

LTC17D171

Title: *Regulations and Research Degree Policy Document updates*
Author: Melanie Steele, Doctoral Training and Quality Manager, PGR Service, and Vivien Easson, Head of PGR Service
Date: 8 June 2018
Agenda: LTC, 20 June 2018
Version: Final
Status: Open

Issue

Updates to Regulations and Research Degree Policy Documents for 2018-19. These were approved by PGR Executive on 4 June 2018.

Recommendation

Recipients are invited:

- 1) To endorse the attached updated documents, to take effect from the 2018-19 academic year;
- 2) To approve the EdPsyD continuing for further cohorts now that funding has been secured from the Department for Education beyond the 2018 cohort and HCPC and BPS have approved the course (subject to conditions we expect to be able to satisfy);
- 3) To note the setting up of a pilot exercise by the NBI Graduate School during 2018-19 for the introduction of a fully electronic final thesis deposit process and the setting up of a parallel consultation exercise with students and supervisors regarding a possible move to fully electronic final thesis submission.

Resource Implications

None anticipated. The revised documents are intended to provide greater clarity to staff and students.

Risk Implications

None anticipated. The EdPsyD has recruited well in its first cycle and has strong support.

Equality and Diversity

No equality and diversity issues are associated with this Procedure.

Timing of decisions

Endorsement by the Postgraduate Research Executive, LTC and Senate will allow the updated documents to take effect from 2018-19.

Further Information

For further information contact: Melanie Steele, Doctoral Training and Quality Manager, Postgraduate Research Service email: m.steele@uea.ac.uk tel.: 01603 593870.

Background

The Regulations, Procedures and Policy Documents relating to postgraduate research degrees are updated on an annual basis to take account of issues that have come to light during the year and changes to titles and terminology. They are also revised as a result of more substantial reviews.

Proposed revisions

The following documents have been reviewed:

A. RESEARCH DEGREE POLICY DOCUMENTS

- 1 RDPD 1: Extensions to Period of Study and Registration-Only Period for Research Degrees

No changes proposed

- 2 RDPD 2: Continuation Fees

No changes proposed

There are still 33 registered students whose original expected submission date was on or up to 30 September 2016, so paragraphs 3.1 and 3.2 need to remain in RDPD 2. This will be reviewed for the 2019 update.

- 3 RDPD 3: Research Degrees: Submission, Presentation, Consultation and Borrowing of Theses

As per PGR17D075 and in addition:

- Change to name of the exit award for the Doctorate in Educational Psychology (EdPsyD) to Postgraduate Diploma in Theoretical Educational Psychology
- Removal of references to MD by Publication in 1(6) and 2 (xiv) (provided minor corrections submitted by last registered candidate for this route are to the satisfaction of the examiner(s)).
- Replacement of roman numerals with alphabetised lists.

- 4 RDPD 4: RESEARCH@UEA: A Guide to Good Practice

No changes proposed

- 5 RDPD5: Procedures for Dealing with Allegations of Misconduct in Research

To be removed from the Research Degree Policy Documents and to be made a standalone document in the UEA Academic Calendar (see PGR17D097, PGR Executive 4.6.18 for further details).

- 6 RDPD 6: Classification of Students as Category A and Staff Candidates

See Appendix 1. Additional text is highlighted.

Changes are proposed:

- a) to clarify that classification of students as category A or B in relation to the examination process should be made at the point of submission of the appointment of examiners form. It is clear that as the wording stands that we are disadvantaging those research students who have accepted or started a postdoctoral position in their School of registration subsequent to submission of their thesis. This was not the intention in making the changes to RDPD 6 during 2016-17 where the future employment clause was restricted to recruitment as a member of academic staff. There is also a point for practical reasons beyond which we would not want to go back to a School and insist that they find an additional external e.g. examiners appointed 5 March for a viva on 5 June, candidate receives UEA Research Associate job offer on 30 April to start 15 May.

RDPD 6 currently states that:

“The following groups of staff will always be considered as Category A:

- All academic staff (ATS and ATR) whether from within or outside the School of Study, whether part-time or full-time or on fixed term or indefinite contracts.
- Research Associates or Technical staff based in the School of Study or UEA Research Centres associated with the School of Study.
- Research staff at an affiliated Graduate School². ² *This includes academic staff and Research Associates.*

It also states that “The classification of students as Category A or Category B should be made at the point of admission, before any examination and reviewed at each annual review of progress.”

- b) To clarify the position of a student who is employed as a Research Associate at an affiliated Graduate School who is a UEA campus-based student or based at another affiliated Graduate School. This is to address the anomaly whereby, for instance, a student registered and based in ENV who was employed as a Research Associate in BIO would be classed as Category B, but a student registered and based in ENV who was employed as Research Associate at the Earlham Institute would be Category A.

- 7 RDPD 7: Guide to Good Supervisory Practice
No changes proposed
- 8 RDPD 8: Code of Practice for the Examination of Research Degree Awards at UEA
As per PGR17D075 and in addition:
- Reference to Registrar and Secretary to be amended to University Secretary.
- 9 RDPD 9: The Role of the Independent Chair– **as per PGR17D075**
- 10 RDPD 10: Approval of New Research Degree Awards or Changes to Research Degree Programmes - **Being updated. Chair’s action will be sought in summer 2018 for the revised document.**
- 11 RDPD 11: Research Ethical Approval Framework
No changes proposed
- 12 RDPD 12: Guidelines for Probationary Review
See Appendix 2.

- 13 RDPD 13: Policy on Split-Site PhD Partnerships
No changes proposed

- 14 RDPD 14: Policy on PGR Student Employment in Teaching at UEA
LTC approved changes to RDPD14 on 14 March 2018, following approval at PGR Executive on 31 January 2018 (PGR17D056). The revised RDPD14 was implemented with immediate effect. No further changes proposed.

To note:

Amendments will be made to the following documents as a result of the review of Research Degree Policy Document 8 *Code of Practice for the Examination of Research Degree Awards at UEA*:

- RDPD 3 *Research Degrees: Submission, Presentation, Consultation and Borrowing of Theses*
- RDPD 8 *Code of Practice for the Examination of Research Degree Awards at UEA*
- RDPD 9 *The Role of the Independent Chair*
- Instructions to Examiners
- Code of Practice: Research Degrees

Full details of these changes are included in PGR17D075.

B. POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH (PGR) NOTICE TO INTERRUPTING STUDENTS

See Appendix 3.

The addition of paragraph 10. Financial Matters: Studentships

In 2016/17 the PGR Service added a new paragraph to the interruption concession request form at the request of the Faculty Finance Teams to say "Please be aware that if you have been paid for a period of time whilst interrupting, the University's Finance Teams will contact you to recover any overpayment of your studentship." The wording in the Notice to Interrupting Students now mirrors the concession form.

C. SUBMISSION AND FORM OF THESES

Submission of an electronic copy of the thesis for the Library was made mandatory from January 2013 (see Postgraduate Research Programmes Policy Group 9 May 2012 Minute 9 and Learning and Teaching Committee 27 June 2012 LTC11M006 Minute 73(4)). The Calendar '*Rules for the Submission of Work for Higher Degrees*', '*Rules for the Form of Theses (Research Degrees)*' and '*Consultation and Borrowing of Theses*' specify that the final submission of the thesis by a research degree candidate should comprise an electronic copy (for the UEA Library) and a hardbound copy (for the School of Study or Institute concerned).

The NBI GSE recently endorsed a proposal put forward by the NBI Library that the Institute copy should be submitted in electronic format only (NBIGSE2017D034). The proposal is attached as Appendix 4.

As noted in the proposal there are benefits for both the research degree candidate (less expense, simpler submission process) and the School / Institute (storage issues). Potential problems relate to IPR and copyright, restricting access to theses and how to deal alternative format submissions. The main issue to consider is however a cultural one – research degree theses have traditionally been submitted in a characteristic hardbound format. When the UEA Library conducted a thesis submission survey in 2012 several responses were similar to that of the following student: *“I felt submitting a hard copy would be more satisfying, as it would make all of my hard work over the past years more tangible. I was very proud of my PhD thesis and did not feel that an electronic file represented this feeling.”* For this reason it is important that there is full consultation with research students and supervisors, and that the issue is considered at Faculty GSEs.

PGR Executive members have approved a pilot exercise whereby the NBI Graduate School mandated electronic submission of the Institute copy of the thesis, from 1 October 2018, and a parallel consultation process with students and supervisors in other Graduate Schools during 2018/19.

It is **not** proposed to amend the Calendar Rules or RDPD 3 for 2018-19 but subject to a positive result from the pilot and consultation exercise fully electronic final submission could be introduced from 1 October 2019.

D. DEGREE REGULATIONS, INSTRUCTIONS TO EXAMINERS AND CODE OF PRACTICE FOR RESEARCH DEGREES

Revisions to the recommendations available to examiners of research degrees were made for 2014-15 following the review conducted by the Working Group to Review the Instructions to Examiners (PhD Executive 15 May 2014, PGR13D037). The range of recommendations available to examiners for the MPhil and the Masters by Research were reduced to mirror the changes recommended for the PhD. The period of time allowed for the resubmission of a thesis was set at 12 months and this is reflected in the Regulations for all research degrees from 2014-15 onwards. Unfortunately the Instructions to Examiners and Post-viva Report Form still contain the original six month resubmission period for the Masters by Research (up to 2013-14). The word limit for the Masters by Research (40,000 words) is the same / similar to that for the ClinPsyD (40,000 words), EdPsyD (40,000 words) and MEd (30,000 words) all of which have a 12 month resubmission period.

It is **proposed** to correct this anomaly by revising the Instructions to Examiners and Post-viva Report Form accordingly, with the changes taking **immediate effect**.

There may be other minor updates needed to the degree Regulations, Instructions to Examiners and the Code of Practice Research Degrees to reflect changes in terminology e.g. references to the Registrar and Secretary, or where research degree programmes no longer have registered students under specified variants or routes e.g. MD by Publication route. No substantial amendments are anticipated but if needed will require approval by Chair's action.

Attachments

- Appendix 1 Research Degree Policy Document 6 Classification of Students as Category A and Staff
- Appendix 2 Research Degree Policy Document 12 Guidelines for Probationary Review
- Appendix 3 Postgraduate Research (PGR) Notice to Interrupting Students
- Appendix 4 Proposal from NBI Graduate School Executive regarding fully electronic submission of theses

APPENDIX 1



RESEARCH DEGREE POLICY DOCUMENTS

Document 6 **Classification of Students as Category A and Staff Candidates**

1. **Scope of these guidelines**

These guidelines cover the following research degrees:

- Doctor of Philosophy
- Doctor of Philosophy by Publication
- Master of Philosophy
- Master of Arts by Research
- Master of Laws by Research
- Master of Science by Research
- Doctor of Medicine
- Doctorate in Clinical Psychology
- Doctor of Education
- Master of Education
- Professional Doctorate
- Doctorate in Educational Psychology

2. **Background**

The University Senate agreed on 25 June 2003 to class PGR students as Category A and Category B students, rather than as staff and non-staff candidates. The rationale behind this was to *“separate the quality assurance issue from the contractual nature of the relationship between the student and UEA or Institute.”* The definition was that *“Category A candidates are students employed by the University or Institute.”*

The Regulations for the PhD and other research degrees state that *“Candidates for the degree ... will be designated as Category A (including faculty of Schools and such other candidates as Senate shall determine) or Category B.”*

Section 5 of the [Code of Practice for Research Degrees](#) (page 10) states that *“The admission, registration, annual review and examination of candidates who are members of the University's academic staff or research staff at an affiliated Graduate School¹ are governed by special regulations (see Appendix A)”*

¹ *The Affiliated Graduate Schools are currently the Norwich Bioscience Institutes (NBI) Graduate School and the University of Suffolk Graduate School.*

The categorisation of students as Category A ensures that consideration of these students' progress is undertaken outside the School, separate from any staff management considerations or perceptions of unfair advantage or bias. Also it means that any academic decisions taken, for example, to confirm the passing or not of probation, or to award the degree of PhD are subject to independent review from outside the School.

Categorisation as Category A means that any changes to a student's registration will need to be approved by the Academic Director of Research Degree Programmes and annual progress and probationary review forms will be considered by the relevant Graduate School Executive rather than at School level.

The classification of students as Category A or Category B was reviewed in 2010-11, and Appendix A of the [Code of Practice for Research Degrees](#) was amended to provide greater clarity on which categories of staff were included or excluded from the definition of Category A.

This classification has been reconsidered as part of the University's periodic review of its regulatory framework, and revised guidelines are set out below.

3. Classification of students as Category A and Category B

The classification of students as Category A or Category B should be made at the point of admission, the date of submission of the Application for Approval of Thesis Title and Examiners form ~~before any examination~~ and reviewed at each annual review of progress.

If registered for a research degree the following groups of staff will **always** be considered as Category A:

- All academic staff (ATS and ATR) whether from within or outside the School of Study, whether part-time or full-time or on fixed term or indefinite contracts.
- Research Associates or Technical staff based in the School of Study or UEA Research Centres³ associated with the School of Study.
- Research staff² at an affiliated Graduate School¹ **and** based as a postgraduate research student at that affiliated Graduate School

The following categories of staff will be considered as Category B unless there is actual or possible perceived conflict of interest, in which case they will be considered as Category A:

- Administrative staff employed at the University, or at Academic Partners or affiliated Institutes³.
- Associate Tutors or Demonstrators employed by the University, Academic Partners or affiliated Institutes³.
- Research Associates or Technical staff based in the affiliated Institutes or Academic Partners³, **excepting those based as a postgraduate research student at the affiliated Graduate School where employed (as above).**
- Academic staff at Academic Partners³, **excepting those at affiliated Graduate Schools (as above).**

² This includes academic staff and Research Associates.

³ Details of the Affiliated Institutes, Academic Partners and UEA Research Centres can be found in the University Calendar.

Members of staff have the responsibility of identifying potential conflicts of interest.

The above lists are not exhaustive and in some circumstances it may be appropriate, due to a possible perception of conflict of interest, for other students to be classified on an individual basis as Category A. In particular this may apply to near relatives⁴ of UEA staff members.

IMPORTANT NOTE: All members of staff and near relatives of staff must complete a Staff Candidate Admission form prior to admission, regardless of whether they are classified at that point as Category A or Category B.

4. Review of Category A or B status

If students gain or leave employment at UEA during their **period of registration** studies or the nature of their employment changes, consideration should be given at that point as to whether their classification as Category A or Category B students should be amended.

Students should notify [the Postgraduate Research Service](#) of any changes to their employment status (e.g. gaining or leaving qualifying employment at UEA).

5. Examination

The above rules for determining whether a candidate should be considered as Category A also apply to the examination process, noting that the examination of Category A candidates must be conducted exclusively by external examiners.

The following students should also be considered as Category A for the purposes of examination:

- The following candidates who have left the University in the 12 months preceding the date of submission of the Application for Approval of Thesis Title and Examiners form:
 - UEA members of academic staff.
 - Research Associates or Technical staff based in the School of Study or allied Research Centres.
 - Research staff at an affiliated Graduate School¹.
- Candidates who will be appointed as members of UEA academic staff within six months of the viva.

The following candidates may be considered as Category A in certain circumstances:

- Near relatives of UEA staff members⁴.
- Any other candidates who were classified during their studies as Category A but who left the University in the last 12 months.

⁴ The University considers that spouses, partners, children, parents, uncles, aunts, nieces, nephews, those considered next of kin, and grandchildren of members of staff may be regarded as near relatives.

The overarching principle in determining whether a student should be classified as Category A for the purposes of examination is to consider whether it might appear to an outside person that there is any real or perceived conflict of interest or that the University has a vested interest in the outcome of the examination. In such circumstances the candidate should be classified as Category A to ensure that the examination process clearly demonstrates integrity and independence.

RESEARCH DEGREE POLICY DOCUMENTS

Document 12 Guidelines for Probationary Review

Paragraphs 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3

CURRENT WORDING:

Training Record

The student should also present a list of training taken to date, or completed personal development plan template, including successful completion of advanced research skills training, professional and personal development (PPD) training and Experiential Learning. Students can access their record of PPD sessions undertaken on eVision <https://sso.uea.ac.uk/evision>

PROPOSED WORDING:

Training Record

All research degree students registered on or after 1 October 2017, and those students registered before that date who intend to satisfy the University's training requirements by compliance with a Training Pathway, should submit an up to date Personal and Professional Development Plan (PDP). Students registered on or before 30 September 2017 who are not planning to comply with a Training Pathway, and have chosen instead to demonstrate compliance with the existing PPD credit requirement, should present a list of training taken to date. The training record for all students should include successful completion of advanced research skills training, professional and personal development (PPD) training and Experiential Learning. Students can access their record of PPD sessions undertaken on eVision <https://sso.uea.ac.uk/evision>

Postgraduate Research (PGR) Notice to Interrupting Students



These notes are intended to clarify your status and to define your relationship with the University and its facilities during your period of interruption under General Regulation 3 'Students interrupting their period of study'.

Introduction

1. Interruptions are granted for a variety of reasons: medical, personal, financial or a combination of these. Often the factors which have led to the interruption request have affected your academic work. It is the University's policy that interrupting students should not remain on campus, and aside from occasional visits you are expected to remain away from the University.

Status as a Student

2. During your absence you will remain a member of the University. This means that your name will be included in the official register of students, but your status as a student currently registered at the University is in abeyance and your campus card (for those students in receipt of one) will be deactivated. If you are a member of staff, it is your student activities which are affected by interruption, and you will need to distinguish between your staff and student roles where appropriate.

University Facilities available to Interrupting Students on Research Degree Programmes

3. Your privileged access as a student to University facilities is in abeyance and you are asked to note in particular:
 - (a) You will not normally be given a place in University residences or allowed to continue in occupancy of a room in University residences. In exceptional circumstances interrupting students may contact the Student Support Service if they believe that there is a good reason why an exception should be made in their case.
 - (b) You may wish to seek the advice of the Accommodation Office about your eligibility for accommodation in University residence at the end of your period of interruption. Accommodation Preference Forms (APFs) are not automatically sent out to interrupting students. If you are returning from interruption in September and wish to apply for a room in residence, it is important that you contact the Accommodation Office before the Easter break.
 - (c) You will retain access rights to your University e-mail account but will normally not be allowed Library borrowing facilities nor access to any other University Computing Facilities.
 - (d) You will not be allowed access to the Sportspark as a student.

- (e) You will not be allowed to attend classes or to receive tuition or supervision from a member of University staff or any other individual normally involved in your supervision.
- 4. You may remain in touch with your supervisor but not for the purpose of receiving tuition.
- 5. You may consult staff in the Student Support Service, Careers Service, the University Medical Service (including the Dental Practice) and the UEA Student Union Advice Centre.
- 6. Your child may continue to use the University Nursery.

Financial Matters: Debts

- 7. Before leaving the University you should ensure that you have cleared any outstanding debts to the University. This includes returning books to the Library and any equipment or materials you may have borrowed. If you cannot clear your debt to the University, it is important that you discuss your difficulties with the Finance Division before starting your period of interruption. If you do not, the University may take steps to recover any sums of money owed while you are interrupting. If there are any debts outstanding at the end of your period of interruption, they may prevent you being re-admitted to the University to resume your course.

Financial Matters: Tuition Fees

- 8. If your course year commenced in September/October and your interruption begins on or before 31 October and lasts the full academic year, you will not be liable for any tuition fees for that academic year. If you have already paid tuition fees you may have them refunded or held against your fees for the next academic year.
- 9. If your interruption begins after 31 October, you will be liable for fees for that academic year. How much you will have to pay will depend on the start and return date of the interruption, and the fees liability will be calculated monthly.

Financial Matters: Studentships

- 10. If you have been paid a maintenance stipend by the University for a period of time whilst interrupting, the relevant Faculty/Institute Finance Team will contact you to recover any overpayment of your studentship.

Financial Matters: Financial Assistance

- 11. You will not normally be eligible to apply to the University for financial assistance while you are interrupting. Any funding awarded would normally be on a loan basis pending your return to the University. Advice on your entitlement to financial assistance or Universal Credit (for those eligible) can be obtained from the financial advisers in the Student Support Service.

International (non-EU) students

- 12. International (non-EU) students who are studying in the UK on a student visa must note that your permission to be in the United Kingdom will no longer be valid because you will

not be actively studying. The University is required to inform UK Visas and Immigration of any periods of interruption for international students for whom we are the visa sponsor. UK Visas and Immigration will require International students who are in the UK on a student visa to leave the UK during their period of interruption. Following this, when you are ready to continue your studies, you will need to make a new visa application. Staff in the International Student Advisory Team in the Student Support Service will be able to give confidential advice to students on their individual circumstances.

13. International students should note that they may need to also make a new application for ATAS clearance and that the financial implications of any new visa application can be very significant. Staff in the International Student Advisory Team in the Student Support Service will be able to give confidential advice to students on their individual circumstances.

Address While Interrupting

14. You should ensure that the contact addresses (home and email) on e:Vision are kept updated at all times during your interruption. This enables the University to send important information relating to your course throughout your period of interruption. It is your responsibility to ensure that persons outside the University who may need to contact you know that you cannot be reached at your University address and that you advise them of an address where you can be contacted.

Return to Study

15. If your interruption has been granted on medical grounds you will need to complete the Return to Study form (Medical) and return it for consideration by the Student Support Service at least ten weeks before your return date (where the length of the interruption allows this).
16. If your interruption has been granted on non-medical grounds, you will need to complete the Return to Study form (Other) and return it for consideration by the Postgraduate Research Service.
17. On your return to the University you will be subject to University Regulations then in force, unless otherwise specified.
18. On your return to studies you might like to re-familiarise yourself with the confidential help, guidance and support services offered by the University's Student Support Service.

Please consult the Postgraduate Research Service if you have any questions relating to your interruption. Contact details can be found [on the PGR Service website](#).