean or nominee may seek advice from the Conduct and Appeals Unit in considering the matter. If the Director/Head/Dean or nominee then decides that the matter should be investigated further he or she must inform the Head of the Conduct and Appeals Unit.

* For the purpose of this procedure a "piece of work contributing to a research award of the University" is any written work or oral presentation submitted to the supervisors for assessment or submitted to a Faculty Research Committee in support of the progression stage of a Research Degree Programme or as part of annual monitoring.

3. If a *prima facie* case for further investigation is established. A letter inviting the student to a meeting will be sent by the Research Institute/Centre (RI/RC).

Academic or administrative staff should not discuss the matter with students. Students who enquire about their assessment should be told that they will be receiving a letter from the Research Institute/Centre (RI/RC) inviting them to a meeting to discuss the work.

The meeting will have in attendance:-

- The Director/Head of the RI or RC, or Dean of Faculty, or nominee
- The Head of the Conduct and Appeals Unit
- Student (and friend)
- Note taker (provided by the Conduct and Appeals Unit)

4. The student will be given the opportunity to discuss with the panel the circumstances which have led to the assessment which is at the centre of the allegation. The standard and burden of proof for the University to prove the allegation(s) of misconduct is, if on the available evidence it is more likely than not that misconduct has occurred then the burden and standard of proof is fulfilled and a penalty will be imposed as appropriate

If, as a result of this meeting, academic misconduct is admitted by the student or the evidence clearly shows that academic misconduct has occurred, the relevant Faculty Research Committee will be informed and will be requested to apply the appropriate penalty (see paragraph 7 below). The student will be informed in writing within seven working days of the meeting.

5. Penalties

Academic Board has agreed that the penalty for serious academic misconduct by any postgraduate research student is exclusion from the University.

Note: Serious academic misconduct is defined as any case, which has either been admitted by a student, or which a panel has judged to include:

- deliberate, premeditated cheating,
- premeditated attempt to deceive and gain unfair advantage,
- significant plagiarism in a critical piece of work i.e. thesis

6 Right of Appeal

A student will have the right to appeal against the decision reached by a Stage One hearing. The grounds for appeal are:

- That an administrative error or material irregularity has occurred in the conduct of the investigation.
- That there were personal circumstances which they believe would have affected the decision taken by the panel had they been made aware of them. The student must have a good reason not to have revealed the circumstances to the Stage One hearing.

Appeals must be made within 20 working days of the receipt of the letter which informs the student of the penalty imposed.

Students are advised to contact the Students' Union for advice and support prior to submitting an appeal. The Students' Union Advice & Support Centre can be contacted via email to advice.wolvesunion@wlv.ac.uk or by calling 01902 322038. Details of the Students Union Representation Service are available on their website: www.wolvesunion.org and will be included in the invite letter.

Appeals should be made in writing to:

The Office of the Dean of Students
Gateway @ The George
University of Wolverhampton
Wulfruna Street, Wolverhampton
WV1 1LY

The Head of the Conduct and Appeals Unit (where they have had no previous involvement with the case) or the Dean of Students will review the request for an appeal to determine whether or not the appellant has demonstrated valid grounds for an appeal to proceed. To determine whether it is appropriate for the appeal to be considered by a Stage Two Appeals Panel additional documentation may be requested.

If it is determined that the student has demonstrated a valid case for an appeal to proceed then the case will be referred to a Stage Two Appeal Hearing. If this is not found to be the case a Completion of Procedures letter will be issued, in accordance with the format prescribed by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education.

An appeal review should normally be completed in no more than 30 working days.

7. Stage Two Hearing

The membership of a Stage Two Appeal Panel will be:

- Chair - a Dean of a Faculty other than that to which the student belongs, or their nominee.
- A senior member of academic staff from a Faculty other than that to which the student belongs.
- A Students' Union representative nominated by the President of the Students' Union.

Members of the appeal panel shall not have been involved in the original Academic Misconduct Hearing.

Also present will be:

- The student (and friend/representative) – to present the appeal
- A representative from the Stage One Academic Misconduct Panel to present a response to the appeal
- A senior member of staff from the Conduct and Appeals Unit (with no prior involvement in the case at stage one) to provide procedural and regulatory advice to the panel.
- An officer of the Conduct and Appeals Unit to take notes

An audio recording will also be taken. Students who would prefer not to have an audio recording made will be required to request this in advance.

Both parties may call witnesses to appear before the panel

The appellant must be given written notice, at least 7 working days prior to the hearing, of the date and place of the hearing, and a copy of the University's Academic Misconduct procedure, drawing attention to the appellant's rights under the procedure. The standard and burden of proof applied will be the same as at stage one of this procedure.

Students will be advised to contact the Students' Union for advice and support. The Students' Union Advice & Support Centre can be contacted via email to advice.wolvesunion@wlv.ac.uk or by calling 01902 322038. Details of the Students Union Representation Service are available on their website: www.wolvesunion.org and will be included in the invite letter.

At least 5 working days before the hearing, members of the Stage Two Panel and the appellant and the representative from the Faculty will be provided with the appropriate documentation. The appellant may also provide an additional written statement to the panel.

The student has the right to appear before and be heard by the Stage Two panel. They may be accompanied by a friend (the student shall be responsible for notifying the Conduct and Appeals Unit of the identity of the friend or witness not less than 2 working days prior to the hearing). The role of the friend can be either to provide support (in which case they would not be expected to speak) or to act as a representative (in which case the student would attend but the representative would speak on their behalf).

The Student would normally be expected to attend the stage two hearing. If the student fails to attend the meeting without a valid reason then a decision will be taken in their absence. Students who do not wish to attend the meeting may submit written representations which should be received no later than 2 working days prior to the hearing.

The Chair of the panel shall have discretion to manage the conduct of the hearing including to adjourn, continue or postpone a hearing and to limit the length of the hearing, the questioning of witnesses, and the number of witnesses called.

The student and the representative from the stage one Academic Misconduct Panel may present evidence and call witnesses, who may be questioned by the other party and by the Panel. The student will always be afforded the opportunity to make a final closing statement.

The panel will consider its decision in private. The panel, at the end of its deliberation will either uphold the appeal in whole or part or dismiss the appeal. Where the appeal is upheld the panel can decide to impose an alternative penalty or to rule that no penalty should be imposed.

The decision taken by this panel will be final.

The student will be informed of the outcome and reasons in writing within 5 working days of the hearing. A Completion of Procedures letter will also be issued to the student, in accordance with the format prescribed by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator. Further details of the review scheme operated by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) are available at their website: www.oiahe.org.uk

The Panel decision will be communicated to the Chair of the Research Awards Sub-Committee (RASC).

It is anticipated that the full appeal process will take no longer than 90 calendar days to conclude.

Office of the Independent Adjudicator

If having exhausted all Stages of the University's internal procedure, the student considers that the University has failed to consider and respond to their appeal appropriately, they can refer the case to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA). This office provides an independent scheme for the review of student complaints and appeals.

In order to refer their case to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator they will require a Completion of Procedures Letter. A Completion of Procedures letter will be issued when all applicable stages of the procedure have been exhausted. The letter will be issued in accordance with the format prescribed by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator.

Details of the rules of the scheme and information about how to make an application for review by the OIA are available at their website: www.oiahe.org.uk

Students are advised to contact the Students' Union for advice and support prior to submitting a complaint to the OIA. The Students' Union Advice & Support Centre can be contacted via email to advice.wolvesunion@wlv.ac.uk or by calling 01902 322038.

Appendix G: How to access the eVision Research Supervision Log

Research Supervisor Logs – Add a New Log

To add a new log click the 'Update' button.

Student Code	Student Name	Course	View All Meetings	Update Research Log
0300002/22	RICHARDS-TESCJ	BU020R01UV	View	Update

Complete all sections of the form.

- Select the Type of Meeting from the drop down list.
- Please only select meeting if you have met the student face to face in the UK
- Enter the date of the meeting using the format DD/MM/YY
- Add in the names of those attending the meeting
- Add the notes of the meeting into the 'Meeting Notes' field
- Click 'Next'

Create New Meeting - Caroline Richards-Test Record (0300002)

← Exit

Type of Meeting:

Date of Meeting (in format DD/MM/YY):

Meeting Attendees:

Meeting Notes:

[Next](#)


Previous Meetings

Meeting Date	Meeting Type	Meeting Attendees	Meeting Notes
06/Nov/2014	Meeting	Test 1 Test 2 Test 3 Test 4	Test
07/Nov/2014	Meeting	Test 1 Test 2 Test 3 Test 4	Test
08/Nov/2014	Meeting	Test 1 Test 2	Test

If 'Date of Meeting' or 'Meeting Notes' are left blank, the log will not be stored and the following error messages will be displayed. If the 'Meeting Attendees' fields do not have at least one attendee entered an error message will also be displayed and the log will not be stored.

Create New Meeting - Caroline Richards-Test Record (0300002)

Type of Meeting

Date of Meeting (in format DD/MM/YY)  * please do not leave blank

Meeting Attendees

* please do not leave blank

Meeting Notes

* please do not leave blank

Previous Meetings +

Are you sure?

Type of Meeting	Meeting
Date of Meeting	09/11/14
Attendees	Test 1 Test 2 Test 3 Test 4
Meeting Notes	Test

If any of the details displayed are incorrect, the 'Edit' button should be clicked. When the 'Edit' button is clicked, the user will be returned to the 'Create New Meeting' screen.

If all information is correct, click 'Save and the meeting will be saved.