

SUPERVISION AND STUDYING

POLICY AND PROCEDURE FOR RESEARCH DEGREES

SUPERVISION

- i. The supervisor(s)-student relationship lies at the heart of successful research practice, the one leading the other in what is essentially an apprenticeship in research/scholarship. The following regulations are to help ensure the integrity and quality of that relationship. (See QAA Quality Code Chapter B11: Research Degrees)
- ii. A supervisor is appointed to his/her role by the Research Officer in conjunction with the Head of Department/Dean. The following must be considered regarding eligibility: a supervisor should normally:
 - a. have a DPhil/PhD;
 - b. be research-active and publishing in one or more specialist fields;
 - c. not carry an undergraduate teaching-load or administrative-load that is incompatible with having appropriate time for supervision. This is ensured via the use of the Supervisor Workload Monitoring Form.
- i. Before a student is registered on a programme of study it is crucial to ensure that there is an appropriate match between the potential student's research interests or agenda and those of a supervisor, depending on the supervisor's experience and range of interests. See 'Checklist for registration as a research student'.
- ii. The supervisory role may be appropriately considered at each supervisor's PDR to ensure the on-going development of the supervisor's own research, research expertise, and teaching knowledge, and to identify training needs.
- iii. Where it is possible, students will have joint supervision, i.e. two named and equally-acting supervisors. At least one of the supervisors should be an employee of the University, and that the principle supervisor allocated to a student, should be an employee of the University. Where that is not possible or appropriate supervision will involve one named supervisor (first supervisor), and a second named supervisor who takes a subsidiary role. The first supervisor must be identified prior to entry and named at entry; the second (joint) or (subsidiary) supervisor may be appropriately appointed later, but within the first year, as the precise direction of the research becomes clear. The supervisor shall normally have had successful experience of supervising to the level of the degree proposed, either solely or as co-supervisor. Where the subject-specialist supervisor does not have such supervisory experience, a director of studies (i.e. principal supervisor with appropriate supervisory experience) must be appointed. Where a proposed supervisor is wholly new to the role, s/he will usually be appointed to act in the first instance as second supervisor with an experienced supervisor who, in the initial stages, is first supervisor. If the student is based abroad, a local person will normally be appointed to act as a second supervisor.

RESEARCH PROPOSAL OR PLAN

- iv. At the commencement of studies for all higher degrees by research the student and supervisor(s) must work together to develop or refine the research proposal/plan. The research proposal should specify
 - a. the field of study;
 - b. the working title;
 - c. an outline of the proposed plan of work;
 - d. iv. the facilities available for the investigation (an outline bibliography, for example), and, where appropriate, the resources identified elsewhere;
- v. any additional support, including supporting studies, that the student will require.
- vi. For a PhD student, the research proposal must be available at the first Annual Review, and will form an important part of the discussion at the Review. For Masters level students by research (MA, MSc, LLM), the research proposal should normally be fully evolved and a work-in-progress by the end of the second term of study (fourth term for part-time students).
- vii. If the research proposal for PhD is not considered satisfactory at the first Annual Review, the review panel may grant an extension of time to achieve a satisfactory proposal or may terminate the student's studies. If the research proposal at Masters level is not considered satisfactory after two terms by the supervisor(s) and the Research Officer (after four terms for part-time students), they may grant an extension of time to achieve a satisfactory proposal or may terminate the student's studies. In both instances the student will be informed from the Registry by letter, which will indicate the student's right of appeal. A student who withdraws or whose studies are terminated within the first six months from registration will not count for the purposes of completion statistics.