

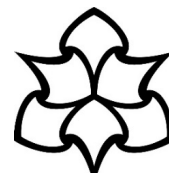


**Manchester
Metropolitan
University**

INSTITUTIONAL CODE OF PRACTICE FOR POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH DEGREES

2019-20

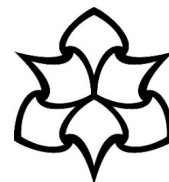




Institutional Code of Practice for Postgraduate Research Degrees 2019-20

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Major changes for 2019-20

This Code of Practice is reviewed annually, with changes approved by the Academic Board. Major changes for 2019-20 are below:

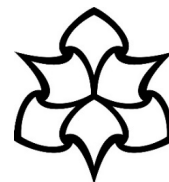
Regulation	Amendment/Addition
All	Amendments have been made throughout the document to provide clarity, reduce duplication and ambiguity in the text and ensure ease of reference between the suite of regulatory documents.
All	To provide consistency and clarity in decision making, where the term “delegated authority” is noted, unless stated otherwise, this means the Faculty Research Degrees Committee.
All	Where the term “normally” appears, if a situation does not fall within this criterion, it will be assessed on a case-by-case basis by the Head of Faculty Research Degrees, in liaison with the Research Degrees Manager.
All	Terminology has been amended from <i>conferment</i> to <i>completion and award</i> throughout the document
2.1	The regulation confirms the minimum number of staff required to make admissions decisions, and the Head of Research Centre has been added; this was not referenced as an approval role in the previous regulations.
2.6	Regulation has been updated to confirm that the application for registration deadline for students who enrol in October will be 15 January 2020.
2.9	Regulation confirms in exceptional circumstances a student may be registered for another course of study concurrently with the research degree registration, provided that the dual registration will not detract from the research.

This Code of Practice is owned and updated by the Manchester Metropolitan University Graduate School on behalf of Academic Board. Queries should be directed to the Graduate School (gsresearchdegrees@mmu.ac.uk).

Introduction

Manchester Metropolitan University produces a suite of documents that outline the formal regulations and procedures for postgraduate research degrees, and provide operational guidance to students and staff:

- The **Regulations for Postgraduate Research Degrees** outlines the rules governing the formal stages of postgraduate research programmes: registration, progression and assessment.
- The **Institutional Code of Practice for Postgraduate Research Degrees** details the procedures and practices that apply to all aspects of undertaking and administering postgraduate research programmes.



- The **Research Degrees Handbook** provides detailed, practical guidance for students and staff about research degrees.

These and other key documents are available on the [Graduate School website](#).

1. General Principles

1.1 The University's Institutional Code of Practice for Postgraduate Research Degrees is reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that Manchester Metropolitan University's practices and procedures regarding research degrees continue to be compliant with national guidelines.

1.2 The Institutional Code of Practice is made available to research students and staff of the University and should be read in conjunction with the [Regulations for Postgraduate Research Degrees](#). It outlines the requirements of research degree programmes and the support mechanisms available to students and staff as members of the supervisory team.

Definitions of research and research degrees

1.3 At Manchester Metropolitan University, research degrees include: Master's (by Research), MPhil, and doctoral level study including Professional Doctorates, PhD and PhD by Published Work and by Professional Practice.

1.4 For those studying Part A of Professional Doctorates the taught postgraduate curriculum framework and the [Assessment Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Programmes of Study](#) apply.

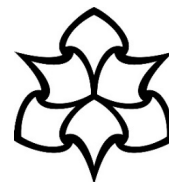
1.5 At Master's level, the work of Manchester Metropolitan University research students will be at, or informed by, the forefront of an academic or professional discipline. Students will demonstrate originality in the application of knowledge and they will understand how the boundaries of knowledge are advanced through research. They will be able to deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, and they will show originality in tackling and solving problems. They will have the qualities needed for employment in circumstances requiring sound judgement, personal responsibility and initiative, in complex and unpredictable professional environments.

1.6 At doctoral level, Manchester Metropolitan University research students will show creation and interpretation of knowledge, which extends the forefront of a discipline, usually through original research and critical thinking. Holders of doctorates will be able to conceptualise, design and implement projects for the generation of significant new knowledge and/or understanding. They will have the qualities needed for employment requiring the ability to make informed judgments on complex issues in specialist fields, and innovation in tackling and solving problems.

University policies, procedures and guidelines for postgraduate research degrees

1.7 The Institutional Code of Practice for Postgraduate Research Degrees is supported by Manchester Metropolitan University policies and University-wide procedures. It should be read in conjunction with the following:

- [Research and Knowledge Exchange Strategy for Manchester Metropolitan University](#)
- [Internationalisation Strategy for Manchester Metropolitan University](#)
- [Education Strategy for Manchester Metropolitan University](#)
- [The Regulations for the Academic Awards of the University](#)
- [The Regulations for Postgraduate Research Degrees](#)



- [The Manchester Metropolitan University Commitment](#)
- [Postgraduate Research Degrees Admissions Procedure](#)
- [Research Degrees Handbook](#).

1.8 In addition, and where a Collaborative Partner Organisation is supervising a student for a Manchester Metropolitan University postgraduate research award, the [Institutional Code of Practice for Collaborative Provision](#) will apply.

1.9 These policies and procedures will be applied consistently to all students on a research degree.

Equality and diversity commitment

1.10 Manchester Metropolitan University is proud of its diverse community of staff, students and visitors. We are committed to creating a positive environment where everybody is treated with dignity and respect. Wherever possible this commitment should be reflected in the diversity of staff membership on the panels (e.g. interview panels), committees (e.g. University and Faculty Research Degrees Committees) and teams (e.g. supervisory teams) associated with managing postgraduate research across the University.

2. Application, admission, registration and progression

2.1 To ensure equality of opportunity, all applications for study must be made online and include evidence of qualifications and references, followed by a formal interview.

Admission decisions will involve a minimum of two members of staff who have completed HR's Recruitment and Selection training. This can include:

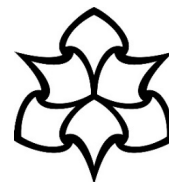
- The Research Degree Co-ordinator, Head of Department, Faculty Head of Research Degrees (or their nominee) or Head of Research Centre (or their nominee)
- Another research active member of staff (which can include a prospective Director of Studies).

2.2 All applicants must meet the minimum [university English language entry requirements](#) and complete their study and prepare and defend their thesis in English. Where applicable, evidence of the applicant's IELTS score must also be provided to support the application.

- Overseas students must adhere to immigration, visa and UK Home Office requirements at all times. Some types of visa also require attendance at specified pre-enrolment sessions. Such information is provided within the application information, and queries can be directed to the International Office.

2.3 Entry requirements to research Master's (by Research), MPhil and doctoral level study, including detail of equivalent qualifications for international applicants, are available on the [Applying for Postgraduate Research Courses](#) webpages.

2.4 Applicants holding alternative qualifications, including professional qualifications, shall be considered on their merits and in relation to the nature and scope of the programme of work proposed. In exceptional circumstances, Manchester Metropolitan University, through the University Research Degrees Committee or delegated authority, may permit entry for PhD to applicants who do not hold typical academic qualifications for entry to postgraduate study. The University Research Degrees Committee or delegated authority may place additional entry criteria,



including written or oral submissions, on applicants without the normal entry requirements to ensure an ability to study at the required level. Applicants must also be required to provide names of two suitable persons, independent of the supervisory team, who the University can consult concerning the applicant's academic attainment and fitness for research.

2.5 Applicants may transfer into Manchester Metropolitan University from other institutions. Each case will be considered on its merits and a maximum reduction of one year of study will be available for full-time students who do not transfer into Manchester Metropolitan University with their existing Director of Studies from their previous institution. A pro-rata equivalent will be applied for part-time students. Where an applicant transfers into Manchester Metropolitan University when their existing Director of Studies takes a post at the University, they may continue with their studies at the same stage of registration as at their previous institution. Applicants will be required to provide documentation from their previous institution to support a reduction in their registration period. All transfers to Manchester Metropolitan University shall be approved by the University Research Degrees Committee or delegated authority.

Application for registration (RD1)

2.6 Following enrolment, an application for registration for a research degree is considered by the University Research Degrees Committee or delegated authority. The Head of Faculty Research Degrees and the relevant Head of Department (or equivalent) where the research programme will be undertaken must support applications. The application for registration will normally take place within three months of enrolment for full-time students and within six months for part-time students. Only in exceptional circumstances shall students obtain an extension of registration from the University Research Degrees Committee or delegated authority.

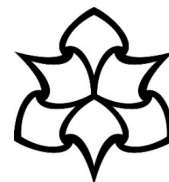
2.7 Approval of registration, and the date of registration is set in accordance with the terms outlined in 3.2 and 3.3 of the [Regulations for Postgraduate Research Degrees](#).

2.8 The University Research Degrees Committee or delegated authority may approve an application from a student proposing to work substantially outside the University or by distance learning, provided that:

- There is satisfactory evidence regarding the facilities available for the research both within and outside the University
- Adequate provision is made for contact with other researchers and for the attainment of skills development
- The arrangements for supervision include frequent and substantial contact between the student and the supervisor(s)
- The oral examination will be conducted within the University, or via video conferencing if deemed appropriate (see the Interim Video Conference Policy for Oral Examinations for full details and eligibility).

In addition, see [Distance Learning PhD guidance](#) for full details of resources and support that should be in place.

2.9 The University Research Degrees Committee or delegated authority may exceptionally permit a student to register for another course of study concurrently with the research degree registration, provided that, in the opinion of the Committee, the dual registration will not detract from the research.



Progression review and transfer of study (RD2)

2.10 All students undertaking a research degree (with the exception of those on programmes that last for less than 12 months full-time or 24 months part-time) will complete a progression review. This takes place after 12 months (or 24 months if part-time) of registration and enables the University to judge whether the student has made sufficient progress on their research studies to continue their registration (see Regulations for PGR Degrees, 4).

2.11 Manchester Metropolitan University also provides the opportunity for research students registered for a Master's degree (by Research) or an MPhil to apply to the University Research Degrees Committee or delegated authority for transfer to study for a higher award. A transfer report will be required and an oral assessment will be used to support the case for transfer (see Regulations for PGR Degrees, 5.1 – 5.6).

2.12 If a student is unable to complete their approved programme of work, they may apply, or the Director of Studies may recommend, to the University Research Degrees Committee or delegated authority prior to the submission of the thesis for examination, for a transfer from MPhil or PhD to a Master's degree (by Research) or an MPhil respectively (see Regulations for PGR Degrees, 5.7). The student has a right of appeal regarding any transfer recommendation via the [University Academic Appeals](#) procedure (see Regulations for PGR Degrees, 5.8).

3. Extension and Suspension of study

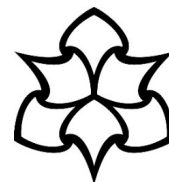
3.1 There are specific guidelines providing information and support about an extension of studies (where a student, due to exceptional factors, requires additional time to submit their thesis), and about a suspension of studies (where a student is prevented by exceptional factors from making progress with their research). Please see [The Code of Practice on Extensions and Suspensions](#) for full details.

4. Adjustments for students

4.1 The [Student Maternity and Pregnancy Guidelines](#) outline the maternity procedures for all students.

4.2 The needs of students with disabilities, including specific learning difficulties (e.g. dyslexia), are supported in compliance with the [Equality Act 2010](#). Students who identify a disability or other learning need that requires reasonable adjustments to be made to the approved programme will be referred by their supervisory team to the University's [Disability Service](#). Arrangements will need to be put in place if the Disability Service confirms a Personal Learning Plan is required. The University's [Practical Arrangement for Examinations for Disabled Students](#) shall be followed in so far as they can be applied to research degree students having regard for the standard of the award and the programme's thesis requirements.

4.3 If a student needs support during supervision or within the oral examination, this will be detailed within the Personal Learning Plan. Where an oral examination is used as the means of examination, and the University Research Degrees Committee or delegated authority is satisfied that a student would be disadvantaged due to reasons of sickness or disability if required to undertake an oral examination, an alternative form of examination may be approved.



5. Supporting research students

Induction arrangements and skills development

5.1 All full-time and part-time research students should attend the appropriate Faculty induction programme and complete the online induction on Moodle. Students who fail to attend the relevant Faculty induction, and complete the online induction, may not be permitted to re-enrol with the University until active participation at an appropriate induction event has been recorded (see also '8. Annual review').

5.2 Through the Faculty inductions and Graduate School online induction, students are introduced to the general research environment and are signposted to the research degree policies and practices, information on supervisory expectations and research ethics.

5.3 Research students are required to complete research integrity training, which is part of the online induction.

5.4 Research students are required to complete at least two weeks' worth of development activities per year for full-time students and one week per year for part-time students. These should provide personal and professional skills and the skills necessary to attain competence in research methods, wider research integrity and knowledge related to the subject of the thesis. See the Training and Development section in the [Research Degrees Handbook](#) for further details.

Students are required to complete at least two weeks' worth of development activities per year for full-time students and one week per year for part-time students. (See Training and Development)

Students should utilise the [Vitae Researcher Development Framework \(RDF\)](#), which describes the knowledge, behaviour and attributes of successful researchers.

The characteristics of excellent researchers are expressed in the RDF as 'descriptors', which are structured in the following four domains:

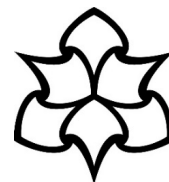
- Knowledge and intellectual abilities
- Personal effectiveness
- Research governance and organisation
- Engagement, influence and impact

The framework can be used to help researchers to identify the areas that they want to develop further, and to create an action plan.

Students are required to maintain a record on the university system throughout their studies of their engagement with skills development and training. This skills development record is used as a basis for discussion at the annual review.

Graduate Teaching Assistant Framework

5.5 As part of their development, full-time research students shall, wherever possible, be provided with the opportunity to participate in the [Graduate Teaching Assistant Framework](#). The Graduate Teaching Assistant Framework is not a compulsory element of skills development but teaching experience can be a valuable opportunity for some research students.



5.6 Research students may undertake a range of teaching-related activities including: tutorial support, demonstration of practical exercises, delivery of lectures, and assessment of students. They must not develop or lead a unit of study.

5.7 The employment of research students shall follow Manchester Metropolitan University Human Resources requirements, policies and guidelines. In accepting a contract, students will become employees of Manchester Metropolitan University and must therefore be eligible to work in the UK. This eligibility is very important for international students and must not compromise their visa status, which would need to be checked by the International Office and Human Resources as part of the selection process. Students, including those receiving training awards or University studentships, shall be employed in approved University roles and receive the commensurate approved rate of pay for any teaching undertaken. Those employed as Graduate Teaching Assistants shall have a teaching qualification or have completed one of the following approved training courses:

- PGR students with no previous teaching experience must have completed the Teaching and Learning Essentials for New Teachers (TALENT) unit
- PGR students who already teach at least 4 hours a week could be eligible for the '[Learning, Teaching and Assessment in Higher Education](#)' (LTA) qualification, delivered by the [University Teaching Academy](#)

5.8 Graduate Teaching Assistants cannot act as scrutineers, academic supervisors or examiners. A permanent member of academic staff acting as a mentor shall support Graduate Teaching Assistants.

5.9 Manchester Metropolitan University acknowledges that the employment of full-time research students as Graduate Teaching Assistants must not compromise their ability to complete their research degree programme. Therefore, Faculties are required to ensure that any employment of full-time research students as Graduate Teaching Assistants will not endanger their ability to complete their research degree programme within the specified time. Employment shall not normally exceed six hours per week and, in all cases, must not exceed 180 hours averaged over the course of the academic year. Such employment must be approved by the student's Director of Studies, Head of Faculty Research Degrees and Head of Department.

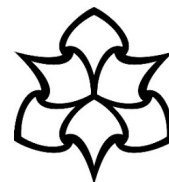
Support for research students who teach

5.10 The University recognises its responsibilities to provide all research students with appropriate training before they undertake any teaching, in order to safeguard the quality of teaching and learning. All research students who teach will:

- Receive an induction and mentoring from the appropriate programme leader
- Be signposted to available [University Teaching Academy](#) provision (a charge may be liable for research students from collaborative partner institutions).
- Be signposted to any Faculty-specific provision and resources if in place.

5.11 It is the Head of Department's responsibility to undertake or delegate the above actions to ensure they are carried out, and appropriate records are maintained.

5.12 In addition, research students shall be provided with sufficient resources in terms of access to teaching and learning facilities, to allow them to provide a quality teaching experience.



6. Employment of research students

6.1 During registration, full time research students shall not undertake more than 16 hours of paid employment per week. This is to safeguard their ability to complete their research degree programme successfully. Students who require a visa and/or students who are funded should also check their eligibility to work with the relevant authority.

7. Supervision of research students

7.1 All research degree students shall be supervised by a supervisory team including a Director of Studies, supervisors and, where appropriate, specialist advisor(s). The team shall not include anyone who has a close personal relationship with the student.

Each member of the supervisory team should normally be:

- a member of the University teaching or research staff
- experienced in and actively engaged in research
- hold a research degree at the same level as, or higher than, the degree being supervised, or
- have appropriate equivalent experience or professional qualifications or status.

7.2 The approval of the University Research Degrees Committee or delegated authority should be sought for proposed supervisors to supervise to a higher level than their own qualifications. Approval to supervise in these circumstances would be granted once to an individual member of staff. Evidence that a member of the team has attended and passed the 15-credit unit on [Research Degree Supervision and Examination](#) offered on the [Postgraduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching in HE](#) will count towards a proposed supervisor's academic experience. Supervisors without completed supervisions, or academic staff new to the University, should attend appropriate supervisory training and receive mentoring within an existing supervisory team. An academic supervisor or advisor may be external to the University. All supervisors must attend the supervisor or refresher training every three years.

7.3 The Director of Studies shall be a member of academic staff of the University, and normally hold a higher degree than the level of the student's registration award. They shall have responsibility to the appropriate Faculty Research Degrees Committee for the administration of the project.

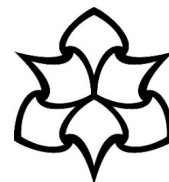
A member of staff without completions may be appointed to the Director of Studies role on condition that they:

- have attended research supervisory training
- will be mentored by a nominated member of the supervisory team who has previous successful experience of research degree completions, ideally as a Director of Studies.

At least one member of every supervisory team must have supervised a research student to successful completion.

Research degree students at the university are ineligible to act as Director of Studies for other research degree students at the university, but may act as a supervisor or advisor, with the exception of PhD by Published Work (Route 2) students who can act as Director of Studies).

7.4 Supervisory teams can propose the addition of an advisor to contribute specialist knowledge or provide a link with external organisations, where appropriate. Supervisory teams may also appoint a mentor to provide additional experience and support to the team.



7.5 The appropriate Faculty Research Degrees Committee shall determine the number of concurrent supervisions permitted for a member of staff acting as a Director of Studies or supervisor. A maximum number of six students shall normally apply where the member of staff is acting in a Director of Studies role. The Committee shall ensure that an individual member of staff is able to manage a particular workload and that this does not reach a level where it might disadvantage a student.

7.6 For students in a collaborative institution, the University will ensure that the partner organisation has comparable resources to support the supervision of research students through the approval and review of collaborative programmes process, and that any supervisors are appropriately qualified and experienced.

7.7 The aim of supervision is to:

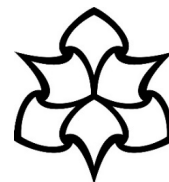
- enable the development and critical overview of the work
- prepare the student for the oral examination
- provide the student with insight into the skills required to supervise future students.

In order to achieve this, the supervisory team shall have contact with the student on a negotiated and agreed regular basis. Records of formal supervisory meetings must be kept using the record of supervision (RD9) form. Students are required to complete at least six RD9 forms throughout the academic year and these should be taken to the annual review meeting (see '8. Annual review'). (Please note that the visa conditions for some international students require them to record at least 10 points of contact across the academic year; the record of supervision can be used for this purpose).

In the event that a student fails to maintain contact with their supervisory team, the team may choose to instigate the [Unsatisfactory Academic Progress Procedure for Postgraduate Research Students](#), which could lead to the withdrawal of the student's registration by the University Research Degrees Committee or delegated authority if their engagement does not improve.

7.8 The responsibilities of the supervisory team (including the Director of Studies) are to:

- Manage the induction of the student into the Department, Research Unit or School, the Faculty, the University environment, and where appropriate the wider region
- Ensure the satisfactory and timely completion of required postgraduate research milestone documentation (e.g. application for registration and thesis submission)
- Provide guidance on such matters as the nature of research, academic standards, planning, literature, methods and techniques
- Propose the appointment of a suitable advisor, where appropriate
- Assist the student in navigating through official procedures
- Negotiate and maintain frequent formal contact with the student
- Obtain progress reports and other written work
- Provide prompt and constructive critical evaluation of work reviewed
- Provide an annual progress report as part of the annual review
- Arrange any training or formal instruction which the student requires, including research, personal and professional skills
- Ensure that the research student is aware of ethics procedures and has completed an ethical application to support this.



- Ensure that the student is aware when their progress is inadequate or of other problems that may affect the successful completion of research within the required duration
- Ensure that the student re-enrols on an annual basis
- Ensure that the student makes a positive contribution, through their work within the University and through the choice of area of study, research methods and analysis, to promoting diversity and equal opportunities within the University and the community.

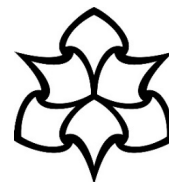
7.9 Students who are dissatisfied with their supervision arrangements should first raise their concerns with a member of the supervisory team. If it is not possible to resolve the issues at this level, they can then discuss their concerns with the Head of Faculty Research Degrees and appropriate Head of Department. Any issues that still require resolution can then be escalated to the appropriate Faculty Head of Research and Knowledge Exchange, if required. Students can also raise such concerns with their Faculty Graduate School team, or at their annual review. Students may also use the more formal [complaints procedure](#). In all cases where there is a proposal for a change in supervision arrangements this shall be reported to the appropriate Faculty Research Degrees Committee and the University Research Degrees Committee.

7.10 Where students are not progressing with their research, the [Unsatisfactory Academic Progress Procedure for Postgraduate Research Students](#) can be instigated by supervisors at any point during the academic year or a recommendation can be made by the independent reviewer following the annual review process (see '8. Annual review').

8. Annual review

8.1 Most students undertaking a research degree (with the exception of students on suspension, Masters (by Research) students studying full-time, students who have submitted already or students who are within three months of their thesis submission date) will have an annual review in the summer term of each academic year, which focuses on the student's engagement with the research programme, quality and frequency of supervisory meetings, and wider research skills development support. The annual review is completed by a reviewer independent from the supervisory team. The focus of the review is to evaluate the student's engagement with the research programme, their progress with their study, contact with their supervisory team, and the skills they have developed. It provides the opportunity to discuss any future developmental requirements and review personal and professional development activities. Students shall be required to present evidence of attendance at supervisory meetings using the record of supervision (RD9) form, a successful record of annual reviews and evidence of undertaking a skills development programme. This annual review process must be completed before the start of the new academic year.

8.2 In the event that the annual review is deemed to lack evidence of satisfactory progress, the independent reviewer, in consultation with the Director of Studies, may recommend that the [Unsatisfactory Academic Progress Procedure for Postgraduate Research Students](#) is instigated which aims to retrieve the situation within an appropriate timescale. However, it may result in the termination of the registration or, if appropriate, the consideration of a lower level award. The student has a right of appeal regarding any progression recommendation via the [University Academic Appeals procedure](#) (see Regulations for PGR Degrees, 4).



9. Examination procedures

9.1 All teaching, supervision and examination of research degrees will be in the English language.

9.2 The University Research Degrees Committee, acting as the Assessment Board for research degrees, shall establish general procedures for the conduct of examinations and shall consider and approve award recommendations.

9.3 Academic staff, including supervisors, advisors and other research degree students registered with the University may, with the explicit consent of the student, attend the oral examination as non-examining observers.

9.4 Detailed guidelines are provided in the document entitled [Guidelines on the Examination of Postgraduate Research Degrees](#) and in the [Research Degrees Handbook](#). The assessment regulations for postgraduate research degrees are set out in the [Regulations for Postgraduate Research Degrees](#). The external examiners shall make recommendations according to the regulations. A copy of the Regulations for Postgraduate Research Degrees and Guidelines on the Examination of Postgraduate Research Degrees shall be made available online to each student, the supervisory team and the examiners.

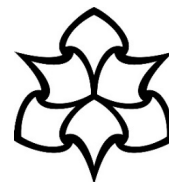
The role of examiners

9.5 The examination team shall be able to assess the student's conduct of research and, for doctoral programmes, the contribution to knowledge. The examination team shall normally comprise an external examiner, an independent internal examiner and an independent chair. At least one of the examiners shall have experience of examining UK research degree students at the level of the award or higher. An internal examiner with limited or no research degree examination experience may be approved if they have experience of supervising a research student to successful completion at the level of the award or higher. They must also have attended the university workshop (or refresher workshop) on supervising and examining research students, and have observed at an oral examination (where possible). (See also [Guidelines on the Examination of Postgraduate Research Degrees](#)).

9.6 The University Research Degrees Committee or delegated authority shall appoint the examination teams and external examiners for the research degree programmes. Examination teams shall be proposed by the Director of Studies before being approved by the University Research Degrees Committee or delegated authority.

9.7 The role of external examiners shall be to ensure that the student is treated fairly and equitably, that the standard of the University's awards is maintained, and that the assessments with which the examiner is concerned are carried out in accordance with the [Regulations for Postgraduate Research Degrees](#). External examiners shall be independent of Manchester Metropolitan University and of any collaborative partner organisation where the Manchester Metropolitan University research degree is being undertaken.

9.8 For research degree students who are required to undertake an oral examination, an independent chair shall be appointed by the University Research Degrees Committee or delegated authority who has previous research degree examining experience and has completed the 'Chairing a Viva' training. The chair shall also be responsible for ensuring the associated administration of the



oral examination is completed satisfactorily. The chair will not examine the thesis but may, on request, have a copy made available to them.

9.9 The independent internal examiner will not have been a supervisor or advisor to the student and must have relevant knowledge of the thesis subject area. They shall not be in a close personal relationship with the student or any of the supervisory team.

9.10 The student shall take no part in the appointment of examiners and shall not have contact with the examiner(s) between the appointment of the examiners and the oral examination.

10. Complaints and appeals

10.1 The [Student Complaints Procedure](#) and the [Academic Appeals Procedure](#) apply to all postgraduate research students of the University.

10.2 If research students are employed by Manchester Metropolitan University as Graduate Teaching Assistants and have any complaints regarding their experience as Graduate Teaching Assistants, they must manage such complaints through the [Manchester Metropolitan University Grievance Procedure](#) rather than the [Student Complaints Procedure](#). Every effort shall be made to address concerns informally within the Faculty as soon as they arise. However, if this does not achieve resolution, the normal University Human Resources procedures will apply.

11. Research ethics and academic misconduct

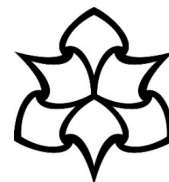
11.1 The University expects research students to maintain the highest level of professional integrity in research practice and publication. Students are accountable to their professional bodies, Manchester Metropolitan University and to the organisations that fund the research. The Manchester Metropolitan University [Academic Ethical Framework](#) explains how staff and students of the University are expected to give consideration to the ethical implications associated with any academic activities with which they engage. If there are any ethical issues associated with the research, full approval must be sought from the relevant Faculty Research Ethics and Governance Committee. Where there is research involving patients or the NHS, research students must submit an application for ethical approval to the National Research Ethics Service (NRES). Prior to the commencement of any research work, students must gain approval for that work.

11.2 The Manchester Metropolitan University website on [Research Governance](#) provides guidelines for good research practice and links to legal requirements and Manchester Metropolitan University policies and procedures. The [Procedure for the Investigation of Misconduct in Research](#) and the [Procedure for Handling Academic Misconduct](#) provide guidance on appropriate behaviour and definitions of misconduct in research.

11.3 The University will implement the Procedure for the Investigation of Misconduct in Research if an allegation of scientific or ethical misconduct is identified. Once this procedure is complete, any necessary recommendations and decisions on penalties will be made through an Assessment Disciplinary Committee as outlined in the [Procedure for Handling Academic Misconduct](#).

12. Monitoring and evaluation

12.1 The University shall, through the University Research Degrees Committee, monitor and evaluate its research degrees. The monitoring and evaluation process is undertaken on an annual basis to review the success of research programmes. Such monitoring takes account of feedback



from Faculties, student feedback, examiner comments and, where appropriate, employer, sponsor or funder feedback. The university also undertakes comparative analysis of other institutions in order to monitor the position of Manchester Metropolitan University and guide further development activity.

12.2 Heads of Faculty Research Degrees shall submit their Annual Monitoring Reports to the Head of the Graduate School each year, and an Annual Monitoring and Evaluation Report shall be considered and approved by the University Research Degrees Committee. The report will comment on identified areas for improvements to the support, and general academic environment, for research students and supervisors. It will identify both the positive and negative comments made by students during the annual review process and report on the action taken to address issues arising. Faculties will ensure mechanisms are in place to provide feedback to any research students undertaking taught elements of research programmes.

Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES)

12.3 The University participates in the PRES survey in association with Advance HE. The University analyses the results from the survey and uses the data to enhance the student experience through the Student Rep Forum and through University and Faculty Research Degrees Committees.

13. Staff development and training

13.1 Manchester Metropolitan University ensures that external and internal examiners and academic staff at Manchester Metropolitan University, and collaborative partner organisations involved in the supervision and assessment of students, are equipped to undertake their roles and responsibilities. The [University Staff Development Programme](#) is reviewed annually and provides detail of development opportunities for staff involved in postgraduate research supervision. It includes training and guidance on the selection and admission of research degree students, ethical issues and procedures, the supervision and examination of students, the chairing and observation of oral examinations and information related to the annual review.

Glossary

Academic Board: The body that oversees the University's academic activities, and considers matters relating to the awarding of degrees.

Advisor: An optional member of the student's supervisory team who may be brought in to contribute specialist knowledge or connections.

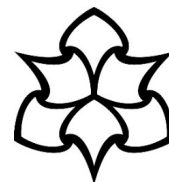
Annual review (RDAR): The formal review of a student's engagement with and progress in their research project.

Application for registration (RD1): The formal process of defining and approving a student's research project.

Department, Faculty, School: Manchester Metropolitan University is made up of five Faculties. Each Faculty is subdivided into a number of different Schools or Departments.

Director of Studies (DoS): Leads the supervision of the student.

Ethics: Research ethics are a set of core principles defining how researchers interact with research participants, including their data or tissue.



Examiner: A specialist academic who can assess a student's research output. Examiners may be internal (employees of Manchester Metropolitan University) or external (not employed by Manchester Metropolitan University).

Extension of study: Where a student has exceptional factors that mean they require additional time to submit (or re-submit) their thesis, they can apply for an extension of study.

Faculty Research Degrees Committee: The strategic body within each Faculty that reviews student progress and key milestones, and which takes a wider interest in postgraduate research policies and procedures. Also the delegated authority for the Research Degrees Committee in many instances.

Graduate School: The University's Graduate School oversees the administration and quality assurance of research degrees, as well as working to enhance the student experience and raise the profile of postgraduate research.

Head of Faculty Research Degrees (HFRD): Provides strategic leadership within Faculties, ensuring the interests of postgraduate research students are protected, and that the standard and quality of research degrees is maintained.

Independent chair: A member of the examinations team. The chair does not examine the thesis, but will be responsible for ensuring the oral examination is run and administered appropriately.

Independent reviewer: A student's annual review will be assessed by an independent reviewer: an academic outside the student's supervisory team.

Moodle: The University's online learning environment.

Oral examination (viva, viva voce): Most research degrees are examined via an oral examination, sometimes referred to as a viva or viva voce.

Personal Learning Plan (PLP): Students who declare a disability will have a Personal Learning Plan (PLP) that details any reasonable adjustments they require

PGR: Abbreviation for postgraduate research, or postgraduate researcher.

PRES (Postgraduate Research Experience Survey): A survey that takes place every other year in order to gather feedback from postgraduate research students about their learning and supervision experiences.

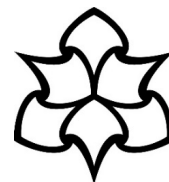
Progression review (RD2): A formal process to review the progress a student is making with their research.

Registration period: The formal period that a student is registered on a research degree.

Research Degrees Committee: Has University-wide strategic responsibility for the enhancement and quality assurance of research degrees, and for oversight of students' registration, transfer, progression and examination.

Research Degrees Co-ordinator: Academic lead within Schools/Departments for research degrees, providing oversight of the research degrees programme. Note, in some faculties this role is called Research and Knowledge Exchange (RKE) Lead.

Scrutineer: A student's registration and progression review will be assessed by scrutineers: two academics from outside the supervisory team.



Supervisory team: The team that will supervise the research student. The supervisory team includes a Director of Studies (DoS), supervisor(s) and – in some cases – advisor(s).

Suspension of study: Where a student has exceptional factors that prevent them from progressing with their research, they can apply for a temporary break of study, known as a suspension of study.

Thesis submission: The formal submission of the thesis – in the required format – to the University.

Main forms and processes used by PGR students

- RD1: Application to register
- RD2: Progression review / Transfer of study
- RD3: Changes to supervisory arrangements
- RD4: Application for extension
- RD5: Application for suspension
- RD6: Approval of examiners
- RDAR: Research degrees annual review
- RD9: Record of supervision.

Additional guidance and support

Supporting regulations are available from the Graduate School website, including the Regulations for Postgraduate Research Degrees and the Research Degrees Handbook. Additional supporting documents include:

- [Guidelines on the Examination of Postgraduate Research Degrees](#)
- [Guidelines for PhD by Publication](#)
- [Assessment Arrangements for Disabled Students](#)
- [Code of Practice on Extensions and Suspensions](#)
- [Unsatisfactory Progress Procedure](#)
- [Appeals and Complaints: Guidance for Students](#)
- [Ethics and Research Governance](#)
- [Research Misconduct](#)