LTC14D099

Title:	**Research Degree Education Strategy**
Author:	Dr Nick Watmough, Academic Director of Research Degree Programmes
Agreed:	Postgraduate Research Executive, 13 January 2015
Circulation:	Learning and Teaching Committee, 28 January 2015
Agenda:	LTC14A003
Version:	Final
Status:	Open

Issue

The Academic Director of Research Degree Programmes presents the Research Degree Education Strategy 2014-19 for approval by the Learning and Teaching Committee. This includes the Postgraduate Research Quality Enhancement Plan as an appendix showing the plan for implementation over the next two academic cycles.

Recommendation

The Committee is asked to approve the Strategy; it will go forward to Senate and if approved, will be disseminated widely in line with the University's Learning and Teaching Strategy.

Resource Implications

Resource implications have been considered for each of the items by the Postgraduate Research Executive.

Risk Implications

The University is required to take a strategic approach with respect to its learning and teaching provision at all levels and therefore LTC is asked to approve this Strategy to achieve this goal. Specific risk implications have been considered for each of the items included by the Postgraduate Research Executive.

Equality and Diversity

The Postgraduate Research Executive is committed to embedding consideration of equality and diversity within actions listed in the Quality Enhancement Plan, and there is a specific focus for each academic year which considers each of the groups with protected characteristics in turn.

Timing of decisions

A decision at the January 2015 LTC is requested to allow prompt dissemination.

Further Information

Contact Dr Nick Watmough, n.watmough@uea.ac.uk, extension 2179, with any queries about this report.

The Purpose and Corporate Objectives of the
UEA Research Degree Education Strategy

The Purpose

The purpose of the *Research Degree Education Strategy* is to:-

- Recognise that research degree candidates are a valued component of our academic community and important contributors to our world-leading research.
- Recognise that our research degree programmes need to prepare doctoral graduates for careers inside academia and beyond and equip them to impact upon their chosen careers.
- Articulate our key institutional priorities with regard to the education of research degree candidates.
- Prioritise changes that will help the Norwich Research Park continue to develop as an international centre of excellence for doctoral education.
- Ensure an appropriate alignment with the goals and ambitions set out in the *UEA Corporate Plan*.
- Ensure that the University's approach to the education of research degree candidates is properly aligned with the *UK Quality Code* and with the *Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* and with the RCUK *Statement of Expectations*.
- Ensure that the University's approach to the training of research degree candidates is configured to allow doctorate graduates every opportunity to acquire the attributes described in this document during their period of study.

Alignment with Corporate Priorities

The *Research Degree Education Strategy* has been developed to reflect the University's commitment to high quality doctoral education as articulated in Section Two of the University's Corporate Plan 2012-2016 "*Research with Impact*":-

- Attract and nurture world-class early-career and established researchers and provide top-class research support and mentoring for all research staff.
- Secure Research Council and charity-funded postgraduate research centres and partnerships, increase postgraduate research student quality and numbers from a diverse range of funding sources and support them with an exemplary training programme.
- Develop a sustainable strategic investment plan for University-funded postgraduate research scholarships that serves to encourage the best research students world-wide to train with us and underpins the development of key strategic national and international research partnerships (such as doctoral training centres).
- Have in place Doctoral Training Centre/Partnership status with the key UK funding bodies, including AHRC, BBSRC, MRC, EPSRC, NERC and ESRC.
- A year-on-year increase in the number of UEA registered PGR students from the current ratio of PGR/ATR of ~1.5:1, with the aim of achieving a ratio of ~1.75:1 over the duration of the Corporate Plan.

Implementation Plan

The *Research Degree Education Strategy* is supported by an implementation plan, the *Postgraduate Research Quality Enhancement Plan* (QEP), which incorporates actions from plans developed by the institution as part of its ongoing implementation of the UK Quality Code. The QEP is contingent on policy documents that will be developed during the 2014/15 academic session including the *Framework for Training Research Students Registered on Doctoral Programmes at UEA*.

UEA Research Degree Education Strategy

Contents

Contents

1) Foreword by the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Research and Enterprise)
2) Attributes of UEA doctoral candidates
3) The Strategy (15 core principles)

Appendix

Postgraduate Research Quality Enhancement Plan

Foreword by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise)

The *Research Degree Education Strategy* for 2014–19 not only recognises that research degree candidates are valued members of our academic community who contribute to our world-leading research and global reputation, but also seeks to ensure that the outstanding research environment offered by UEA and our partners on the Norwich Research Park is used effectively to train the next generation of researchers. Our strategy reflects on the 2012-16 Corporate Plan and looks forward to the vision for UEA's future currently being developed as part of the next Corporate Plan.

We have deliberately developed an educational strategy for research degree candidates that recognises that they are simultaneously both early career researchers and UEA registered students. In the first capacity we wish to offer high quality training that both supports their research and prepares them for careers inside and beyond academia. At the same time as UEA registered students they have a right to access the high-quality student-facing services and facilities that contribute substantially to UEA's outstanding performance in the National Student Survey (NSS) and other measures that evidence the satisfaction of our undergraduate population. Our *Research Degree Education Strategy* will ensure our continuing success through the combined efforts of our academic, research, technical and professional staff working together and in partnership with our research degree candidates and other stakeholders.

The University and its partners on the Norwich Research Park are committed to further developing the research infrastructure and providing an outstanding physical and digital training environment for our postgraduate researchers. However the key to the rich and rewarding doctoral education offered by UEA is our commitment to managing the professional relationship between our candidates and the academic staff and researchers who constitute their supervisory teams. Nurturing and ensuring the strength of these relationships remains at the very heart of our strategy.

To emphasise the distinctive nature of a UEA research degree we have produced a summary of attributes of UEA doctoral graduates. This is designed to help staff, sponsors, potential employers and research degree candidates themselves understand the knowledge, skills and behaviours that we anticipate will become hallmarks of graduates from our research degree programmes. These attributes will ensure that UEA doctoral graduates can not only realise their potential as researchers, but will also help them make maximum impact in their diverse future professional lives.

Professor Dave Petley, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise), UEA

Attributes of UEA Doctoral Graduates

The attributes set out below provide doctoral graduates with a framework within which they will be able to articulate their knowledge, abilities and skills to employers, whilst also providing staff and other stakeholders (e.g. employers, funding bodies) with a clear indication of the value of doctoral level study at UEA. These attributes take account of appropriate external reference points including *the UK Doctorate*[1] which was jointly authored by the QAA and NUS, and Vitae's *Researcher Development Framework*[2] (RDF). The attributes are themed according to the four domains of the RDF:

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

The degree to which research degree candidates are able to demonstrate these attributes may depend on the extent and duration of the independent research project and the eventual award. For example, those graduating with the degrees MPhil or Master's by Research are less likely to be able to demonstrate the full range of attributes, while those completing a professional doctorate may demonstrate additional competencies and would also have developed their own individual professional practice.

Knowledge and intellectual abilities
Doctoral graduates will be able to:
• Create and interpret new knowledge through original research or other advanced scholarship, of a quality to satisfy peer review, extend the forefront of the discipline and merit publication.   • Continue to undertake pure and/or applied research and development at an advanced level, contributing substantially to the development of new techniques, ideas or approaches.   • Make informed decisions on complex issues in specialist fields often in the absence of complete data.   • Demonstrate a systematic acquisition and understanding of a substantial body of knowledge which is at the forefront of an academic discipline or area of professional practice.   • Demonstrate an awareness of the frontiers of research within the discipline and a detailed understanding of applicable techniques for research and advanced academic enquiry.   • Conceptualise, design and undertake research projects, and adjust the project design in the light of unforeseen problems.   • Critically analyse, evaluate and synthesise new and complex ideas.   • Evaluate and extrapolate from the outcomes of their research.   • Use appropriate advanced methodologies to solve complex problems in novel situations.   • Confidently use a range of technologies for academic and professional purposes.
Research governance and organisation
Doctoral graduates will be able to:
• Explain the principles of good research conduct in their discipline and understand how to conduct their research in a way that complies with relevant ethical, legal and professional frameworks.   • Locate their research within a broader theoretical, and where appropriate, practical and policy context.   • Demonstrate that they are mindful of the environment and their own impact on it.   • Appreciate the principles behind the concept of corporate social responsibility   • Apply the principles of project management through the setting of research goals, intermediate milestones and prioritisation of activities.   • Appreciate the basic principles of financial management and commercial awareness.

---

[1] http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/Doctorate-guide.pdf
[2] https://www.vitae.ac.uk/researchers-professional-development/about-the-vitae-researcher-development-framework

Personal effectiveness

Doctoral graduates will be able to:

- Demonstrate a willingness and ability to learn and acquire knowledge.
- Create ideas and opportunities by investigating/seeking information and be able to use appropriate technology to search for high-quality information.
- Demonstrate self-discipline, motivation and thoroughness. Persevere in the face of obstacles and set-backs.
- Act autonomously and exercise personal responsibility in complex and unpredictable situations and in professional environments.

Engagement, influence and impact

Doctoral graduates will be able to:

- Communicate their ideas and conclusions clearly and effectively to specialist and non-specialist audiences.
- Critically evaluate and engage with the information obtained.
- Demonstrate an awareness of global perspectives on disciplinary knowledge and how it is represented and understood within other cultures.
- Show consideration to others. Listen, give and receive feedback and respond perceptively to others.
- Have insight into their own behaviours and impact on others when working in and contributing to the success of formal and informal teams. Appreciate contributions of other team members.
- Be sensitive to and respectful of individual differences. Develop awareness of diversity and difference within working environment.
- Understand the value of engaging with the public and with public policy.
- Develop awareness of the impact of research on wider society and of the impact of society, the environment and culture on research.

Our Strategy

Our Research Degree Education Strategy consists of 15 Strategic Aims each of which has measurable outcomes.

	Aims	Measures
1	**To provide a dynamic and stimulating research environment:** Together with our Norwich Research Park partners we will continue to recruit the best established and early career researchers and invest in the physical and digital infrastructure to provide an outstanding environment that supports advanced scholarship and world-leading research.	Applicant quality Submission rates (%) Investment in infrastructure (£) Volume of external funding secured (£)
2	**To offer challenging and properly resourced research projects:** We will ensure that each project, whether devised by supervisor(s) or applicant, will be reviewed and refined before and/or during the admissions process to meet three criteria: (i) it is appropriate to the background of the student; (ii) there is a well-qualified and experienced supervisory team; (iii) there is a realistic prospect of progressing the research within the period of study.	Proportion of offers where the School or Institute Director of Postgraduate Research confirms these quality criteria have been met (%)
3	**To provide an effective induction to doctoral-level education:** We will offer effective programmes of induction that acknowledge the rich diversity of educational, cultural and professional backgrounds of our research degree candidates and help them integrate with their peer group(s), School and the wider research community in Norwich.	Positive feedback from research degree candidates from induction sessions and PRES (%)
4	**To ensure best practice and good conduct in research:** We will ensure that at the earliest opportunity all research degree candidates are introduced to the principles of good research conduct in their discipline, and that an understanding of how to comply with relevant ethical, legal and professional frameworks is developed through the programme of study.	Proportion of research degree candidates on training pathways that satisfy these training criteria (%).
5	**To encourage strong relationships between staff and candidates:** We will ensure research degree candidates gain maximum benefit from their programme of study by meeting regularly with their supervisory team, taking advantage of training opportunities offered by Graduate Schools and engaging with the wider research community at UEA. We will work with UUEAS to ensure that the interests of research degree candidates are represented at all levels of the University.	Proportion of research degree candidates engaging with supervisory meetings and annual progress review monitoring (%)
6	**To provide timely feedback and actively manage progression:** We will ensure that supervisory teams offer timely and helpful feedback which is appropriate to the work submitted or research idea suggested and provide a regulatory framework for all our research degrees with explicit requirements for timely progression.	Proportion of research degree candidates successfully completing probation at first opportunity (%)
7	**To provide career information throughout the research degree programme and beyond graduation:** We will make available accessible and understandable information on the range of career opportunities available to graduates of research degree programmes as well as providing opportunities to interact with a range of employers.	Positive feedback from research degree candidates for this area in PRES (%)

8	**To assess training needs in order to support research and enhance employability:** We will continue to develop mechanisms that assess, provide for and monitor the needs of each individual's continued professional development, including the development of professional and transferable skills. These needs will be met within research degree candidates' research environment by Graduate Schools, working collaboratively with CSED and the Careers Service.	Proportion of research degree candidates submitting completed training needs analysis record to the Postgraduate Research Service (%)
9	**To offer a wider range of training opportunities:** We will provide opportunities for advanced research training to enable research degree candidates to develop their understanding and skills in areas beyond their specific research project. Where appropriate, this training will be offered at UEA and within the wider Norwich Research Park, but individuals will also be strongly encouraged to attend relevant training programmes elsewhere.	Positive feedback from research degree candidates for individual advanced training sessions and overall in annual progress review (%)
10	**To provide opportunities to develop an academic profile and establish networks:** We will support and encourage our research degree candidates to raise their academic profiles and establish sustainable networks with other researchers at UEA, within the wider Norwich Research Park, and beyond, by strongly encouraging participation in academic conferences, exchange visits and placements.	Proportion of research degree candidates who undertake a recorded external arrangement (%)
11	**To provide opportunities for research degree candidates who wish to teach:** We will continue to provide a programme of training which is appropriate to the discipline and style of teaching and learning undertaken and that allows research degree candidates who wish to participate fully in the delivery of taught programmes to meet the requirements of the descriptor for Level One of the UK Professional Standards Framework.	Proportion of research degree candidates who undertake training in learning and teaching (%)
12	**To promote international citizenship:** We will embrace the international profile of our staff and research degree candidates. Wherever possible we will deliver training to multidisciplinary groups of researchers to provide an inclusive and international perspective. We will seek to maximise opportunities for peer-to-peer learning and develop sustainable networks of peers that equip our research degree graduates to address contemporary global issues and challenges.	Proportion of research degree candidates with international fee status (%)
13	**To develop a governance structure that can oversee the specialist provision of research degrees:** We will continue to develop our governance structure for research degree programmes to enable us to deliver research degree education effectively and in accordance with this Strategy.	Proportion of actions listed in Quality Enhancement Plan which are achieved by the deadline set (%)
14	**To work with a range of stakeholders to evaluate and enhance our research degree provision:** We will work with research partners and employers to inform the Quality Enhancement Plan. The QEP will be reviewed regularly in order to evaluate our research degree provision in a structured manner and with reference to clear benchmarks and targets. We will work with UUEAS to ensure that feedback from research degree candidates is heard, considered and acted upon.	Proportion of actions listed in Quality Enhancement Plan with stakeholder involvement outside PGR Service and academic leads (%)

| 15 | **To improve professional support for research degree education:** We will continue to improve and enhance processes relating to research degree administration to enable us to deliver other aims within this Strategy. | Proportion of critical priority areas in PGR Process Improvement Plan with progress by deadline (%) |

Agreed: Postgraduate Research Executive, 13 January 2015
Submitted to Learning and Teaching Committee, 28 January 2015

	Postgraduate Research: Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), v1.0 (January 2015)					
Primary Indicator	**Action**	**Professional Lead**	**Academic Lead (where applicable)**	**Session**	**Committee Schedule**	**Repeating Cycle?**
	Actions relating to Chapter B11: Research Degrees of the UK Quality Code					
B11.1	Introduce probationary status and expectations for probationary review	Head (PGR)	AD PGRs	2014-15	Jan 2015 PGR Exec	Once
B11.1	Review ClinPsyD regulations	Q&I Manager	ClinPsyD Director	2014-15	Apr 2015 PGR Exec	5-yearly
B11.1	Index guidance notes of types listed and scope improvements	Q&I Manager		2014-15	PGR Service internal	Once
B11.1	Review policy for Category A (including staff) and Category B candidates	Head (PGR)/ Q&I Manager	ADRP	2014-15	Apr 2015 PGR Exec	Once
B11.1	Develop regulatory framework for dual award/co-tutelle arrangements	Q&I Manager	ADRP	2014-15	Oct 2015 PGR Exec	Once
B11.2	Respond to QAA consultation on degree characteristics	Head (PGR)/ Q&I Manager		2014-15	March 2015 PGR Exec	Once
B11.2	Review Code of Practice for Research Degrees	Q&I Manager		2014-15	June 2015 PGR Exec	5-yearly
B11.2	Ensure applicants made aware of regulations and Code of Practice via CRM plan	Head (PGR)		2014-15	PGR Service internal	Once
B11.3	PGR strategic benchmarking	Head (PGR)	ADRP	Annual	PGR Executive	Annual
B11.3	Embed PGR employability and DLHE statistics in PGR Executive agenda	Head (PGR)	ADRP	Annual	PGR Executive	Annual
B11.3	Review MI reports against B11 indicator 3 and scope improvements	Q&I Manager		2014-15	PGR Service internal	Once
B11.3	Review equality data on PGR admissions/lifecycle from Athena Swan submissions	NBI Graduate Studies Manager	AD PGR (SCI/FMH)	Annual	June 2015 PGR Exec	Annual
B11.3	Finalise PGR Education Strategy	Head (PGR)	ADRP	2014-15	Jan 2015 PGR Exec	Once
B11.3	Develop PGR Recruitment Strategy	Head (PGR)/ARM	ADRP	2014-15	PGR Executive	Once
B11.3	Scope modularisation of ClinPsyD and if accepted propose implementation strategy	Research Degrees Manager	ClinPsyD Director	2014-15	Oct 2015 PGR Exec	Once
B11.3	Review of EdD programme	Head (PGR)/ Q&I Manager	EdD Director	2014-15	Jan 2015 PGR Exec	5-yearly
B11.4	Review of research environment following REF 2014	Head (PGR)	PVC(R&E)/ADRP	2014-15	March 2015 PGR Exec	Once
B11.5	Review admissions procedures for University Campus Suffolk students	Head (PGR)/ Research Degrees Manager	ADRP	2014-15	Jan 2015 PGR Exec	5-yearly
B11.5	Review English language qualification procedures and language support	Head (PGR)		2014-15	June 2015 PGR Exec	5-yearly
B11.6	Follow up dissemination of recruitment and selection / admissions framework	Head (PGR)		2014-15	PGR Service internal	Once
B11.7	Update terms and conditions for UEA studentships	Head (PGR)/ Q&I Manager		Annual	PGR Service internal	Annual
B11.7	Review of postgraduate research programme continuation and other fees	Head (PGR)		2014-15	March 2015 PGR Exec	5-yearly
B11.7	Review of internal contracts and stipend processes	Head (PGR)/ Research Degrees Manager		2014-15	PGR Service internal	Once
B11.7	Major review of postgraduate research student handbooks	Research Degrees Manager		2014-15	PGR Service internal	5-yearly
B11.8	Implement any changes to induction required by doctoral training strategy	Research Degrees Manager		2015-16	PGR Service internal	Once
B11.9	Review of procedures for ensuring supervision quality, including supervisory training	Head (PGR)	AD PGRs	2014-15	June 2015 PGR Exec	5-yearly
B11.9	Improve web information about safety nets if supervision breaks down	Head (PGR)		2014-15	PGR Service internal	Once
B11.12	Review of supervisor workload and inclusion in workload allocation models	Head (PGR)	PVC(R&E)/ADRP	2014-15	March 2015 PGR Exec	5-yearly
B11.13	Annual Review of Research Student Progress	Q&I Manager	AD PGRs	Annual	January PGR Exec	Annual
B11.14	Review of teaching opportunities and related training	Head (PGR)		2014-15	March 2015 PGR Exec	5-yearly

B11.14	Reviews of personal and professional development provision (Faculties)	Research Degrees Manager/Officers	AD PGRs	Annual	Faculty GSEs	Annual
B11.14	Review of personal and professional development programmes (pan-NRP)	Head (PGR)	ADRP	2014-15	March 2015 PGR Exec	5-yearly
B11.15	Review report on PRES data	Head (PGR)	AD PGRs	Biennial	Jun and Nov PGR Exec	Biennial
B11.15	Set up Research Student Forum in Faculty of Science	Research Degrees Manager	AD PGR (SCI)	2014-15	PGR Service internal	Once
B11.17	Guidance on vivas by videoconferencing	PGR Service (tbc)	AD PGR (SSF)	2014-15	Apr 2015 PGR Exec	Once
B11.17	Review of guidance to students on examinations, thesis format and copyright	PGR Service (tbc)	Chair of working group (tbc)	2014-15	May 2014 PGR Exec	Once
B11.17	Annual Review of External Examiners' reports	Q&I Manager		Annual	March 2015 PGR Exec	Annual
B11.17	Review of examiners' fees and employment status	Head (PGR)		2014-15	Apr 2015 PGR Exec	Once
B11.17	Review of research degree examination procedures	PGR Service (tbc)		2015-16	May 2016 PGR Exec	5-yearly
B11.18	Embed PGR appeals and complaints statistics in PGR Executive agenda	Q&I Manager		Annual	PGR Executive	Annual
B11.all	Equality duty focus: disability and mental health	Q&I Manager	ADRP	2014-15	June 2015 PGR Exec	5-yearly
B11.all	Equality duty focus: maternity, paternity, mode of study	PGR Service (tbc)		2015-16	Nov 2015 PGR Exec	5-yearly
B11.all	Equality duty focus: race, nationality, religion and belief	PGR Service (tbc)		2016-17	Nov 2016 PGR Exec	5-yearly
B11.all	Equality duty focus: age and career stage	PGR Service (tbc)		2017-18	Nov 2017 PGR Exec	5-yearly
B11.all	Equality duty focus: sex, transgender and sexual orientation	PGR Service (tbc)		2018-19	Nov 2018 PGR Exec	5-yearly
Actions for other Chapters of the UK Quality Code, where not already covered under B11						
B2.2	Create training logs for PGR admissions	PGR Service (tbc)		2015-16	PGR Service internal	Once
B2.3	Review admissions appeals and complaints policy for PGR	Head (PGR)	ADRP	2014-15	Apr 2015 PGR Exec	5-yearly
B2.5	Review use of applicant-led themes in PGR admissions	Head (PGR)	AD PGRs	2014-15	Jun 2015 PGR Exec	Once
B2.9	Review process by which we communicate changes to applicants	Head (PGR)		2015-16	Nov 2015 PGR Exec	Once
B3.1	Disseminate Research Degree Education Strategy	Head (PGR)	ADRP	2014-15	PGR Service internal	Once
B3.6	Review improvements to PGR space across the campus	Head (PGR)	PVC(R&E)/ADRP	2014-15	March 2015 PGR Exec	Annual
B3.8	Review of PGR processes around General Regulation 13: attendance, engagement and progress	PGR Service (tbc)	AD PGRs	2015-16	April 2015 PGR Exec	Once
B5.3	Work with LTC review of SSLCs to ensure consideration of PGR input	Research Degrees Manager	ADRP	2014-15	March 2015 PGR Exec	5-yearly
B10.1	Develop strategy and processes for managing international professional doctorate placements	Research Degrees Manager	ClinPsyD Director	2014-15	PGR Service internal PGR Executive (tbc)	Once
B10.1	Review strategy and staff resource for Doctoral Training Partnerships	Head (PGR)	PVC(R&E)/ADRP	2014-15	March 2015 PGR Exec	Annual
B10.2	Review governance for Doctoral Training Partnerships	Head (PGR)	PVC(R&E)/ADRP	2014-15	March 2015 PGR Exec	Annual
B10.7	Embed annual reporting on current partnership arrangements involving PGR as a report to PGR Executive	Head (PGR)		2014-15	March 2015 PGR Exec	Annual
B10.10	Index existing records of co-tutelle arrangements and other external arrangements	Head (PGR) / Q&I Manager		2014-15	PGR Service internal	Once
B10.19	Monitor discussions of HEAR for PGR students	Head (PGR) / Q&I Manager		2014-15	PGR Service internal	Once
C.7	Review maintenance of records for PGR collaborative activity	Head (PGR) / Q&I Manager		2014-15	PGR Service internal	Once