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Section A Facilities and Services

A1. Introduction to the Postgraduate Research Student Handbook

The aim of this handbook is to inform postgraduate research students on the management of postgraduate research in the University, and provide relevant guidance concerning the services available aimed at enhancing the postgraduate research student experience at Queen's. It includes an introduction to the Postgraduate Office, the Students' Union, information on the student support services available in Queen's, and guidance covering all aspects of the postgraduate research student experience from registration through to graduation.

The handbook should be read in conjunction with the core regulations governing the relevant degrees, which have been prepared in light of the best practice recommended in the QAA Code of Practice Section 1: Postgraduate Research Programmes. In the event of any inconsistencies, these regulations take precedence over the guidance in this handbook and form part of the Institutional Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes, which can be accessed via the Postgraduate Office website (www.qub.ac.uk/postgraduate).

The following higher degrees by research are awarded by Queen's:

All faculties

Doctor in Philosophy (PhD)

Master of Philosophy (MPhil)

Degrees by Independent Research and Publication

School of Medicine, Dentistry and Biomedical Sciences

Doctor of Medicine (MD)

Master of Surgery (MCh)

This handbook is aimed principally at those students on the generic research degrees (MPhil and PhD). Students undertaking the MD, MCh or a degree by Independent Research and Publication, should therefore pay particular attention to the specific regulations governing these programmes (www.qub.ac.uk/postgraduate).

If further clarification is required, please do not hesitate to contact the Postgraduate Office, either by telephoning **028 90972585** or emailing pg.office@qub.ac.uk.

A2. The Postgraduate Office

The Postgraduate Office aims to provide a focus for postgraduate education and provide for the needs of postgraduate research students within the University. It strives to give research students every opportunity to achieve their research objectives and progress their careers. The office responsibilities include the administration of postgraduate awards, postgraduate skills training, enrolment and registration, the regulation and administration of postgraduate programmes and performance monitoring.

The Postgraduate Office provides key linkages with other University departments which have a responsibility for postgraduate research students. In particular, the Office liaises closely with the Admissions Office which administers the admissions process for postgraduate research students, with the Finance Directorate in the administration of postgraduate awards, with the Student Records and Examinations Office regarding examinations and student progress and with the Marketing, Recruitment and Communications Directorate in the postgraduate marketing activities for the University.

The staff of the Postgraduate Office have skilled knowledge and experience of all aspects of the regulations and administrative responsibilities for postgraduate research students, and will answer any related query or resolve any operational issue which might arise. The office is located in Room 110N, Lanyon North. Full details of all procedures and documents outlined in this handbook can be obtained from the website

www.qub.ac.uk/postgraduate.





A3. The Students' Union

The Students' Union exists to promote the interests of Queen's students; to represent students to the authorities of the University; and to organise social events. On enrolment at Queen's you automatically become a member of the Students' Union and this entitles you to use the facilities and services provided within the Students' Union building. More information on these facilities and services can be seen at www.qubsu.org.

The Students' Union is at the hub of student life in the University, and for those of you who are new to Queen's, is located directly opposite the main University site, providing a wide range of social and welfare services. The Students' Union Council, which is elected annually in October, is responsible for the conduct of the affairs of the Students' Union. All students are entitled to stand for election to the Council, which has membership positions reserved especially for postgraduates.

The position of the Students' Union Vice-President (Equality and Diversity) has been created to work with the non-academic issues that face postgraduate students, such as social events, representation within the Union and ensuring that all services are available to postgraduate

students during their studies. The Vice-President (Equality and Diversity) may be contacted through the Students' Union by emailing su.vpequality@qub.ac.uk or by telephoning **028 90971058**.

For guidance on academic and research related matters, including appeals and complaints, postgraduate students should contact the Students' Union Vice-President (Education) by emailing studentadvice@qub.ac.uk or by telephoning **028 90973724**.

A4. The Postgraduate Students' Association (PGSA)

The Postgraduate Students' Association (PGSA) is a student-led body which was formed at the end of 2006 and which aims to provide a focal point for postgraduate students. It organises a range of research related and social events and relevant details may be found at the PGSA website: www.qub.ac.uk/pgsa.

A5. An introduction to student support services

Your experience and success as a Postgraduate Research Student at Queen's is dependent upon a number of factors other than the quality of the experience you will have on your

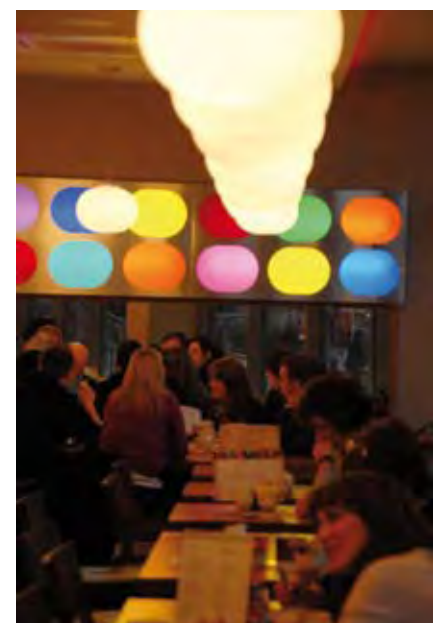
programme of study. To make life at Queen's as smooth as possible there is a number of key central services for you to use, the locations of which are highlighted in the campus map on the back cover of the Handbook.

◆ Accommodation Advice

Queen's offers a range of residential accommodation. Information is included within a comprehensive handbook, which is essential reading, giving details about the different types of accommodation, how long you can stay and everything else you need to know, including fees. This is available from the Accommodation Office or on-line at www.qub.ac.uk/sacc.

◆ Catering

Hospitality Services provides a wide variety of food from a range of catering outlets across the University; on the Main Lanyon Site, Students' Union, Elms Centre, the Medical Biology Centre (MBC) and the ECIT Research Centre.



Facilities and Services

Check out opening hours at the Catering website at: www.qub.ac.uk/home/HospitalityServices-Catering

Careers Service (including Work Placement Centre and Student Jobshop)

Queen's Careers Service offers a wide range of services which are available to Postgraduate Research Students, including:

- Career Management & Employability Skills Courses, delivered as part of the Postgraduate Skills Training Programme (PSTP). Course details will be outlined in the PSTP training manual which you will receive prior to Enrolment and Registration.
- There is a dedicated Senior Careers Adviser for postgraduate research students at Queens, who can provide individual consultations/guidance interviews to discuss career-related issues in greater depth, including career planning, decision-making, job search strategies, transferable skills, applications and interviews. Contact the Careers Service on **9097 2819** to arrange an appointment, or email careers@qub.ac.uk.

- Careers Information
 - Careers Website (www.qub.ac.uk/careers) includes up-to-date Vacancy Database, Student Jobshop & Work Placement Centre
 - Information Room at Student Guidance Centre
 - information available on graduate jobs and employers, occupational and sector profiles, application and selection processes etc.
- Contact with Employers – through Autumn and Summer Careers Fairs, on-campus presentations, and employer-led sessions in the Autumn and Spring Careers programme; visit the Careers Service website for further details.

- ◆ **Counselling Service**
The Counselling Service is a confidential, friendly and professional service for students, staffed by qualified Counsellors, experienced in dealing with student related matters.

In order to get the most out of your time at Queen's, the Counselling Service can help you deal with a wide range of student issues, including academic, inter-personal, self-esteem, assertiveness and confidence building.

Counselling offers you an opportunity to talk freely about your situation with someone who will not judge you or rush you to offer advice.

There is a dedicated counsellor for postgraduate research students at Queens, who may be contacted by telephone on **028 90972918** or by email at counsellor@qub.ac.uk.

You can find out more at www.qub.ac.uk/sgc.

- ◆ **Disability Services**
The University is committed to supporting students with disabilities and students are encouraged to contact Disability Services as early in the academic year as possible. Disability Services currently offers support to students with a wide range of disabilities to ensure that you have appropriate services and support to successfully complete your studies.

Disclosing your disability is a personal choice, and while there is no obligation to make this disclosure when applying to, or studying at Queen's, disclosure enables the University to plan and provide for your individual support requirements.

If you have a disability and could benefit from the services and support Disability Services offer, please visit the website at www.qub.ac.uk/disability.

- ◆ **Finance Office**
The Finance website (www.qub.ac.uk/bo) provides details on fee payment options (if applicable) and has a list of frequently



asked questions concerning tuition fees. Alternatively you can contact the Tuition Fees helpline on **028 9097 2767**.

In addition, assistance from the University Support Fund may be available to eligible students who are experiencing financial hardship, for one reason or another, during the academic year. Further details can be found at **www.qub.ac.uk/bo**. Alternatively you can contact the Students' Union Financial Advisor by email **studentsunion@qub.ac.uk** or by telephone **028 9097 1049**.

◆ Queen's International

Queen's International is a new department which brings together the activities delivered by the existing International Office and the domestic recruitment initiatives and responsibilities previously managed by the Admissions Office, into one centralised department.

The primary objectives of Queen's International are:

- The provision of a specialised visa and immigration service for international students and Queen's academics working abroad
- Student recruitment activity, in local, domestic and international markets
- Assisting Schools to develop and maintain international institutional partnerships
- The delivery of the University's student exchange programmes such as Erasmus and Study Abroad
- The induction, orientation and ongoing care of international graduating and non-graduating students
- Supporting academic Schools' internationalisation activities and delivering a joined-up approach to these initiatives

Queen's International has officers with specialist knowledge working in the national and international markets. The International officers provide Schools with in-country market intelligence, specific recruitment initiatives, partnership development activity, student guidance and support.

Queen's International aims to ensure Queen's University Belfast is the primary destination of choice for international students considering postgraduate study at a university in the UK and Ireland, and may be contacted by telephone on **+44 28 9097 5088** or by email at **international@qub.ac.uk**.

You can find out more at **<http://www.qub.ac.uk/ilo/>**.

◆ Student Computing Services at Queen's

The web link below provides information about computing services at Queen's, how to access Queen's computing facilities off-campus, how to improve your computing skills and other useful information: **www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/InformationServices**

To access the Queen's Online service you must have your username and password; these are provided during the enrolment process. As a student at the University you must use your Queen's email account. The Postgraduate Office and other University services will communicate to you using your Queen's email account only.

The Training and Assessment Unit offers a range of training courses ICT skills as part of the Postgraduate Skills Training Programme. These courses will be outlined in the training manual which you will receive at registration and enrolment.

◆ Queen's Sport

Queen's Sport offers all students the opportunity to adopt a healthier, physically active lifestyle. The sports development management team is committed to providing quality facilities, ongoing programmes of activity and professional support services, which meet the needs of all levels of interest and ability.

See more of what's on offer at the Queen's Sport website: **www.queenssport.com**



◆ University Health Centre at Queen's

If you are a student living away from home, you are required by the Health and Social Services Boards to be registered with a GP within 10 miles of your place of residence.

The University Health Centre provides a complete range of certificates for NHS services together with non-NHS services (Medical Certificates, Letters, Medical Reports etc) free of charge to Queen's students who are registered patients.

To learn more, visit the University Health Centre at Queen's website at **www.qub.ac.uk/uhs**.

Section B

Practical guidance concerning your research

B1. Introduction

This section is intended to provide information on all formal stages of your time at Queen's from registration through to graduation.

Additional requirements may apply in your subject area, and you should check this with your supervisors at your first supervisory meeting.

B2. Registration

2.1 Annual registration

You must register as a research student at the beginning of your first year of research, and again at the start of each academic year until you submit your thesis. You will not be issued with a student card until you have registered, which means that you will not be able to borrow books from the library, gain access to University premises or if you are funded, receive your studentship. Registration in the second and subsequent years is subject to the completion of a satisfactory progress monitoring report (see section 4.4 below).

You may not normally be registered for a course leading to any other qualification while you are enrolled as a research student.

The Postgraduate Office will administer the arrangements for the registration of postgraduate research students.

2.2 Changing your registration status

You will register as full-time, part-time or thesis-only (writing up stage), and that will be your status for the rest of the academic year. If you have a genuine reason for needing to change your status during the year (for example, if you have taken up employment and need to go part-time), you should discuss the proposed change with your principal supervisor. If your supervisor agrees to the change, he or she will forward your request to the School Postgraduate Research Committee.

B3. Training

3.1 University Induction Programme

The University organises a Postgraduate Induction Programme for all new research students in September/October and January/February each year. The Induction Programme provides an opportunity for students to meet each other and begin to develop important professional and personal networks. Information on the Induction Programme is normally sent out to new students in August and December, depending on their start date. Relevant up to date information is also displayed on the Postgraduate Office website www.qub.ac.uk/postgraduate and you are advised to check this, whether or not you have received other related information.

3.2 School Specific Training

Schools may specify particular training as compulsory for their own students. Please check the school specific training in the Postgraduate Skills Training Programme Manual or check with your supervisor or school office. Your school or

supervisor may indicate particular courses relevant to your research that you should attend. This could be training offered by a Research Council or a professional body, delivered on a national or regional basis.

3.3 Postgraduate Skills Training Programme (PSTP)

The development of professional and transferable skills is a significant part of a PhD. In 2001 the Research Councils issued a Joint Skills Statement (refer to section C6 of this Handbook) which outlined that research students are expected to develop a range of generic skills in addition to those related to their research project. The PSTP, managed and co-ordinated by the Postgraduate Office, offers a comprehensive range of courses and training opportunities designed to enhance and develop transferable skills across disciplines. The courses map onto the skills areas outlined in the Joint Skills Statement. The programme aims to support PhD researchers in developing a range of professional skills to successfully complete their research and increase their employability.

The PSTP consists of three training elements:

- i. Formal training courses in transferable skills co-ordinated centrally by the Postgraduate Office,
- ii. Subject specific training delivered/coordinated by Schools,
- iii. Developmental opportunities which include both formal and informal learning/training activities. These can include attending and/or presenting at a conference or seminar, journal publication, organising an event, teaching or demonstrating.



3.3.1 Training Requirements

Full-time research students are advised to undertake 30 days' training over the course of their PhD. These 30 days include both structured training and developmental or on-the-job training. Due to the diversity of skills requirements and training needs, the University has not designated the training provided centrally as compulsory, however it is expected that you will undertake 30 days' training during your PhD. As outlined in section 3.2 above, your School may deem specific training as mandatory and it is recommended that you check your School requirements with your supervisor or School Office.

You are expected to undertake **20 days' structured/formal training** during your research. Structured training can include:

- Formal training courses from the Skills Training Programme co-ordinated by the Postgraduate Office
- Relevant courses delivered and co-ordinated by your School
- Relevant training delivered by Research Councils and other Professional Bodies
- Previous relevant training undertaken as part of employment, Masters Degree and/or other providers. (Please note that to gain training exemptions you must

have undertaken this training within the previous 2 years).

Developmental training involves 'putting transferable skills into practice'.

Developmental or on-the-job training can include activities such as presenting a paper at a conference or seminar, organising a seminar or postgraduate event, demonstrating or other teaching activity, journal publication or attending a conference. This training is most relevant in 2nd and 3rd year and includes activities that are 'part and parcel' of your research anyway. You are expected to undertake at least 10 days' developmental training.

3.3.2 Differentiation

For purposes of differentiation, it is expected that you will have attended 10 days' training in your first year. You are advised to check with your School to clarify their training requirements for differentiation.

3.3.3 Individual training requirements

Before you select the training courses you wish to attend you should complete the **Skills Analysis Checklist** (available on the

Queen's on-line section of the PSTP, www.qub.ac.uk/postgraduate or in the PSTP Manual). The Skills Checklist allows you to map your own skills against the skills areas outlined in the Joint Skills Statement (JSS). This checklist should help you identify the areas that you need to develop. You



should discuss these skills areas with your supervisor and discuss and agree the structured training courses and/or developmental training that you should undertake for the semester or year.

It is recommended, as best practice, that a student should gain approval from his or her supervisor before registering for a training course. This is important not only so that your supervisor is aware of and agreeable to the timing of the course, but also to ensure that you select relevant courses which will meet your training needs. It is your responsibility to ensure that you attend the training courses.

3.3.4 Registering for a PSTP course

Courses can only be registered for using the Queen's Online system. The training system will give

Practical guidance concerning your research

you the most up-to-date information on course availability, course content and any new courses that have been recently added to the Training Programme. You do not have to register for all the courses you are interested in at once. You have several years to take these courses so the most important thing for you to do is to decide which courses will be most beneficial to you at your particular stage of research. When you register for a particular course you will receive confirmation by email. Around 5 days prior to the course date you will receive a reminder email confirming the date, time and venue of the course. If you are unable to attend a particular course you should cancel your registration to allow others to take your place. You can cancel your registration via the

online system up to 24 hours before the start of the course and thereafter only by contacting Training Section of the Postgraduate Office (**028 9097 2597**). While students may have genuine reasons for not being able to attend courses, failure to cancel registrations on a repeated basis may jeopardise future registration at other courses.

The Postgraduate Office and course facilitators will use only your Queen's email address to communicate updates, changes, information, course notes etc. Students are expected to check their Queen's email address on a regular basis.

3.3.5 Training Record

Your Training Record will record all the courses you have attended as part of the PSTP. For other relevant training (structured or developmental) that you have undertaken you must

add this information to your training record in order to gain credit and build up your training days.

At the end of your PhD, your Training Record will document all the training you have attended as part of the skills training programme including any developmental/on-the-job training that you have undertaken throughout the duration of your PhD.

3.3.6 Part-time students

The training courses included in the training manual are open to all students. As courses are scheduled during office hours, Monday to Friday, some part-time students may find it difficult to attend. Therefore there are no expectations, at this stage, for the number of training days a part-time student should undertake during their research. However your School may deem specific training as mandatory and it is recommended that you check your School requirements with your supervisor or School Office.

3.3.7 Training exemptions

It is possible to obtain exemptions from the skills training courses, but you must be able to demonstrate the previous relevant training which you have undertaken and show how it relates to the skills areas outlined in the Joint Skills Statement. This involves any relevant training undertaken as part of employment,



a Masters programme and/or other professional training providers. In general exemptions are only considered if the training/experience was at a postgraduate or equivalent level. (Please note that this training must have been undertaken within the previous 2 years).

In order to gain exemption, a *Training Exemption Form* is available from the Postgraduate Skills Training website **www.qub.ac.uk/home/Research/PostgraduateOffice/PostgraduateTraining**. This form must be completed, approved by your supervisor and forwarded to the Postgraduate Office for approval and in order for your Training Record to be updated. In the form you must be able to demonstrate graduate level skills.

3.3.8 Evaluation and Feedback

All courses delivered as part of the PSTP are evaluated. Evaluation forms are available after each course either in hard copy or through the training system on Queen's Online. The evaluation form will ask course participants to comment on various aspects of the course including the content, pace, delivery, venue, handouts and whether course objectives were achieved. It is very important for the development and success of the programme to gain honest and constructive feedback

Informal focus groups are also organised during the year to discuss with researchers the choice of courses on offer, course content and recommendations for new training initiatives and course improvements. Suggestions for additional training initiatives may also be made directly to the staff of Training Section of the Postgraduate Office (**028 9097 2597**).

3.3.9 Special requirements

The Postgraduate Office is strongly committed to supporting students with disabilities. If you have a disability and require support whilst completing one of our training courses, please contact the Postgraduate Office on **028 9097 2597** or email **pg.training@qub.ac.uk**. Alternatively, you can contact Disability Services directly on **028 9097 2727** or email **disability.office@qub.ac.uk**.

3.3.10 Monitoring

Students are personally responsible for attending agreed training (structured training, school specific training or developmental/on-the-job training). The PSTP online software provides supervisors a variety of reports to allow attendance monitoring.

3.4 School Seminars

You should try to attend any research seminars taking place in your school, as they will give you a wider perspective on your

subject. You may be required to give a seminar on your own work at some stage: your supervisors will let you know about this. Please note that attending or participating at a seminar will count towards your developmental training days, as part of the University's Postgraduate Skills Training Programme (see section 3.3.1 above).

3.5 Conferences

You should discuss relevant conferences with your supervisors. Depending on the source of funding for your research, you may be able to claim limited expenses from your funding body for conference attendance. You can also contact Academic Affairs **www.qub.ac.uk/qap** for information about travel scholarships, however you should be aware that there are not many of these available and that even if you are successful, the award will not cover the full cost of attending the conference.

3.6 Personal Development Plan (PDP)

Personal Development Planning (PDP) is a process already present in most PhD supervision and study practices. PDP is a structured and supported process undertaken by an individual to reflect upon their own learning, performance and/or achievement and to plan for their personal, educational and career development' (QAA 2001).

PDP is a continuous cycle of:

- Self-assessment and evaluation
- Identification of needs and goals
- Planning a course of action to meet these needs and goals
- Carrying out your action plan
- Recording your achievements
- Reflecting on the outcomes and evaluating your progress
- Revealing new needs and goals

Practical guidance concerning your research

A PDP handbook, included with your enrolment and registration pack, provides details for postgraduate research students at Queen's on what PDP involves and will help you get the most out of the process. Your supervisor will assist you with your PDP and other help may come from your colleagues and others in the school, the Postgraduate Office, the Careers and Counselling Services.

3.7 Student Led Initiatives

Funding is available throughout the year for Student-Led Initiatives. These initiatives can involve organising a conference, research seminar or some other appropriate training activity but the content of the training event must relate to one or more of the skills areas set out in the Research Councils' Skills Statement (refer to section C6 of this Handbook) and must also involve training and development for fellow PhD students.

Student Led Initiatives are a popular means of encouraging students to work independently, or in groups, to develop training that will enhance their own skills set and those of other research students. Further information is available on the Postgraduate Skills Training website www.qub.ac.uk/home/Research/PostgraduateOffice/PostgraduateTraining.

B4. The progress of the research

4.1 Planning your research

When you start your research, your principal supervisor will help you draw up a research plan specifying concrete targets against which your progress can be monitored over the course of the research. This will be confirmed at the Initial Review which takes place within three months of starting your research. Training will be built into the plan



and monitored. The research plan will help you and your supervisors to recognise if things are going wrong and you are starting to fall behind. You should also agree a written schedule of supervision including relevant meeting dates with your supervisors and keep to it. It is good practice to confirm the date of the next meeting at the end of each supervisory session.

The research plan will be designed to ensure that you submit your thesis on time ie at the end of three years full-time/six years part-time for a PhD or two years full-time/four years part-time for an MPhil. The University places great importance on students meeting these deadlines. You should note that, once the plan has been drawn up, it is your responsibility to maintain the progress of work and to meet the various deadlines set out in the plan. If you are not sure what you have to do at any stage, you should ask your supervisors at once. You should let your supervisors know immediately if you experience difficulty in meeting your deadlines, or have any other concerns about your progress.

The earlier you take action, the more likely it is that problems can be resolved without any loss of time and that you will still be able to meet the deadlines for submission.

4.2 Differentiation

You will normally register initially as an undifferentiated research student. Differentiation is the subsequent process of deciding whether you should proceed towards a PhD or an MPhil. Some students register directly for the degree of MPhil, and do not go through differentiation (although their progress will normally be reviewed part-way through the first year, and on a regular basis thereafter).

You will be informed in advance of the deadline for your differentiation and of the detailed arrangements. If you are full-time, it will normally take place within nine months of the start of your research (ie no later than June of your first year). If you are part-time, it will normally be within the first 18 months.

These deadlines may be extended slightly where circumstances require it, but all full-time students must go through differentiation within the first 16 months and part-time students within the first 30 months.

Differentiation is conducted by a panel, normally comprising three academics, including one of your supervisors. You will be required to submit written work (your supervisor will tell you what this involves) and to attend an interview. The panel will also consider your research plan (see section 4.1 above) and your training record, and will make a recommendation as to whether you should be permitted to register for the degree of PhD. You will be informed of the outcome. You may be allowed one further attempt at differentiation if your first attempt is unsuccessful.

You have the right to appeal to a central Postgraduate Appeals Committee if you are dissatisfied with the outcome of the differentiation procedure (see section 10 below).

4.3 Ongoing Monitoring

As a research student, your progress is continually being monitored – every time you meet your supervisor or submit work for comment, for example. Your supervisors will use the regular supervisory meetings to check your progress against the targets in your research plan (see section 4.1 above), will provide you with regular feedback and will discuss any concerns about progress with you at the earliest opportunity. Your supervisors may bring serious concerns about your progress to the attention of the Head of School.

4.4 The Progress Monitoring Exercise

The University formally monitors the progress of all postgraduate research students once a year through its progress monitoring exercise. Your first review will take place within 12

months of the start of your research. If there are concerns about your progress, you may be required to undergo reviews more frequently than the normal once a year.

A progress monitoring form will be forwarded to you at the appropriate time and you will be asked to complete Section A. It is important that you answer the questions as openly and honestly as possible, since one of the aims of the exercise is to pick up problems at an early stage while there is still time to do something about them. If difficulties arise later on, the record of annual reports will be used to determine how the problems occurred and what steps were taken by supervisors and student to deal with them.

Once you have completed your section of the form, you should give it immediately to your principal supervisor. Your principal supervisor, in consultation with the second supervisor, will fill in section B, with your supervisors' views on your progress and a recommendation as to how you should be allowed to proceed, and will ask you to counter-sign the form to confirm having been shown the supervisors' report.

If you are an undifferentiated research student your supervisor may make one of the following recommendations

- (i) that you have gone through the School's differentiation procedure and are recommended for PhD registration;
- (ii) that you are ready to go through the School's differentiation procedure;
- (iii) that your registration as an undifferentiated research student be continued for another specified number of months and reviewed again;

- (iv) that you be given permission to register for a master's degree;

- (v) that your registration be discontinued.

If you are a student already registered for a PhD your supervisor may make one of the following recommendations

- (i) that your registration be continued;
- (ii) that your registration be changed to registration for a master's degree;
- (iii) that your registration be discontinued.

If you are a student already registered for a MPhil your supervisor may make one of the following recommendations

- (i) that your registration be continued;
- (ii) that your registration be discontinued.

If your supervisors' report and recommendation are unfavourable, you and your supervisors may be required to attend a special review meeting. In extreme cases, a student's registration may be discontinued.

If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of the progress monitoring exercise, you can appeal to a central Postgraduate Appeals Committee (see section 10 below).

You must complete the progress report form each year, until a thesis is submitted. Registration at the beginning of an academic year is dependent on the completion of satisfactory report form at the end of the previous year. You will not be permitted to re-register for the next year until you have done so.

Practical guidance concerning your research

B5. You and your supervisors

5.1 The role of the supervisors

Students will normally have two supervisors, a principal supervisor and a second supervisor. The division of responsibilities between them may vary, depending on circumstances, but the principal supervisor always has overall responsibility and the second supervisor normally has a supporting role. Their combined role is essentially to give you advice, help and encouragement so that you receive a good training in research and produce a successful thesis. The thesis is, however, to be your own work, and you must accept the responsibility for its eventual success or failure.

The Principal Supervisor's responsibilities would normally include:

- Helping the student draw up a research plan, and monitoring the student's progress in relation to this plan
- Agreeing a written schedule of meetings with the student and keeping to it
- Meeting the student a minimum of 6 times a year (for full-time students)
- Giving the student regular feedback on progress, including constructive criticism on written work
- Raising any concerns about progress with the student and, if necessary, the head of school at an early stage
- Ensuring that the student goes through the School's differentiation procedure at the appropriate time
- Completing a Progress Monitoring Form for the student at the appropriate time each year



- Ensuring that the student understands the nature and requirements of postgraduate research and the standards expected
- Ensure that the student knows what constitutes research misconduct and knows how to reference properly
- Ensuring that the student is aware of institutional-level sources of advice, including careers guidance, health and safety legislation and equal opportunities policy;
- Providing effective pastoral support and/or referring the student to other sources of such support, including student advisers (or equivalent) and others within the student's academic community;
- Helping the student to interact with others working in the field of research, for example, encouraging the student to attend relevant conferences, supporting him/her in seeking funding for such events; and where appropriate to submit conference papers and articles to refereed journals;
- Maintaining the necessary supervisory expertise, including the appropriate skills, to perform the role satisfactorily, supported by relevant continuing professional development opportunities.

The Second Supervisor's responsibilities would normally include:

- Meeting the student a minimum of twice a year

- Involvement in the annual monitoring and assessment process
- Acting as a replacement 'principal' supervisor if the principal supervisor is away from the University for any length of time
- Undertaking a specific role in the student's training such as developing a Personal Development Plan (PDP) or Training Needs Analysis for the student

If you only have one supervisor, an independent adviser will also be appointed for you. The independent adviser may not be an expert in your topic, but can provide advice on general academic or pastoral matters.

5.2 Establishing a relationship with your supervisors

You will be told when you first enrol who your supervisors are. In order to establish a good working relationship, you and your supervisors should agree at the outset how to proceed and what each of you expects from the others. Your supervisors will explain to you their respective responsibilities and what kind of guidance you can expect to receive from each of them, and should tell you which of them to contact about different aspects of your research. You in turn must ensure that you know exactly what your supervisors expect of you and that you clearly understand the division of responsibilities between your supervisors. If you are unsure about anything, ask your supervisors.

5.3 Meetings with your supervisors

You and your supervisors must meet regularly. If you are a full-time student, the University requires you

to meet your principal supervisor at least six times in each academic year and to meet your second supervisor at least twice a year. If you are part-time, you must meet your supervisors at least once a semester. You are jointly responsible with your supervisors for ensuring that this happens.

You and your supervisors will need to draw up a schedule of meetings in advance, and you should confirm the date of the next meeting at the end of each supervisory session. Neither you nor your supervisor should cancel scheduled meetings without good reason, and if a meeting is cancelled you should re-arrange it as quickly as possible. You should maintain a written record of these meetings with your supervisors, and their relevant outcomes.

5.4 Contacting your supervisors between meetings

You should be able to contact your supervisors for advice and assistance at other reasonable times outside your planned schedule. You must ensure that you know your supervisors' work telephone numbers and work e-mail addresses in case you need to get in touch. The onus is on you to contact your supervisors quickly if you run into difficulty, without waiting for the next planned meeting. You are responsible for ensuring that your supervisors know how to get in touch with you during normal working hours.

5.5 Maintaining contact during periods of absence from the University

If one of your supervisors plans to be away from the University

Your supervisor will let you know in advance about any planned period of absence. Your other supervisor

may be able to take over supervision completely. If necessary, your Head of School will arrange a temporary replacement supervisor, and will let you know who this is.

If your supervisor is unexpectedly absent

Your other supervisor may be able to take over supervision completely. The Head of School will arrange for a temporary replacement supervisor if it is likely that the absence will be long enough to make this necessary.

If you want to work away from the University

You must obtain your supervisors' agreement and relevant University endorsement before you can spend time working away from the University (eg on fieldwork). You must maintain effective contact with your supervisors – by telephone, e-mail, fax or visits – while you are working away, even if an external supervisor is appointed for you.

If you are unexpectedly absent

You must report any unintended absence or sick leave to your supervisors as soon as possible. This is particularly important if you are in receipt of a studentship, as you must comply with your funding body's rules about absence, including absence due to sickness.

If one of your supervisors leaves the University during the period of your research, the University is responsible for finding a suitable replacement supervisor for you.

5.6 Facilities

Your supervisors should tell you at the start of your research about the facilities that are available to you. These should normally include the

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following, which represents the minimum standard of provision:

- For full-time students, a desk in a shared room
- Access to computing facilities suitable for the research
- Use of a telephone for research purposes
- Library access
- Laboratory space as applicable

You should note that, if you transfer from full-time to thesis-only registration (see section 8.2 below), your School is unlikely to be able to continue providing you with the same level of facilities.

B6. Paid employment

6.1 Teaching and demonstrating

You should ask your supervisors about any opportunities which exist for teaching and demonstrating. You will be required to undergo training before beginning such work.

While the University considers teaching and demonstrating to be important for research students' career development, it expects their research to take priority. Your school will therefore only allow you to undertake a limited amount of teaching and demonstrating.

6.2 Relationship between research and paid employment

If you are a full-time student, you must not take on any paid employment, including employment outside the University, which is likely to interfere with the progress of your research. You must inform your supervisors about the extent of your employment commitments, including teaching and demonstrating commitments (see above). You should discuss any problems (eg difficulty in meeting research deadlines) related to your employment commitments with

your supervisor at the earliest opportunity.

6.3 Part-time students in employment

If you are a part-time student and in employment, it is particularly important for you to let your supervisors know about work pressures. You may wish to consider the option of temporarily withdrawing from research (see section 7.3 below) if you are going through an unusually busy time in work – taking up a new job or working on an important project, for example.

B7. Dealing with difficulties

7.1 Delays in your progress

If you run into difficulties which cause you to fall behind in your research, it is essential that you take action as quickly as possible before too much damage is done. The first thing you should do is to speak to one of your supervisors, who may be able to suggest a solution. For example, if you are being hindered by equipment failure or by difficulty in getting access to source material, it may be possible to make other arrangements to let you get on with your work. If your supervisor cannot help, he or she should advise you as to what you should do next, or you can approach your Head of School or the school's head of postgraduate studies, if applicable.

You should keep a written record that you have spoken to your supervisor about the problem, as this will be important if you need to apply for an extension of time at a later stage or if you need to make an appeal or complaint. You should also refer to it in your progress report form.

7.2 Difficulties with your supervisor

If you and your supervisor(s) cannot establish an effective working relationship, it is important that you

take action as quickly as possible, before too much damage is done to your research. You should, if possible, talk to the supervisor concerned about the problem in the first instance. If you feel unable to talk to your supervisor or if talking to your supervisor does not resolve matters, you should talk to your other supervisor. If this is not possible or does not resolve matters, you should contact your Head of School (or school postgraduate tutor), who will investigate. It is in everyone's interests for such problems to be sorted out within the school and as informally as possible. If this does not prove possible, and you are still unhappy with your supervision, you should write to the Head of the Postgraduate Office and ask for the matter to be investigated. A new supervisor may be appointed if necessary. You may appeal to a central Postgraduate Appeals Committee, in exceptional cases (see section 10 below).



7.3 Temporary withdrawal from your research

If a fairly short-term problem is affecting your research (ill-health, for example, or a very busy period at work), it may be advisable for you to withdraw temporarily until the problem has been resolved. This is better than struggling on, missing deadlines and eventually failing to complete on time. The period of temporary withdrawal will be deducted from the time allowed for completion of your thesis, and you will not be liable for fees once you have been given permission to withdraw temporarily. You should discuss the situation with your principal supervisor, who will ask the relevant University authority for permission for you to withdraw temporarily, if he or she agrees that temporary withdrawal is the best option. You must tell your supervisor if you are in receipt of an award from a funding body, as its approval will also be needed for you to suspend. Your supervisor will seek this approval on your behalf. You will not be paid any studentship during the period of temporary withdrawal.

Your temporary withdrawal will be for a fixed period of time. It is essential that you make contact with your supervisor before the end of this period, either to make arrangements for you to return to your studies or to seek a further temporary withdrawal. While any request for a further temporary withdrawal will be considered sympathetically, you must make the request rather than assuming that your temporary withdrawal will automatically be extended if you do not return to work. If you are in receipt of a studentship, it is particularly important that you keep the University, through your supervisors, informed about your intentions.



A student who does not re-register at the appropriate time and who does not seek permission to withdraw temporarily shall be deemed to have withdrawn from the University. A student who is dissatisfied with such a ruling can appeal to the Postgraduate Appeals Committee (see section 10 below).

7.4 Research Misconduct

The University expects all researchers, including research students, to maintain good scholarly standards. Research misconduct is a disciplinary offence, and will be treated very seriously. If you are found to have committed any form of research misconduct, it is likely that you will be required to withdraw from the University or – if you have already submitted your thesis – that you will not be awarded a degree.

The University defines research misconduct as behaviour, intentional or not, that falls short of good scholarly standards. Examples of behaviour that constitutes research

misconduct include plagiarism (defined as the presentation of the work of others as the writer's own without appropriate acknowledgement), fraud, breach of confidentiality and negligence.

Referencing conventions may differ between disciplines. Your supervisors will advise you on the conventions applying in your subject, and it is your responsibility to ensure that you comply with them. If you have any doubts at any time in the course of your research about how you should handle material, you should seek your supervisors' advice.

You should also ensure you are familiar with the University's Code of Good Conduct in Research in Section C of this Handbook.

B8. Submission of the thesis

8.1 Deadlines for submission

The University's regulations set limits on the length of time students should take to complete a degree, and it is very important that you meet these deadlines. The expected

Section B

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deadlines for completing and submitting a thesis are as follows:-

	Full-time	Part-time
PhD	end of 3rd year	end of 6th year ¹
MPhil	end of 2nd year	end of 4th year

If you do not submit within these time limits, you will have to apply through your supervisor for an extension of time, and you will have to pay fees for the extra period. Any extension granted will be for up to one year beyond the time limits set out above. Subsequent requests for a second extension of time will be scrutinised very carefully, and will only be granted if there is evidence that you are taking positive steps to complete your thesis.

8.2 Thesis-only enrolment

If you have been enrolled for the equivalent of three full-time years and have completed your research you may (with permission) enrol for up to one year as a "thesis-only" student in order to write up your work. You will be expected to remain in contact with your supervisors during this writing-up period, but you will not be allowed to use University facilities such as laboratories. Because of space constraints within the University, you may lose your entitlement to an office or desk once you go thesis-only. If the thesis has not been submitted by the end of the thesis-only year, you will have to revert to either full-time or part-time registration and pay the appropriate fees. You may require an extension of time for your thesis-only year, depending on the length of time for which you have been enrolled.

8.3 Deciding when to submit

You and your supervisors should decide together when the thesis is ready for submission, although the final decision rests with you. Please note that agreement from your supervisors that the thesis is

ready to be submitted does not guarantee a successful outcome of the examination.

8.4 Notice of intention to submit

Before you can submit your thesis, you must provide notification in writing to the relevant University authority of your intention to submit. Your letter must specify the title of the thesis (which cannot then be changed) and the date by which you intend to submit it.

The deadlines for giving notice and for submitting a thesis are as follows:-

Graduation	Notice	Submission of thesis
July	1 February	1 May
December	1 May	15 September

If you submit on time, the University will make every effort to ensure that the examination process is complete in time for you to graduate in that session (assuming you are successful), although this cannot always be guaranteed as it depends on the availability of external examiners. Missing the deadline for submission - even by only a few days - makes it much less likely that the examination process will be complete in time to allow you to graduate in that session.

8.5 How to submit your thesis

You must hand your thesis in to the Student Records and Examinations Office in the Student Guidance Centre, and complete the necessary forms. You must supply a copy of the thesis for each examiner (there are normally two; your supervisor will inform you in advance if more copies are needed) and you should keep a copy for yourself. There are rules governing the layout and format of a thesis and these may be accessed through the Student Records and Examinations Office website at www.qub.ac.uk/sgc.

8.6 Failure to submit after giving notice of intention to submit

If you do not submit your thesis by the notified date, you must agree a new date with your supervisors who will seek the appropriate University endorsement, following the same procedures as before (see section 8.4 above). If the new date is not within the permitted period of registration, you will have to apply for an extension of time (see section 8.1 above).

B9. The examination process

9.1 The examiners

Examiners will be appointed for your thesis in consultation with your supervisors and your Head of School. There are normally two examiners: an internal examiner - who will be someone from your school, but not one of your supervisors - and an external examiner. The external examiner will be a senior academic from another university or someone of equivalent



¹ If you are a part-time research student who is employed by the University as a contract research assistant, you can submit after three years provided you have the support of your supervisor and the School Postgraduate Research Committee.

status from, for example, industry or one of the professions. Your supervisors will tell you who the examiners are.

9.2 The independent Chair

An independent Director of Research will be appointed to act as an independent Chair of the oral examination. The independent Chair will take no active role in the process and will be in attendance only for the purpose of monitoring the conduct of the examination. This is intended to safeguard the fairness and consistency of the examination process, and to provide assurance that the viva is conducted in an appropriate manner.

9.3 The examination

The examination will be in two parts. First, the examiners will read your thesis and will - without consulting each other - prepare individual reports, based on their reading. You will then be required to attend an oral examination, when the examiners will question you about your research and the thesis. The oral will take place in the University and will normally last between one and two hours. One of your supervisors may attend the oral but cannot take part in the examination. You and your supervisors should discuss in advance which of them will attend. You have the right to ask for your supervisor not to be present at the oral, and you should arrange this in advance through your Head of School or school postgraduate tutor.

9.4 The result

At the end of the oral examination, you and your supervisor will be asked to withdraw while the examiners reach their decision. The Student Administrative Services and Systems Division will notify you in writing of the outcome of the examination, and will send you a

copy of the examiners' reports on your thesis.

The possible outcomes are as follows:

- (i) award of the degree for which the thesis was submitted;
- (ii) award of the degree subject to minor amendments;
- (iii) permission to revise and re-submit the thesis for re-examination;
- (iv) award of a Master's degree in lieu of a PhD;
- (v) award of a Master's degree in lieu of a PhD subject to minor amendments;
- (vi) requirement that a thesis submitted for the degree of PhD be revised and re-submitted for consideration for a Master's degree;
- (vii) no award.

You can appeal against outcomes (iv) to (vii) above.

B10. Appeals

Research students can appeal against specified outcomes of an examination (see section 9.4 above) or against the decision of a School.

If you need to appeal, you should contact the Postgraduate Office and/or the Vice-President (Education) of the Students' Union as soon as possible for advice on how to proceed. You must act quickly, as the deadline for submitting appeals is 10 days from the date that you were informed of the decision against which you want to appeal. A late appeal will not be considered. The appeals procedure is set out in full in the core regulations for the degrees of PhD and MPhil (www.qub.ac.uk/postgraduate), and you should read this carefully before proceeding.

Your appeal must be in writing, and must state clearly the grounds on which you are appealing. You should note that challenges to



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academic judgement will not be considered. It is in your own interests to be as full and frank as possible in your letter of appeal. Please be aware that your letter of appeal will be released to the members of a central Postgraduate Appeals Committee, the Head of your School, your supervisors and, if applicable, your examiners.

You will be invited to appear in person before a central Postgraduate Appeals Committee when it meets to consider your appeal, and you are strongly advised to avail of this opportunity. You may, if you wish, be accompanied at the meeting by a registered student of the University, a sabbatical officer of the Students' Union, a member of University staff or a University chaplain. The Committee has the right to reach a decision in your absence if you choose not to attend the meeting. You will be informed of the outcome of your appeal, in writing, within five working days of the Committee's decision.

B11. Key points for part-time postgraduate research students

11.1 Introduction

Queen's strives to ensure that all postgraduate research students, regardless of their mode of study, receive the support and environment they need to complete their research degrees successfully and in good time. Therefore, the majority of the standards and procedures set out in this Handbook make no distinction between full-time and part-time students. However, in recognition of the fact that part-time postgraduates do have specific needs and concerns, this section summarises key points for them.

11.2 Registration

Registration requirements, including making arrangements to pay fees (or providing evidence of sponsorship) are the same as for full-time students.

11.3 Training

The training courses included in this manual are open to all students. As courses are scheduled during office hours, Monday to Friday, some part-time students may find it difficult to attend. Consequently, there is no specification at this

stage, concerning the number of training days which part-time students are expected to undertake during their research. However, some Schools may require their part-time students to undertake a specific number of training days, and you are advised to check this out with your School. The development of suitable part-time training provision will be a priority for this coming year and a working group will be set up to discuss training requirements.

11.4 Progress Monitoring

The requirements in respect of the Progress Monitoring Exercise and re-registration are exactly the same as for full-time students.

11.5 Meeting with your supervisors

Part-time students are required to meet with their supervisors at least once a semester. You are jointly responsible with your supervisors for ensuring that this happens.

11.6 Paid employment

If you are a part-time student and in employment, it is particularly important for you to let your supervisors know about work pressures. You may wish to consider the option of temporarily withdrawing from research (see section 7.3 above) if you are going through an unusually busy time in work – taking up a new job or working on an important project, for example.

11.7 Submission of thesis

The expected deadlines for completing and submitting a thesis for part-time student are for a PhD at the end of the 6th year and for an MPhil at the end of the 4th year. If you are a part-time research student who is employed by the University as a contract research assistant, you can submit after three years provided you have the support of your supervisor and the University.



Section C

Relevant information and key documents

C1. Introduction

This section outlines your general responsibilities as a research student and the University's responsibilities towards its research students, along with a range of related information including the University's Code of Good Conduct in Research and its Policy Statement on provision of research for research students. You should ensure that you are familiar with the content of this section.

C2. Your responsibilities as a research student

The general responsibilities common to all research students include the following:

- (a) complying with the postgraduate regulations (www.qub.ac.uk/postgraduate) and with any additional school procedures;
- (b) complying with other relevant University regulations, including the disciplinary regulations (<http://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/media/Media,131094,en.pdf>);
- (c) agreeing a research plan and written supervisory schedule with your supervisors at the outset of the research, and attending courses and performing research work as specified in the research plan;
- (d) submitting your thesis within the time limits set out in the regulations. If you are a PhD student, the University expects you to submit at the end of three years full-time or six years part-time. If you are registered for an MPhil, the deadlines for submission are at the end of two years full-time or four years part-time registration;
- (e) meeting the various general deadlines set out in the postgraduate regulations, and any specific deadlines set by your supervisors;
- (f) complying with the University's requirements on differentiation (refer to section B4.2 of this Handbook), including submitting written work by the deadline set for you;
- (g) discussing with your supervisors the type of advice and guidance that you find most helpful;
- (h) agreeing a written schedule of meetings with your supervisors and keeping to it;
- (i) maintaining a written record of key meetings and communications with supervisors;
- (j) keeping in regular contact with your supervisors and keeping them informed of the development of your research;
- (k) taking the initiative in raising problems or difficulties, however elementary they may seem. It is in your own interests to do this as soon as possible, so that problems can be resolved before they start to affect your research. In particular, if you have an urgent problem you should not wait for the next planned meeting to discuss it with your supervisors;
- (l) complying with the University's training requirements, the training requirements of your funding body (if applicable), and with any training requirements in place in your School;
- (m) submitting written work as required by your supervisors, in good time to allow for comments and discussion before proceeding to the next stage;
- (n) keeping your supervisors informed about the extent of any paid employment commitments you may have and about their impact (if any) on your research;
- (o) completing a progress monitoring form each year;
- (p) complying with the health and safety legislation, with University and school safety regulations, and with any safety rules applying in any location



Relevant information and key documents

where you are undertaking research;

- (q) complying with the Data Protection Act (1998) (refer to web link in section C8 of this Handbook); and
- (r) complying with the requirements of the University's Code of Good Conduct in Research (refer to Section C4 of this Handbook), and with the research ethics applying in your discipline.

C3. The University's responsibilities towards its research students

The University undertakes to ensure the following:-

- (a) that only candidates who meet the necessary high academic standards and who appear capable of completing the requirements for the degree are admitted
- (b) that suitable supervisors are available
- (c) that the necessary resources and facilities are available, and that the school can cover the costs associated with the project. In admitting a student, a school undertakes to provide the necessary supervision and resources, and will be held responsible for doing so
- (d) that the proposed topic is suitable as the basis of a research degree and that it is capable of being completed within the time limits for the degree submission
- (e) that students have the appropriate funding in place to complete their research degree
- (f) that supervisors with appropriate knowledge of the student's field of study will be appointed
- (g) that the supervisors meet the criteria for eligibility to supervise as set out in the regulations for the degree
- (h) that the school will appoint a replacement supervisor if one of the original supervisors leaves the University or is unable to continue with the supervision
- (i) that all research students receive a copy of the University's Postgraduate Research Student Handbook
- (j) that research students are provided with information about the resources and facilities available to them
- (k) that research students are provided with adequate facilities, normally including:
 - For full-time students, a desk in a shared room
 - Access to computing facilities suitable for the research
 - Use of a telephone for research purposes
 - Library access
 - Laboratory space as applicable;
- (l) that students comply with the University's training requirements, the training requirements of their funding body and any compulsory or recommended training requirements in their School
- (m) that students have the opportunity to attend an induction programme as early as possible in the first year
- (n) that supervisors comply with the requirements set out in the regulations and the University's Postgraduate Research Student Handbook, in particular, that they:
 - Explain at the outset the kind of guidance and support to be provided

- Help the student draw up a research plan, and monitor progress in relation to the plan
- Tell the student about the various University deadlines and procedures that must be complied with
- Meet the student a minimum of 6 times per academic year (for full-time students)
- Agree a written schedule of meetings with the student and keep to it
- Maintain a written record of key meetings with the student
- Give the student regular feedback on progress, including constructive criticism on written work
- Raise any concerns about progress with the student at an early stage and – if the problem continues – with the Head of School
- Ensure that the student goes through the school's differentiation procedure at the appropriate time if progressing satisfactorily.
- (o) that all research students are included in the University-wide Progress Monitoring Exercise
- (p) that schools – through supervisors – continually monitor students' progress on an informal basis, so that problems can be addressed at the earliest possible stage
- (q) that suitable examiners are appointed for every student
- (r) that an oral examination is held
- (s) that an Independent Chair of the oral examination is appointed in accordance with the regulations

- (t) that students are provided with feedback after the examination; and
- (u) that appeals and complaints are dealt with under the appropriate procedure, and that they are dealt with fairly and as quickly as possible.

C4. Code of good conduct in research (revised October 2003)

1. Introduction

- 1.1 A central mission of the University is to promote excellence in the practice of research. In doing so it has a responsibility to ensure that all research carried out under its auspices is conducted to the highest standard achievable, in accordance with the law and public interest. This means that all of the University community involved in the research process should exhibit impeccable integrity and follow the principles of good research practice.
- 1.2 The University expects these standards to be adhered to by all staff and research students working within or on behalf of the University, whether they are employees of the University or not.
- 1.3 The University also expects these standards to be maintained by all individuals engaged on University business, in particular in the setting of scientific priorities and in the assessment of research.
- 1.4 This document addresses the issues involved in the proper conduct of research, and provides guidance on the standards expected. This cannot, however, be an exhaustive document and

the Code of Good Conduct in Research is to be viewed as the minimum standard with which University staff and research students should comply. The lack of mention in this code of a particular act or omission should not be taken as conclusive on any question of professional conduct, should an enquiry arise.

- 1.5 The Code of Good Conduct in Research sets out general guidance, which may not always be directly applicable in certain instances to particular disciplines. The University expects all staff and research students to work within the spirit of the Code. If they have any doubt concerning the applicability of a particular section of the Code they should consult with their Dean or with the Research Policy section of Research and Regional Services.
- 1.6 The Code of Good Conduct in Research should also be read in conjunction with other documents, especially the Regulations Governing Investigation into Allegations of Research Misconduct. For some areas the general principles are addressed here, but researchers should be familiar with any additional documents, such as those on Data Protection, which cover specific aspects of this code in more detail.
- 1.7 The Code of Conduct in Research applies to:
 - i. researchers (including academic staff, research assistants, research fellows and academic related staff) and



- other staff involved in the research process (including technical, clerical, academic related and administrative staff) employed by the University, whether involved in the research process within the University, or whilst at another institution;
- ii. postgraduate students and their supervisors;
- iii. any persons with honorary positions involved in research within, or on behalf of, the University;
- iv. collaborators from other institutions, government bodies, industry, whether working within the University or not.

Relevant information and key documents

- The term researcher has been used for convenience throughout this Code of Conduct and can be taken to refer to any or all of the above categories, as is appropriate.
- 1.8 The University requires external collaborators, when working on joint research projects where a member of the University is the Principal Investigator, to either agree to be bound by this Code of Conduct, by signature of a form of agreement, or to be bound by their own Institution's Code of Conduct, which should be similar in all major respects to this Code of Conduct.
- 1.9 The Code of Good Conduct in Research may be supplemented or updated from time to time by additional guidance notes on specific areas.
- 1.10 Failure to comply with the Code of Good Conduct in Research may result in disciplinary action (see item 23) and, if serious, dismissal or expulsion.
2. **Principles of good research practice**
- 2.1 The University cannot be prescriptive about individual approaches taken by researchers to solving particular research problems. However, in the conduct of all research, the University expects the following general principles to be understood and observed where appropriate.
- 2.2 Good research practice includes the following aspects:
- maintaining open, honest and fair standards, including
- ready questioning of the researcher's own findings and proper attribution of the contribution made by others;
- leadership, organization and co-operation in research, including appropriate supervision and mentoring of young researchers;
 - appropriate recording (including the storage of data) and reporting of research, allowing ready verification of the quality and integrity of the research data;
 - appropriate dissemination, application and exploitation of the fruits of research;
 - compliance with relevant regulations or policies, whether legal, institutional or other, which govern particular aspects of research;
 - participation only in work which conforms to accepted ethical standards and which ensures the safety of all those associated with the research;
 - participation only in work which the researcher is competent to perform;
 - avoidance of real or apparent conflicts of interest;
 - strict maintenance of the confidentiality of all those involved.
3. **Leadership and cooperation**
- 3.1 It is the responsibility of the Vice Chancellor, Pro-Vice Chancellors, Deans and other Senior Managers, both academic and academic support, to ensure that an environment is created which allows research to be conducted in accordance with good research practice.
- 3.2 These individuals are responsible for establishing a research climate of mutual cooperation, in which researchers at all levels are encouraged to develop their skills and in which the open exchange of ideas is fostered.
- 3.3 A research community should be promoted and encouraged in which discrimination based on gender, race, age, disability, sexual orientation, religious affiliation, political or scientific viewpoint, ethnic or national origin does not occur.
- 3.4 Research misconduct is least likely to arise in an environment where good research practice (e.g. documentation of results, peer review of research, regular discussion and seminars) prevails and where there is adequate supervision at all relevant levels. It is a responsibility of Heads of Schools, Institutes, Research Units, and Supervisors of researchers to promote, develop, encourage and implement the standards and protocols for research advanced in the University's Code of Good Conduct in Research amongst their staff and students, and to ensure that adherence to those standards is a matter of course.

4. Supervision and mentoring

- 4.1 It is the responsibility of established researchers, to nurture the appropriate intellectual, technical, ethical and career development of new staff, students and supervisees.
- 4.2 Supervisors are responsible for the overall progress of their students, and should follow good supervisory practice as laid out in the University's Guidelines for Supervisors. They should also be familiar with the University's PhD and MPhil regulations, as set out in Calendar Book 3: Higher Degree Regulations and Information, and also with applicable sections of the University Calendar: General Regulations.
- 4.3 Researchers who are new to the research community may face particular difficulties. Responsibility for ensuring that students and other new researchers understand good research practice lies with all members of the community, but particularly with Heads of Schools, team leaders, grant holders and supervisors. Good practice should include mentoring young researchers in their new environment.
- 4.4 All researchers should receive appropriate training, for example in research design, regulatory and ethics approvals and consents, equipment use, confidentiality, data management, record keeping, and data protection.

5. Integrity

- 5.1 Researchers should be honest in respect of their own actions in research and in their responses to the actions of other researchers. This applies to the whole range of research work, including experimental design, generating and analysing data, applying for funding, publishing results, and acknowledging the direct and indirect contribution of colleagues, collaborators and others
 - 5.2 All individuals in the University's employment, or working within the University, must refrain from plagiarism, piracy, the fabrication of results or other forms of research misconduct.
- #### 6. Openness
- 6.1 While recognizing the need for researchers to protect their own research interests in the process of planning their research and obtaining

their results, the University encourages researchers to be as open as possible in discussing their work with other researchers and with the public.

- 6.2 Once results have been published, where appropriate, the University expects researchers to make available relevant data and materials to others, on request. This is, of course, provided that this is consistent with any ethics approvals and consents which cover the data and materials and any intellectual property rights in them.

7. Understanding laws, regulations and policies

- 7.1 Researchers are expected to be aware of and to observe the standards of research practice as published by the University, scientific and learned societies and other relevant professional bodies.



Relevant information and key documents

- 7.2 Researchers are expected to be aware of and stay informed of governmental, institutional and any other regulations, standards or policies in proposing, conducting and reporting research. This includes regional (Northern Ireland), national (United Kingdom) and international (e.g. European Union) legislation.
- 7.3 In the case of any discrepancies arising where policies, regulations or contractual terms and conditions are unclear or appear to contradict one another, researchers should take active steps to resolve this.
8. **Commitment to competency**
 - 8.1 Researchers are responsible for actively maintaining professional competency and remaining knowledgeable within their areas of expertise. To this end researchers should conduct their work within the scope of their own training and knowledge base.
 - 8.2 Researchers should not claim any level of competence that they do not possess, and should take all reasonable steps to ensure that their qualifications, capabilities or views are not misrepresented by others. If this should occur they should take necessary steps to correct any such misrepresentation.
 - 8.3 Researchers should also ensure that all persons who assist in the conduct of their research are adequately trained and perform their responsibilities competently.
9. **Critical and impartial approach to results**

Researchers should always be prepared to question the outcome of their research. While acknowledging the pressures - of time and resources - under which researchers often have to work, the University expects research results to be checked before being made public. It is important that ideas can be challenged and tested without loss of face. Equally, it is important that researchers or research groups should not become subject to such commercial pressures that the normal processes of academic inquiry cannot be enforced, e.g. by constraints imposed by the source of funding of the research.
10. **Documenting results and storing primary data**
 - 10.1 Confidentiality of personal data relating to research participants, including data associated with tissue and biological samples, is essential and it is of paramount concern that this is protected. All personal information must therefore be encoded or made anonymous as far as is possible, and as early as possible after collection; ciphers should be held separately. Confidentiality is dealt with further below (see item 20).
 - 10.2 The researcher should clarify at the outset of the research programme any issues regarding the ownership of the data and samples used or created in the course of the research and also the results of the research. Any issues regarding ownership of these should be resolved before the research commences.
- 10.3 Throughout their work, researchers are required to keep clear and accurate records of the research procedures followed and of the results obtained, including interim results. This is necessary not only as a means of demonstrating proper research practice, but also in case questions are subsequently asked about either the conduct of the research or the results obtained. It also is important in the process of protecting intellectual property rights.
- 10.4 Laboratory notebooks should be kept, where appropriate, and each key document and any changes should be signed and dated. Standard University laboratory notebooks should be used for this purpose, and the detailed guidance they contain on record keeping should be followed.
- 10.5 Data generated in the course of research must be kept securely in paper or electronic form, as appropriate, and back-up records should always be kept for data stored on a computer. Data should be stored in such a way that permits a complete retrospective audit, if necessary, and records should be monitored regularly to ensure their completeness and accuracy.
- 10.6 The University expects such data to be securely held for a minimum period of five years after the completion of a research project, in line with general audit requirements. There may, however, be specific requirements by the body

funding the research to retain data for a longer period, for example several Research Councils require data to be retained for 10 years, or even longer for research based on clinical samples or relating to public health. It is the responsibility of the principal investigator to ensure that data retention meets with the requirements of the funding body in such cases.

- 10.7 If the researcher leaves the University, for whatever reason, before the required period of data retention expires, they have a responsibility to ensure that the data is securely held, either by themselves, or by the University if this is not possible.

11. Intellectual Property Rights and Ownership

- 11.1 Intellectual property rights (IPR) include patents, registered designs, copyright, design rights and know-how. Creative work, including research and development, can lead to intellectual property rights and some of these can be protected under one or more headings.
- 11.2 In patent law, the IPR created during an employee's normal or specifically assigned activities belongs to the employer. This means that most of the IPR arising from the activities of University teaching and research staff belongs to the University.
- 11.3 Where work is being carried out under contract from

an outside organization, specific provisions about IPR may apply. For instance, the University may be requested to assign its rights to the sponsor, usually in exchange for some benefit.

12. Conduct of reviewers/referees

- 12.1 Peer review requires that the reviewer/referee be expert in the subject under review, but if a researcher considers themselves to be insufficiently expert in the area on which they have been asked to comment, they must make this clear, and would normally be expected to return the material unread.
- 12.2 A researcher asked to serve as a reviewer/referee should declare any possible conflict of interest, whether real or perceived, such as competitive, collaborative or other close relationship with one or more of the authors under review, or a close professional or commercial interest in the work. If there is any real or perceived conflict of interest, the researcher should normally not participate further in the review process, and should return the material unread.
- 12.3 All information made available to reviewers/referees must be treated in the strictest confidence, and they must not take advantage of any information obtained as a result of their role, e.g. either using ideas or material contained therein or presenting the information as their own. In particular they must not pirate unfunded grant applications

or unpublished manuscripts (the latter including use of knowledge of a work before its publication, unless granted permission by the author(s), to further their own interests).

13. Conflict of Interest

It is the responsibility of researchers to identify and declare any conflicts of interest, whether legal, ethical, moral, financial, personal or other nature, so that it does not become a complicating or actionable issue.

14. Publishing results

- 14.1 Research results of suitable quality should be published in an appropriate form, such as papers in refereed journals, authored books, etc. This has long been widely accepted as the best system for research results to be reviewed - through the refereeing process - and made available to the research community for verification or replication.



Relevant information and key documents

- 14.2 Researchers should make all reasonable attempts to present their research to the academic community through papers, books, presentations or other suitable media, and where appropriate to the public. Where a study has involved research participants, they should normally be informed of the outcome of the study.
- 14.3 The person with overall responsibility for the research programme should authorize publication of results: authorization should cover both the content of the publication (integrity of results, adequacy of internal peer review, appropriate protection of intellectual property rights, appropriate authorship) and the intended place of publication.
- 14.4 When publishing, researchers should not misrepresent their work by omitting information that changes the meaning or significance of their findings.
- 14.5 Work should normally be published as a coherent entity rather than being artificially divided into a number of smaller parts. This does not necessarily preclude preliminary publication where appropriate, such as in Letter format, or presentation at conferences, but caution should be exercised that redundant or duplicate publication does not result.
- 14.6 Redundant or duplicate publication, which is a publication that overlaps substantially with one already published elsewhere (in print or electronic media), is not good practice and should be avoided. There may be exceptions to this, such as a publication of a complete report that follows the publication of a preliminary report, or a paper presented at a meeting but not published in full or that is being considered for publication in a proceedings or similar format. When submitting a manuscript, the author should always make a full statement to the editor about all submissions and previous reports that might be regarded as redundant or duplicate publication of the same or very similar work. The author should alert the editor if the work includes subjects about which a previous report has been published. Any such work should be referred to and referenced in the new paper. Copies of such material should be included with the submitted paper to help the editor decide how to handle the matter.
- 14.7 Researchers are, however, encouraged to communicate their results to as wide an audience as possible. In this context secondary publication may be justified and can be beneficial. For example, publication in another language or publication of a more accessible and widely disseminated report, might be appropriate. In this situation approval should be received from the editors of the publication outlets involved and the editor concerned with secondary publication must have a photocopy, reprint, or manuscript of the primary version.
- 14.8 As a general principle research findings should not be reported in the public media before they have been reported to a research audience of experts in the field of research - preferably by publication in a peer-reviewed journal or in an authored book, published by a reputable publisher, except where there is an alternative contractual arrangement.
- 14.9 More detailed guidance on the issues of redundant or secondary publication is usually available in the guidance to authors provided by academic journals or, for instance, in the 'Vancouver Guidelines' (ICMJE 1997) or by the Committee of Publication Ethics.
- 14.10 In the context of communicating academic information it is always good practice to use as clear and accurate language as possible, without recourse to unnecessary jargon. This is essential when communicating information to a lay audience.
- 14.11 The University supports the freedom to publish research findings. There may, however, be occasions when a legitimate request for deferral of publication is made. An example of this would be when collaborating with an

industrial partner, who may wish publication to be deferred until adequate protection of any intellectual property has been arranged. The University would expect the period of deferral requested to be no longer than six months in most circumstances.

14.12 There may, however, be occasions when an external funder of research exerts pressure in an attempt to suppress results, for example to conceal results they perceive to be detrimental to their interests. In this situation the University will take whatever action it deems necessary to counter any attempt at suppression.

14.13 When negotiating contracts with external funders the right to publish the results of the study should be protected. It is the responsibility of Research and Regional Services, on behalf of the University, and not that of the individual researcher to ensure this has been adequately done.

14.14 The University itself places importance on appropriate protection of Intellectual Property (see item 11), and researchers should refrain from any form of publication or disclosure until it is clear that any necessary protection has been secured.

15. Accuracy of information

Researchers must ensure that all publication and presentation of material arising from research is correct and accurate. If it subsequently becomes clear that this is not the case, the researcher must take appropriate steps to correct the information, and if necessary

make a retraction, in all outlets the information has appeared in. Where appropriate funding or external agencies should also be informed.

16. Authorship

16.1 The issue of authorship is important in the context of good research practice. Although exact proscription of rules for authorship are difficult the University supports the general approach adopted by academic journals, for example by Nature or in the 'Vancouver Guidelines'. In line with this general guidance, the University expects anyone listed as an author should have made a significant contribution to the work, to accept personal responsibility for ensuring that they are familiar with its content, and that they can identify their contributions to it. The practice of honorary authorship is unacceptable.

16.2 It is good practice to discuss authorship at the start of projects rather than on submission of the research to a journal or conference and that authorship of papers etc. should include all individuals who have made a significant contribution to the work.

17. Acknowledging the role of collaborators and other participants

In all aspects of research, the contributions of formal collaborators and all others who directly assist or indirectly support the research must be properly acknowledged, including the source of funding where appropriate. This applies to any circumstances in which statements about the research



are made, including provision of information about the nature and process of the research, and in publishing the outcome. Failure to acknowledge the contributions of others is regarded as unprofessional conduct. Conversely, collaborators and other contributors carry their share of the responsibility for the research and its outcome.

18. Health and safety

Research should be conducted to the highest possible health and safety standards, both for the research participants, collaborators, and the general public. Research must adhere to current safety practices and legal requirements, and all researchers must be familiar with relevant University regulations, such as contained in the Staff Handbook and the University Calendar: General Regulations.

Relevant information and key documents

19. Ethical practice

19.1 Research involving human participants

19.1.1 Approval from an appropriate research ethics committee must be sought for research which involves human participants, material or data. Approval from other regulatory bodies should be sought when necessary.

19.1.2 Participants of research should give informed consent, normally in writing, to take part in the research, except where undertaking the research without consent is mandated by law or Governmental or institutional regulation or explicitly approved in the ethical application for the research. It is important that this consent be obtained using language that the individual understands. Whilst the form of consent may vary according to the circumstances, informed consent generally requires the participant to: i) have the capacity to consent; ii) have been provided with all information regarding the research that may affect their willingness to participate; iii) be aware that participation is voluntary and they may withdraw at any time; iv) understand that not participating or withdrawing will have no effect on their subsequent treatment; v) be asked to participate without undue pressure; and, vi) understand they may ask questions and receive answers regarding their participation.

19.1.3 In circumstances where the participant is legally

incapable of providing consent or is a minor, the researchers should: i) explain the research and the participants' role and requirements; ii) seek the participants' agreement; iii) ensure the person's best interests are served; and iv) obtain consent from the participants' legal guardian.

19.1.4 Deception should not be used unless integral to the research and is justified by a significant scientific or educational advance arising from the research. Alternatives to the use of deception should be considered and demonstrated to be ineffective. The use of deception to induce severe physical pain or emotional distress is not justified. Researchers should inform participants regarding their deception as soon as possible after their participation in the study and not later than at the conclusion of the data collection. Participants should be given the opportunity to withdraw their data.

19.1.5 Observational studies are sometimes conducted in naturalistic settings in which the 'participants' are unaware that an investigation is taking place. Unobtrusive observation raises significant ethical questions regarding informed consent and invasion of privacy. Before conducting unobtrusive observational studies it is essential to undertake an assessment of the extent to which human dignity may

be jeopardised and that threat must be weighed against the value of the study.

19.1.6 Participants should not be offered undue financial or other inducements, over and above their expenses, to participate in a study. In particular, payments should not be used to induce them to risk harm beyond that which they risk without payment in their normal lifestyle.

19.1.7 Research which requires ethical approval must, in no circumstances, commence without this approval having been obtained, nor deviate from the agreed procedure

19.2 Human Organs and Tissue: use of post mortem material

19.2.1 Following the Human Organs Inquiry, set up by the Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety in 2001, the University has established mandatory guidelines relating to the use of human organs and tissue obtained from post mortems. It should be noted that some of these are interim measures, pending changes in legislation and receipt of detailed guidelines and instructions from DHSSPS.

19.2.2 In general, research of whatever nature involving human organs, parts of organs, tissue, blocks and slides etc. (including body fluids, genetic material or other biological samples), whether obtained at post mortem or otherwise, must be approved by an appropriate Research Ethics Committee.

- 19.2.3 Until further notice, because of the level of uncertainty regarding consent, no material currently held within the University derived from post mortems may be used for research purposes, whether Research Ethics Committee approval has been obtained or not. This is expected to extend until November 2004, during which period families have the opportunity to reclaim retained post mortem material. This restriction also includes material which cannot be identified as relating to a specific individual. Material held under the jurisdiction of the Coroner or State Pathologist must not, under any circumstances, be used for research.
- 19.2.4 Any future research activities involving new materials from post mortems may only be

- carried out where there has been proper informed consent.
- 19.2.5 Any research involving materials derived from post mortems which may have been obtained from outside the UK must conform to the code of practice issued by the Chief Medical Officer for England and Wales. The code applies to all human bodies, body parts and other human tissue imported to, or exported from, the United Kingdom for research. It should also be noted that Research Ethics Committee approval must be obtained.
- 19.2.6 Full details must be provided to the University's Organ/Tissue Task Group, c/o Vice-Chancellor's Office, before the import/export of any human materials.
- 19.2.7 Where material is obtained from elsewhere in the UK, Research Ethics Committee approval is required in Northern Ireland for the proposed research and, in addition, the person supplying the material must also have approval from his/her local Research Ethics Committee.
- 19.2.8 Staff intending to undertake research involving materials derived from post mortems should consult the full guidelines, which may be obtained from the School or Faculty Office in relevant subject areas.
- 19.3 Research involving animals
- 19.3.1 Research involving animals should have approval through the appropriate Ethical Review Process, and the researcher involved should ensure appropriate

Personal and Project licences are in place. The use of animals in research should conform to current laws and regulations.

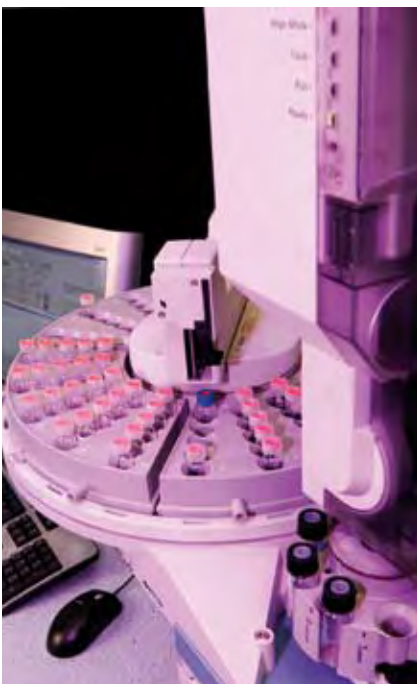
- 19.3.2 Researchers should consider, at an early stage in the design of any research involving animals, the opportunities for reduction, replacement and refinement of animal involvement.

20. Confidentiality

- 20.1 Researchers must ensure the confidentiality of personal information relating to the participants in research, and that the research fulfils any related legal requirements, such as those of the Data Protection Act 1998.
- 20.2 Intrusion into the privacy of research participants should be kept to a minimum, to that necessary to fulfil the purposes of the research. It is recognized, however, that it is likely to be less intrusive to obtain all necessary data on one visit or interview than to make repeat visits or interviews to collect further data. Every attempt, therefore, should be made to collect sufficiently comprehensive data in a single visit or interview, where possible.

21. Integrity in managing research projects

- 21.1 Researchers should take all reasonable measures to ensure compliance with sponsor, institutional, legal, ethical and moral obligations in managing projects.
- 21.2 Researchers are expected to familiarize themselves with the terms and conditions of any research contract



Relevant information and key documents

or agreement entered into by the University on their behalf.

- 21.3 Researchers should follow established University financial procedures, and should practice economy in the use of resources, for example not purchasing more reagents than are needed for the planned sample size.

- 21.4 The person with overall responsibility for a research programme should ensure that it runs within its allocated budget, and ensure that no penalties are incurred by failure to meet sponsor's requirements, for example submission of reports according to schedule.

- 21.5 In no case should any offer of bribery or inducement be accepted

22. Compliance with audit or other monitoring procedures

Researchers are expected to comply with any audit or monitoring procedures, whether external or internal, with which they may be asked to cooperate. Examples of such audit or monitoring may include examination of management of specific research projects, compliance with procedures, such as this Code of Conduct or with external sponsor requirements.

23. Research Misconduct

The University takes seriously any allegation of research misconduct. Any member of the University who believes that an act of research misconduct has occurred or is occurring should bring this to the notice of the University. Allegations of research misconduct may be reported to the University's Research Governance Officer (until further

notice, the Senior Policy Officer, Research & Regional Services), or to the appropriate Line Manager. Allegations made to a Line Manager should be reported immediately to the Research Governance Officer. All such allegations will be dealt with under the procedures detailed in the Regulations Governing Investigation into Allegations of Research Misconduct.

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C5. Policy statement on provision for research students

Note: The following represents the minimum standards which must be met. Schools are free to impose more rigorous criteria if they wish.

The University wishes to ensure that its research students receive appropriate support to enable them to complete their research successfully and on time. It undertakes to ensure the following:-



Admission

- a. that only candidates who meet the necessary high academic standards and who appear capable of completing the requirements for the degree are admitted
- b. that suitable supervisors are available (see below)
- c. that the necessary resources and facilities are available, and that the school can cover the costs associated with the project. In admitting a student, a school undertakes to provide the necessary supervision and resources, and will be held responsible for doing so
- d. that the proposed topic is suitable as the basis of a research degree and that it is capable of being completed within the time limits for the degree submission.
- e. that students have the appropriate funding to complete their research degree.

Appointment of Supervisor

- f. that at least one of the two supervisors has appropriate knowledge of the student's field of study

- g. that the supervisors meets the criteria for eligibility to supervise as set out in the regulations for the degree
- h. that the School will appoint a replacement supervisor if the original supervisor leaves the University or is unable to continue with the supervision.

Provision of information

- i. that all research students receive a copy of the University's Postgraduate Research Student Handbook when they enrol
- j. that research students are provided with information about the resources and facilities available to them (see below).

Facilities

- k. that research students are provided with adequate facilities, including:
 - for full-time students, a desk in a shared room
 - access to computing facilities suitable for the research
 - use of a telephone for research purposes

- library access
- laboratory space as applicable.

Training

- l. that students comply with the University's training requirements, the training requirements of their funding body, and any compulsory or recommended training requirements in their School.
- m. that students have the opportunity to attend an induction programme as early as possible in their first year.

Supervision

- n. that supervisors comply with the requirements set out in the regulations and Postgraduate Research Student Handbook, in particular, that they:-
 - explain at the outset the kind of guidance and support to be provided
 - help the student draw up a research plan, and monitor progress in relation to the plan
 - tell the student about the various University deadlines and procedures which must be complied with

Relevant information and key documents

- meet the student a minimum of 6 times per academic year (for full-time students)
- give the student regular recorded feedback on progress, including constructive criticism on written work
- raise any concerns about progress with the student at an early stage and in a constructive manner and – if the problem continues – with the Head of School
- ensure that the student goes through the school's differentiation procedure at the appropriate time if progressing satisfactorily.

Progress Monitoring

- o. that all research students are included in the University-wide annual Progress Monitoring Exercise
- p. that Schools – through supervisors – continually monitor students' progress on an informal basis, so that problems can be addressed at the earliest possible stage.

Examinations

- q. that suitable examiners are appointed for every thesis.
- r. that an oral examination is held.
- s. That an Independent Chair of the oral examination is appointed in accordance with the regulations.
- t. that students are provided with appropriate feedback after the examination.

Appeals and Complaints

- u. that appeals and complaints are dealt with under the appropriate procedure, and that they are dealt with fairly and as quickly as possible.

Note: the University is satisfied that the undertakings set out in the above Policy Statement meet in full the requirements of the QAA's Code of Practice for Postgraduate Research Programmes: Section One (2004).

C6. Skills training requirements for research students: joint statement by the research councils/AHRC

This document sets out a joint statement of the skills that doctoral research students would be expected to have or develop; these skills may be present on commencement, explicitly taught, or developed during the course of the research. It is expected that different mechanisms will be used to support learning as appropriate, including self-direction, supervisor support and mentoring, departmental support, workshops, conferences, elective training courses, formally assessed courses and informal opportunities.

A. Research Skills and Techniques – to be able to demonstrate:

1. the ability to recognise and validate problems
2. original, independent and critical thinking, and the ability to develop theoretical concepts
3. a knowledge of recent advances within one's field and in related areas
4. an understanding of relevant research methodologies and techniques and their appropriate application within one's research field
5. the ability to critically analyse and evaluate one's findings and those of others
6. an ability to summarise, document, report and reflect on progress

B. Research Environment – to be able to:

1. show a broad understanding of the context in which research takes place

2. demonstrate awareness of issues relating to the rights of other researchers, of research subjects, and of others who may be affected by the research, e.g. confidentiality, ethical issues, attribution, copyright, malpractice, ownership of data and the requirements of the Data Protection Act
3. understand relevant health and safety issues and demonstrate responsible working practices
4. understand the processes for funding and evaluation of research
5. justify one's own research to the funding bodies and contribute to promoting the public understanding of one's research field
6. understand the process of academic or commercial exploitation of research results

C. Research Management – to be able to:

1. apply effective project management through the setting of research goals, intermediate milestones and prioritisation of activities
2. design and execute systems for the acquisition and collation of information through the effective use of appropriate resources and equipment
3. identify and access appropriate bibliographical resources, archives, and other sources of relevant information
4. use information technology appropriately for database management, recording and presenting information

D. Personal Effectiveness –
to be able to:

1. demonstrate a willingness and ability to learn and acquire knowledge
2. be creative, innovative and original in one's approach to research
3. demonstrate flexibility and open-mindedness
4. demonstrate self-awareness and the ability to identify own training needs
5. demonstrate self-discipline, motivation, and thoroughness
6. recognise boundaries and draw upon/use sources of support as appropriate
7. show initiative, work independently and be self-reliant

E. Communication Skills –
to be able to:

1. write clearly and in a style appropriate to purpose, e.g. progress reports, published documents, thesis
2. construct coherent arguments and articulate ideas clearly to a range of audiences, formally and informally through a variety of techniques
3. constructively defend research outcomes at seminars and viva examination
4. effectively support the learning of others when involved in teaching, mentoring or demonstrating activities

F. Networking and Teamworking –
to be able to:

1. develop and maintain co-operative networks and working relationships with supervisors, colleagues and peers, within the institution and the wider research community

2. understand one's behaviours and impact on others when working in and contributing to the success of formal and informal teams
3. listen, give and receive feedback and respond perceptively to others

G. Career Management –
to be able to:

1. appreciate the need for and show commitment to continued professional development

2. take ownership for and manage one's career progression, set realistic and achievable career goals, and identify and develop ways to improve employability
3. demonstrate an insight into the transferable nature of research skills to other work environments and the range of career opportunities within and outside academia
4. present one's skills, personal attributes and experiences through effective CVs, applications and interviews



Relevant information and key documents

C7. Useful points of contact

There are a number of different sources of help and advice on various aspects of postgraduate study. Your first point of contact should normally be your supervisor, who should be able to answer many of your queries or to direct you to another source of help.

Other sources of advice include-

Nature of Query	Sources of Advice
Academic problems	Your supervisor
Accommodation	Student Accommodation Office (www.qub.ac.uk/sacc/)
Appeals	Postgraduate Office (www.qub.ac.uk/postgraduate) Vice-President (Education), Students' Union (www.qubsu.org/)
Differentiation	Your supervisor Your Head of School/school postgraduate tutor
Disability	Disability Services (www.qub.ac.uk/disability/)
Enrolment and registration	Postgraduate Office (www.qub.ac.uk/postgraduate)
Equipment and facilities	Your supervisor Your Head of School/school postgraduate tutor
Examination arrangements (eg date of oral, identity of your examiners)	Your supervisor
Financial difficulties	Student Financial Adviser, Students' Union (www.qubsu.org/) Student Support Fund, Finance Directorate (www.qub.ac.uk/bo/income)
Graduation	Student Records and Examinations Office (www.qub.ac.uk/sgc/srecords/)
Grants/Studentships	Postgraduate Office (www.qub.ac.uk/postgraduate)
International issues (visas etc)	Queen's International (http://www.qub.ac.uk/ilo/)
Layout and binding of your thesis	Student Records and Examinations Office (www.qub.ac.uk/sgc/srecords/)
Personal difficulties	Your supervisor School postgraduate tutor Students' Union – Vice-President (Education), Postgraduate Students' Officer or Vice-President (Welfare) (www.qubsu.org/) University Health Centre (www.qub.ac.uk/uhs) Student Counselling Service (www.qub.ac.uk/sgc) University chaplains (www.qub.ac.uk/chaplains)
Submitting your thesis	Student Records and Examinations Office (www.qub.ac.uk/sgc/srecords/)
Supervisory problems	Your supervisors Head of School/School representative on the University's Postgraduate Advisory Body Postgraduate Office (www.qub.ac.uk/postgraduate) Vice-President (Education), Students' Union (www.qubsu.org/)
Travel scholarships (eg for conferences)	Academic Affairs (www.qub.ac.uk/qap)
Tuition fees	Income Office (www.qub.ac.uk/bo/income) Student Records and Examinations Office (www.qub.ac.uk/sgc)

C8. Web address links to other relevant documents

Postgraduate Skills Training Programme (www.qub.ac.uk/postgraduate)

Student Charter (<http://www.qub.ac.uk/welcomeweek/publications/Student%20Charter.pdf>)

Conduct Regulations (Rules of Discipline) (<http://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/media/Media,131094,en.pdf>)

Data Protection Act (1998) (www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts1998/19980029.htm)

Equality and Diversity Policy

(<http://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/HumanResources/EqualOpportunitiesUnit/EqualityandDiversityPolicy/>)

Freedom of Information Act 2000 (www.qub.ac.uk/home/RegistrarsOffice/InformationComplianceUnit/FreedomofInformation)

Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Code of Practice Section 1: Postgraduate Research Programmes

(www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/codeOfPractice/section1/default.asp)

Queen's University Belfast

Campus Map

- 3 Administration Building
- 39 Admissions and Access Service
- 35 ASEP
- 31 Ashby Building
- 48 Belfast City Hospital Campus
- 36 Bernard Crossland Building
- 1 Canada Room
- 39 Careers, Employability and Skills
- 15 Centre for Byzantine Studies
- 36 Centre for Computer Based Learning
- 12 Centre for Drama and Film at Queen's
- 38 Centre for Educational Development
- 1 Council Chamber
- 39 Counselling Service
- 18 Crèches
- 20 Crèches
- 41 Crèches
- 22 David Bates Building
- 35 David Keir Building
- 1 Development and Alumni Relations Directorate
- 3 Directorate of Academic and Student Affairs
- 39 Disability Services
- 40 Elmwood Hall
- 46 Elmwood Teaching and Learning Centre
- 3 Estates Directorate

Postgraduate Office

Students' Union



New Library

Whitla Hall



Admissions and Access Service
 Careers, Employability and Skills
 Counselling Service
 Disability Services
 Income and Student Finance
 Learning Development Service
 Student Administration
 Welcome Week Office

- 14 Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences
- 43 Faculty of Medicine, Health and Life Sciences
- 37 Faculty Office of Engineering and Physical Sciences
- 44 Festival Office
- 3 Finance Directorate
- 1 Great Hall
- 45 Guthrie House (Accommodation)
- 3 Human Resources Directorate
- 39 Income and Student Affairs
- 1b Information Services Directorate
- 28 Institute of Professional and Legal Studies
- 38 Institute of Theology

- 1 Lanyon Building
- 39 Learning Development Service
- 10 Main Library
- 1a Marketing, Recruitment and Communication Directorate
- 50 MBC Teaching Centre
- 53 McClay Research Centre
- 29 Media Studies
- 1 Naughton Gallery at Queen's
- 32 Northern Ireland Technology Centre
- 8 Old Library
- 2 Peter Froggatt Centre (PFC)
- 17 Postgraduate Office
- 35 QUChem
- 39 Queen's Bookshop
- 12 Queen's Film Theatre (QFT)
- 1a Queen's International Office
- 25 Queen's Sport (PEC)
- 35 QUESTOR
- 35 QUILL
- 1b Registrar's Office
- 1a Research and Regional Services Directorate
- 26 Riddell Hall
- 52 School of Anatomy and Physiology
- 49 School of Biology and Biological Sciences
- 35 School of Chemistry and Chemical Engineering
- 16 School of Education
- 31 School of Electronics, Electrical and Computer Science
- 15 School of English
- 47 School of Geography, Archaeology and Palaeocology
- 14 School of History and Anthropology
- 12 School of Languages, Literature and Performing Arts
- 11 School of Law
- 13 School of Management and Economics
- 5 School of Mathematics and Physics
- 31 School of Mechanical and Aeronautical Engineering
- 9 School of Music and Sonic Arts
- 51 School of Nursing and Midwifery
- 34 School of Psychology
- 30 Science Library
- 1a Science Shop
- 4 Seamus Heaney Library
- 21 School of Sociology, Social Policy and Social Work
- 23 New Library
- 33 Sonic Arts Research Centre
- 6 South Dining Hall
- 26 Staff Training and Development Unit (Riddell Hall)
- 39 Student Administration
- 39 Student Affairs
- 39 Student Guidance Centre
- 1b Student Plus
- 42 Students' Union
- 27 University Health Centre
- 1b Vice Chancellor's Office
- 1 Welcome Centre
- 7 Whitla Hall
- 54 Whitla Medical Building
- 39 Widening Participation Unit

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