



UNIVERSITY OF
PORTSMOUTH

Research Degrees

Operational Handbook

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Operational Handbook for Research Degree Programmes

Summary

What is this Handbook about?

This Operational Handbook provides information and guidance on the events and circumstances that may arise during the registration of postgraduate research students (PGRS). It includes details of the business processes and support available for PGRS, postgraduate research supervisors, responsibilities of the First Supervisor and other members of the supervisory team, and guidance for managing the assessment processes.

Who is this Handbook for?

This Handbook is for all PGRS and Supervisors. It is also useful for Faculty Directors of Postgraduate Research (FDPGRs), Departmental Directors of Postgraduate Research (DDPGRs), research administrators and other staff involved with PGRS during their research degree programme.

How does the University check this Handbook is current?

The Operational Handbook is reviewed towards the end of each academic year to ensure that any approved amendments to the academic regulations and institution policy are reflected within the Handbook. It will also be updated to reflect changes to business processes and provide operational guidance. The Operational Handbook is produced by the the Graduate School and DSAA Research Degrees.

The Operational Handbook is routinely updated following review ready for October each year but any significant changes that occur during the year may be amended at an earlier point.

Who can you contact if you have any queries about this Handbook?

Please contact the Graduate School if you have any queries regarding this Handbook, at graduate.school@port.ac.uk. Please also advise us if links in the document are broken.

PART 1: Institutional Arrangements for Research Degrees

1. Code of Practice

The Code of Practice for Postgraduate Research Degrees sets out the overall responsibilities and expectations of all those engaged in research degree programmes across all research subject disciplines at the University of Portsmouth. It provides the guiding principles and standards of good practice which underpin the University commitment to support and develop excellent researchers in the pursuit of high quality research.

The University's research degrees are covered by the relevant Research Degree Regulations and the Code of Practice for Postgraduate Research Degrees. These documents enable the University to ensure that appropriate standards and quality are consistently maintained for all research degree programmes.

Regulations and guidance which should be read in conjunction with this Handbook are:

- The relevant [Research Regulations](#)
- [Code of Practice for Postgraduate Research Degrees](#)
- [Programme Specification Document \(for Professional Doctorate Programmes\)](#)

2. Research Environment and Postgraduate Research Community

The University is committed to providing high quality support and a stimulating research environment and research community for PGRS which includes:

- The Graduate School as a focal point for the [PGRS community](#);
- A supervisory team with subject expertise and experience of supervising PGRS to completion;
- Annual Development Needs Analysis meetings with their supervisor(s) to identify training and development requirements;
- The University-wide Graduate School Development Programme which provides researcher development training events, and transferable and career development skills;
- Staff-level privileges regarding access to The University Library, printing and photocopying appropriate to the discipline;
- A place of work when at the University, which is appropriate for the research needs, with access to a desk and computer. The workplace may be in a research centre or postgraduate room;
- Access to a telephone with outgoing calls on approval;
- Access to the Postgraduate Study Suite in [The University Library](#), which provides a dedicated resource for postgraduate needs;
- The opportunity to attend appropriate internal research seminars and to present their research plans or findings at a conference;

- PGRS may apply for an allowance to fund, or partially fund, attendance at external conferences during registration on their programme;
- Elected or nominated places on Faculty and University Research Degrees Committees.

2.1 Expectations

All PGRS are expected to:

- Become familiar with and observe the relevant regulations and policies for your research degree programme available at: <https://myport.port.ac.uk/guidance-and-support/research-degrees> and check regularly for any updates during each year of registration;
- Read and follow the guidance within [The Student Charter](#), [The Code of Student Behaviour](#) and the [Research Data Management Policy](#);
- Regularly check your student email account to ensure you are fully informed and have the opportunity to communicate your views;
- Prepare for and undertake meetings with your supervisory team and provide a written record of these meetings (Skills Forge should be used for this – see section 7.2);
- Carry out the equivalent of full-time weekly work commitment on your research topic for full-time PGRS and between 12–16 hours per week for part-time PGRS;
- Participate in research development activity (ten days for full time PGRS and five days for part time PGRS) during each year of registration;
- Provide information for your PURE profile page and send this to your Faculty/Department Web Coordinator;
- Behave as a considerate member of the research community and contribute to development of the research culture at the University of Portsmouth;
- Treat staff, students and members of the community with respect, consideration and courtesy, in person and when communicating online;
- Note that disciplinary procedures will be initiated if plagiarism or scientific misconduct is suspected. [The Procedure for the Investigation for Allegations of Misconduct in Research](#) would be applicable in these circumstances.

2.2 Minimum Resources for PGRS

Individual faculties make appropriate arrangements for the PGRS research environment and these may differ according to discipline. Supervisors should be aware that the minimum provision for PGRS (with the exception of Professional Doctorate (PD) students) is as follows:

- A place of work that is appropriate for research requirements which may be in a research centre or PGRS room;
- Access to a telephone with outgoing calls on approval;

- Access to the Postgraduate Study suite in The University Library which provides a dedicated resource for postgraduate needs.

2.3 Communications Policy

In accordance with the Student Communications Policy the University of Portsmouth student email address will be used to contact PGRS during their research programme. PGRS should ensure that they check their University of Portsmouth student email account on a regular basis or ensure that email from their student account is forwarded to a preferred email address. PGRS will receive all formal notifications regarding fees and registration via their student email account.

2.4 English Language Requirement

For applicants whose first language is not English it is necessary to demonstrate the requisite level of English Language competency in line with the requirements of the specific research degree subject area. This is in accordance with the University's [English Language Requirements](#) such that all assessments, including the thesis, should be written and defended in English.

3. Support and Advice

3.1 Graduate School

The University of Portsmouth's [Graduate School](#) is located on the fourth floor of the main building of St Andrew's Court. The Graduate School has overall strategic responsibility for the recruitment, admissions, training, quality and experience of PGRS and their supervisors within the University. The Graduate School Management Board oversees the operation of the Graduate School's responsibilities and is chaired by the Director of the Graduate School. Staff at the Graduate School coordinate generic training for PhD, MPhil, and MD programmes and the additional research training for Professional Doctorates and MRes students through the [Graduate School Development Programme](#). The research supervision events programme for research degree supervisors is also coordinated by the Graduate School.

3.2 DSAA Student Administration Services

[Student Administration Services](#), Department of Student and Academic Administration (DSAA) are the definitive source of advice, guidance and support to PGRS and staff, including external clients, in relation to PGRS and quality management for Research Degree Programmes. The Student Administration Services Team is responsible for tracking and maintaining all PGRS registrations, including preparation of reports for committees. This also comprises the organisation and maintenance of records of quality assurance procedures and business processes for Research Degree Programmes, including formal progression and examination.

3.3 University Wide

- PGRS may discuss any concerns regarding their research with any member of their supervisory team, the Departmental Director of Postgraduate Research (DDPGR), the Faculty Director of Postgraduate Research (FDPGR), the PGRS representative, Student Administration Services or the Graduate School at any time during their registration.

Advice and Support Services are based in the Nuffield Centre providing a network of support with experienced staff trained in giving advice and helping students to resolve problems. The services provided include the following:

- Academic Skills Unit (ASK);
- Additional Support & Disability Advice Centre (ASDAC);
- Careers and Employability Service;
- Chaplaincy;
- Computing Support & IT;
- Counselling and Wellbeing Service;
- Housing and Accommodation;
- Global Office;
- Library;
- Maths Café;
- Safer Students;
- Sport and Recreation;

- Student Finance Centre - including advice regarding household bills;
- Students' Union.

Further details regarding these services are available online from the [Guidance & Support](#) web pages, or see <http://www.myport.ac.uk/> for all the news and links to the services and support across the University.

International and European Union (EU) PGRS also have access to the [UoP Global](#) team who can provide advice and support for students while they are studying in the UK.

4. Appointment and Role of Supervisory Team

4.1 Appointment Criteria

The First Supervisor is the main supervisor and a member of University of Portsmouth staff with responsibility for supervising the PGRS on a regular basis. The student should be registered in the same Department as the First Supervisor.

The First Supervisor will have expertise in the research topic being undertaken by the PGRS and, ideally, have a doctorate and peer reviewed publications. The First or Second supervisor of the supervisory team should hold a doctoral award.

With the exception of PhD by Publication students, all PGRS* will have at least two but not more than three supervisors. In exceptional circumstances (e.g. where required as part of a collaborative Doctoral award), this may be extended to two University and two external supervisors.

*Students being registered for a PhD by Publication programme will have a minimum of one and a maximum of two supervisors.

At least one of the supervisory team, though not necessarily the First Supervisor, will have experience of supervising PGRS to successful completion. The supervisory team will have combined experience of supervising at least two PGRS to successful completion of a research degree. In exceptional circumstances, agreed by the local Faculty Research Degrees Committee, this may be reduced to one completion, but must be from either the first or second supervisor

The Research Student Registration form (RSR) is completed as part of the application process to propose the supervisory team. The FDPGR, DDPGR and Head of Department/School sign the RSR form to approve the appointment of the supervisory team on behalf of the FRD Committee and to confirm that the necessary resources to conduct the agreed research will be provided.

PGRS can see their approved supervisory team in Skills Forge which can be logged into from www.port.ac.uk/Skills Forge.

Further details regarding the application process and requirements for Research Degree Programmes can be found [here](#).

Supervisors should not normally be responsible for more than the allowed maximum number of six full time equivalent or ten individual PGRS at any one time. The FDPGR and Head of Department/School must, on acceptance of the applicant, provide assurance that a proposed supervisor is not responsible for more PGRS than can be adequately and equitably supervised. If any of the supervisory team are

external to the University of Portsmouth, a short CV should be submitted to the FDPGR along with the RSR Form.

Staff workload allocation regarding the minimum number of hours for supervision of a PGRS has been agreed across the University as follows:

- For a full-time student this is 90 hours in total across all supervisors
- For a part-time student this is 45 hours in total across all supervisors

For intensive supervision of laboratory based or similar high-supervisor intensity PGR projects, the exceptional hours allocation for PGR supervision is as follows:

- For a full-time student this is 110 hours in total across all supervisors
- For a part-time student this is 55 hours in total across all supervisors.

4.2 Role of the First Supervisor

The role of a supervisor is to provide regular, consistent supervision, mentoring, guidance and training for a PGRS during their registration for a Research Degree.

For all PGRS, the First Supervisor will ensure that:

- the applicant is fully aware of their responsibilities as a PGRS during the application stage and will remind them again at induction;
- all admission and registration documents are completed;
- monitoring and examination processes are dealt with by agreed deadlines;
- the PGRS is advised to attend the University wide workshops organised by the Graduate School and Faculty induction events;
- the PGRS is aware of the expectation to attend the agreed programme of researcher development activities (e.g. the University wide workshops organised by the Graduate School);
- the PGRS is advised of the requirement to register and attend the orientation for the mandatory Graduate Students Professional Development Programme ([GPROF](#)) prior to undertaking assistant teaching and/or demonstrating duties. Registration for GPROF is with the Department for Curriculum and Quality Enhancement (DCQE) and it is expected that GPROF training will be completed within six months;
- the PGRS is informed of the opportunities for Personal Development Planning (PDP) as part of the Graduate School Development Programme (GSDP);
- the PGRS is aware of the full supervisory team and the role of each team member.

Additionally, the First Supervisor will:

- establish and maintain regular contact with the PGRS and be accessible to provide advice and guidance when needed, either in person or by electronic means, dependent on the location and mode of study of the PGRS;
- agree a schedule of meetings with the PGRS and other Supervisors;
- ensure the PGRS has the necessary research environment for the Research Degree Programme and take issues to the Head of Department and FDPGR for resolution, where appropriate;
- ensure that ethical approval is sought and that research is conducted within the agreed principles;
- ensure the PGRS is aware of issues of research misconduct, plagiarism and the associated penalties;
- ensure the PGRS is aware of institutional-level information regarding ethics, career guidance, health and safety legislation and equal opportunities legislation;
- monitor the progress of the research project and the PGRS' overall progress within the programme;
- provide timely, constructive and effective feedback on work, including overall progress of the work;

- ensure the PGRS has the opportunity to meet other researchers working in the same area, through seminars and conferences;
- encourage the PGRS to publish findings prior to submission of the thesis, where appropriate;
- encourage the PGRS to complete and maintain their web page information (PURE profile) to be given to the respective Faculty Web Coordinator to update;
- confirm arrangement for annual leave and notification of absence.

The responsibilities listed are in accordance with the [QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education, Advice and Guidance, Research Degrees document](#).

Although these areas are listed as the responsibility of the First Supervisor, in practice, these may be shared between the supervisory team. It is important that all agreements made are communicated to all of the supervisory team and the PGRS to ensure that all are aware of who is covering each area.

Throughout the period of registration the First Supervisor is the main academic contact for the PGRS. As part of the working relationship between the First Supervisor and the PGRS it is essential that accurate records of the meetings are kept in order to ensure that both parties have understood agreed actions. Please see section 4.5 Monitoring and Recording Supervisory Meetings for further details.

The FDPGR and DSAA Student Administrative Services are available to support and provide advice to both supervisors and PGRS, particularly if the student-supervisor relationship is not working as anticipated. Student Administrative Services can advise on the research regulations, the complaints and appeal procedure if required.

4.3 Role of Supervisors

The appointment of a second and possibly third supervisor to the supervisory team provides a number of benefits, not only to cover in the absence of the First Supervisor, but particularly to broaden and enhance the range of expertise available to the PGRS. It is not expected that all of the team are subject experts, however their contribution to the supervisory team may be as a methodologist, project manager or other key role to support the PGRS' research project. At the PGRS' initial induction meeting it is expected that the PGRS meets with the whole supervisory team to discuss and agree the roles of each supervisor and agree formal regular supervisory team meetings. [Vitae](#) provides guidance on [Supervision and Key Relationships](#) which is helpful for both PGRS and supervisors. Supervisors may also find attending one of the Graduate School's Research Supervision Events useful.

Additional members of the supervisory team will:

- attend the supervisory team induction meeting
- provide additional guidance to the PGRS and First Supervisor on the planning timetable and conduct of the research;
- provide specialist expertise;
- be available at appropriate times for consultation;
- attend regular supervisory meetings;
- keep up-to-date records/minutes of meetings (use Skills Forge);
- participate in the Annual/Major Review, as relevant;

- attend training at least once every 3 years;
- deputise, on a temporary basis, for the First Supervisor should the need arise.

4.4 Role of Postgraduate Research Student

All PGRS are responsible for the success of their project and for achieving highly developed subject-specific knowledge, skills, general problem-solving ability and transferable skills. PGRS are encouraged to take control of their engagement with their supervisory team. The Graduate School Development Programme runs a session on [Managing the Supervisory Relationship](#) which PGRS may find useful. [Vitae](#) provides guidance on [Supervision and Key Relationships](#) which is helpful for both PGRS and supervisors.

4.5 Monitoring and Recording Supervisory Meetings

During the initial meeting between the PGRS and the First Supervisor they will agree a schedule of meetings, both with the PGRS and First Supervisor, and the full supervisory team. A record of meetings must be kept and it is expected that the Skills Forge system is used for this purpose as this can be accessed by the supervisory team.

If the research requires the student to be located elsewhere during any year of registration the Work based and [Placement Learning Code of Practice](#) may be applicable. PGRS are advised to discuss planned periods of absence to undertake their research with their First Supervisor so that the requirement for a site visit, [insurance](#) and [health & safety](#) issues are taken into consideration. If a PGRS is travelling overseas to a conference, to undertake research or other activities as part of their research then the PGRS and First Supervisor will need to ensure that the PGRS has obtained the relevant overseas travel approval. For guidance and further information please contact studyabroad@port.ac.uk

It is expected that the [Skills Forge](#) system is used to keep a permanent record of meetings as there is provision within the system for both the supervisor and PGRS to 'sign off' any agreed actions. The meeting records can be made available to other members of the supervisory team if they have not been present at the meeting.

Meeting records are compulsory in accordance with the [Retention Policy](#) (Retention Schedule - section 11.4) and will be called upon in the unusual circumstances where a PGRS submits a formal appeal or complaint to the University. Where Skills Forge is not used to keep a record of meetings, supervisors will need to ensure that these are kept in compliance with the Retention Policy.

4.6 Role of Advisers

In addition to the supervisory team, an adviser, or advisers may be nominated to contribute specialised knowledge or to provide a link with an external collaborating body. Advisers are normally affiliated with an external institution.

4.7 University Research Supervisor Training

The University holds an Introductory Workshop for Research Supervisors. All academic staff new to the role of supervisor must attend this workshop within six months of the start of the registration of the research student. Within a year of becoming a new supervisor, academic staff should undertake at least one other Research Supervision Event (RSE).

Continuing supervisors and those joining from other universities should also attend the 'Introductory Workshop for Research Supervisors' to gain an overview of University of Portsmouth procedures, share good practice and help less experienced delegates. In addition, continuing supervisors should undertake the 'Update for Experienced Supervisors' session at least every three years and maintain supervision of continued professional development by attending at least one RSE or equivalent session every year.

Supervisors resuming the role of supervisor after a break of three years must undertake at least the RSE Update for Experienced Supervisors' session and after a break of five years undertake the Introductory Workshop for Research Supervisors.

Full details of all the programmes are available through the [Graduate School](#) website. Training is also available through [Moodle](#).

Attendance at RSEs is recorded by the Graduate School and shared with Heads of Department, FDPGR, DDPGRs and Student Life, DSAA, to access when managing and approving supervisory teams.

Evidence of attendance at RSE-equivalent internal courses (Faculty/department/online) would be acceptable replacements for all sessions and the DDPGRs can authorise equivalence.

Evidence of attendance at RSE-equivalent external courses would be acceptable replacements for all sessions with the exception of the 'Introductory Workshop for Research Supervisors' and 'Update for Experienced Supervisors' and the FDPGR can authorise equivalence.

4.8 Changes to the Supervisory Team

Any changes to the supervisory team need to be approved and this is requested by completion of a UPR3 Form which is completed by the student and First Supervisor and signed by the DDPGR, Head of Department and by the FDPGR. See Part 2: Section 4.9 for further guidance. The student record is then updated to reflect the approved supervisory team which will then appear in Skills Forge. If a PGRS has any concerns regarding supervision, these can be discussed with the DDPGR or FDPGR.

If any member of the supervisory team can no longer supervise the PGRS and it means there will be fewer than two supervisors, it will be necessary for another member of academic staff to be appointed to the role. Reasons for this change could include long term ill health, maternity leave, sabbatical leave, a move to another University, retirement, or if the student-supervisor relationship is not working well. Section 4 of the [Staff Access to University Facilities](#) provides details of the process to be completed when members of staff leave the University. The Head of Department or School, with the assistance of the DDPGR, will nominate a replacement for approval by the FDPGR by Chair's Action (on behalf of the FRD Committee). See Part 2: Section 4.9 for further guidance.

If necessary, the Faculty Research Degrees Committee will adjust the period of registration for a student who is affected by a change of First Supervisor.

If no one with appropriate subject expertise is available to replace the First Supervisor it may be necessary for the PGRS to be advised that the University can no longer offer them the support required for the Research Degree Programme to continue. In this situation the Head of Department, DDPGR and the FDPGR will advise and assist the PGRS to enable them, where possible, to transfer to another University.

4.9 Support for Supervisors

Supervisors can access guidance and support from a number of sources. The DSAA Student Administration Services Team and the Graduate School both have websites which provide information and resources for supervisors to use. The staff in these areas can also be contacted by email or telephone where it would be helpful for supervisors to discuss or ask for advice on matters relating to the PGRS they are supervising. Other staff across the University that can assist and provide guidance for supervisors are Chairs of FRD Committees, DDPGRs and MyPort Hub administrative staff.

5. University Committees with Responsibility for Research Degrees

The University has a committee structure which oversees the business of the University. Academic Council is the Academic Board of the University of Portsmouth and has a number of sub-committees. University Research Degrees Committee (URDC), is a sub-committee of University Research and Innovation Committee (URIC), which oversees the review of policies, regulations and procedures for research degrees. URDC is supported by the Graduate School Management Board (GSMB) as an operational group. Each Faculty has a Faculty Research Degree (FRD) Committee and the minutes from GSMB and FRD Committees are all submitted to URDC to enable issues to be discussed at an institutional level.

PGRS are represented on FRD Committee, GSMB and URDC.

5.1 University Research Degrees Committee (URDC)

URDC is a sub-committee of the University Research and Innovation Committee (URIC) which reports to Academic Council and meets three times each academic year. Members normally have substantial research experience including successful research degree supervision or research administration. URDC conducts its business to ensure the University provides an environment for the successful completion of research projects by PGRS. It has a strategic, policy and procedural role.

A representative Postgraduate Officer nominated by University of Portsmouth Students' Union is included in the Membership of URDC.

In summary, URDC:

- sets policy regarding research degree matters;
- reviews and maintains regulations regarding research degrees;
- monitors the performances of faculties regarding progress and completions;
- considers and approves the Director of the Graduate School; Research Development Coordinator and FDPGR's Excellence and Quality Improvement Plans (EQuIPs).

5.2 Graduate School Management Board (GSMB)

The Graduate School Management Board is the executive arm of the Graduate School and an operational group of URDC. It provides operational direction for all research degree programmes and associated matters in the University. GSMB considers and develops strategic policies relating to research degrees that are then passed to URDC and other relevant University committees for consideration and approval.

Each year, the Director of the Graduate School, who Chairs GSMB, will produce an Excellence and Quality Improvement Plan (EQuIP) for consideration by GSMB before submission to URDC in January for approval.

5.3 Faculty Research Degrees (FRD) Committee

Each Faculty is required to operate a Faculty Research Degrees Committee, which have delegated authority for certain matters detailed in the [FRD Committee Terms of Reference](#) approved by URDC. Membership includes the Faculty Director of Postgraduate Research as Chair and the DDPGRs. At least two PGRS sit on each FRD Committee and can bring matters to the Committee which are of concern to researchers within the Faculty. A member of the Student Administration Services, Student Life, DSAA attends each FRD Committee meeting to provide advice on the Academic Regulations, current procedures and to liaise with staff on matters relating to PGRS. Administrative staff from the Faculty are also members of the FRD Committee.

Each year, the FDPGR will produce an Excellence and Quality Improvement Plan (EQuIP) and this report is submitted to the FRD Committee before it is presented at URDC in January for discussion and approval. The reports demonstrate clear evidence and evaluation of postgraduate provision and are used to confirm that standards are maintained. The research EQuIP template and guidance notes are available from: <http://www.port.ac.uk/reviewcycle>.

FRD Committees deal with the day-to-day matters associated with research degrees e.g. researcher development, Annual Review monitoring, Major Review monitoring and appointment of examiners. They also undertake a quality assurance role assessing the progress of PGRS within the Faculty, including submission rates. FRD Committees report to URDC, and can bring matters to URDC for discussion and consideration.

The FDPGR has delegated authority to deal with certain research matters specified in the FRD Committee Terms of Reference to ensure a timely response. A report detailing action taken is submitted to the FRD Committee for information and is noted under devolved business.

All supervisors can bring issues to FRD Committees by requesting that their DDPGR raise them for discussion at FRD Committee. PGRS can also request items to be raised by their student representative or by writing to the FDPGR.

In summary FRD Committees:

- have delegated authority regarding the day-to-day management of research degree matters;
- deal with, through agreed process, matters regarding student registration, approval of the supervisory team and any changes to supervisors, approval of applications for Major Review and appointment of two Major Review assessors, applications for extension and suspension (interrupted study) of registration and approval of examination arrangements;
- ensure the Annual Review and Major Review processes for all PGRS are undertaken and if problems have been raised advise and take action where appropriate, including recommending interim examinations;

- approve the recommendation for an interim examination and confirm the form of assessment following the request for an interim examination by the First Supervisor who is concerned that satisfactory progress is not being made;
- report the results of decisions taken under delegated authority by submitting copies of the Devolved Business for the agenda of FRD Committee; including all events dealt with by Chair's Action.

5.4 Committee Representation

PGRS and supervisors are encouraged to contribute their views through their DDPGR and PGRS representative on the FRD Committee as the University values feedback as part of ongoing monitoring and enhancement of our research degree programmes and the student experience. FRD Committees will endeavour to deal with all issues brought to their attention and can refer matters to GSMB and URDC as appropriate.

Where a PGRS is interested in becoming a PGRS representative they should contact their FDPGR for further details. In addition to these routes, Professional Doctorate students are represented through 'taught' mechanisms including Student Staff Consultative Committees (SSCC) and Boards of Studies.

6. Academic Regulations Governing the Award of Higher Degrees

The current University of Portsmouth research regulations can be found at: <https://myport.port.ac.uk/guidance-and-support/research-degrees>. Advice and guidance regarding the research regulations is available from the DSAA Student Administration Services.

The [Code of Practice for Postgraduate Research Degrees](#) includes the institutional principles and quality assurance processes for research degrees and helps enable the University to meet the expectations of Chapter B11, Research Degrees within the UK Quality Code for Higher Education.

The [Awards of the University of Portsmouth](#) document provides information regarding the criteria for an award to be granted and the standard registration periods for PGRS. Examiners are provided with the [Framework for Higher Education Qualifications \(FHEQ\)](#) national descriptor for qualifications awarded at Master's level 7 and Doctoral level 8 when the thesis is reviewed prior to the *viva voce* examination.

7. Annual Monitoring and Periodic Review of Research Degree Programmes

As part of inclusive University-wide policies, annual monitoring and periodic review of standards and the quality of learning opportunities for PGRS are overseen by both URDC and Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) and come under the [Programme Monitoring Review Policy](#).

In brief, annual monitoring is reported at Faculty level through the FDPGR EQuIP which is considered and followed up locally at FRD Committees and centrally at URDC and Academic Quality Group (AQG). These EQuIPs inform the Chair of QAC's Annual Report on Academic Standards and Quality which is considered by QAC and submitted to Academic Council and Board of Governors.

8. Postgraduate Research Student Surveys

The Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) is a sector wide survey which takes place biennially collecting data on PGRS satisfaction with their research programme. The University of Portsmouth Postgraduate Research Student Experience Survey (UPPRES) takes place in the alternate years to the PRES to enable monitoring on an annual basis and to ensure that any issues identified are resolved. The data following these surveys is analysed, monitored and discussed at GSMB and URDC.

9. Research Degree Partnerships

Full details of the support and management infrastructure for when research degrees are conducted in collaboration with an external organisation, including how collaborative research degree partnerships are approved, reviewed and the supporting annual monitoring arrangements are contained in the [Academic Partnerships Policy](#) document.

It is important to identify early in the application process if an applicant is proposing to undertake their programme of work off campus. The University has in place procedures for approval of research degree partnerships that may be tailored to individual arrangements, providing flexibility within a quality assurance framework proportional to any risks involved as part of the proposed collaboration. A collaborative research degree arrangement is considered when the University of Portsmouth research award is dependent on another delivery or support organisation. Further guidance regarding collaborative research arrangements is available in the Academic Partnerships Policy. For advice and guidance on research partnerships contact the Collaborative Partnerships team, in Academic Standards, Quality and Partnerships, at partnerships@port.ac.uk.

10. Awards

The University awards the following Research degrees by Research, governed by the Regulations for Higher Degrees by Research:

- Master of Philosophy (MPhil)
- Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)
- Doctor of Medicine (MD)

The University awards Professional Doctorates, governed by the Regulations for Professional Doctorates. For a full listing of the current Professional Doctorates on offer see the [Awards of the University of Portsmouth](#).

The University offers the following award, governed by the Regulations for the Award of Doctor of Philosophy by Publication:

- Doctor of Philosophy by Publication

The Academic Regulations are available at: [Research Degree Regulations](#)

The awards are given in recognition of:

- the completion of an approved programme of supervised research;
- the submission of a thesis, being a written document and/or other approved submission; embodying the results of the research programme and the conclusions drawn from the results;
- the successful defence of the thesis at a *viva voce* examination.

Additionally:

- Professional Doctorate candidates are required to give a presentation before the *viva voce* examination. The option of an informal presentation, prior to the *viva voce* examination, only to the Examiners, is available to all Research Students but is not a compulsory element of the examination.

The [Framework for Higher Education Qualifications \(FHEQ\)](#) in England, Wales and Northern Ireland should also be referred to with regards to the qualification descriptors for a Doctorate (level 8) and a Masters (level 7).

10.1 PhD, MPhil and MD

The awards of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) and Master of Philosophy (MPhil) are available across all schools/departments and subject groups. The award of Doctor of Medicine (MD) is available in the Science Faculty.

10.2 Professional Doctorates

Professional Doctorates are offered currently in three faculties: Science and Health, Humanities and Social Sciences and Business and Law. Current Professional Doctorates are:

- Doctor of Criminal Justice (DCrimJ)
- Doctor of Security Risk Management (DSyRM)
- Doctor of Education (EdD)
- Doctor of Business Administration (DBA)
- Doctor of Biomedical Science (DBMS)
- Doctor of Chiropractic (DChiro)
- Doctor of Health Science (DHealthSci)
- Doctor of Medical Imaging (DMedIm)
- Doctor of Nursing (DN)
- Doctor of Pharmacy (DPharm)
- Doctor of Social Work (DSW)
- Doctor of Sport and Exercise Psychology (DSEP)
- Doctor of Forensic Psychology (DForenPsy)

The curriculum framework for Professional Doctorates can be found in the [Curriculum Framework Specification](#). The framework provides a flexible design and delivery of professional doctorate programmes to meet the needs of a diverse range of professional and disciplinary contexts.

The professional doctoral programme is divided into two phases:

Stage 1- Taught Phase consists of formal learning delivered by the University of Portsmouth that covers topics such as research methods, professionalism, reflective practice and writing for publication and dissemination. These topics prepare students for the final part of the taught phase which includes submission of a research proposal, and Professional Doctorate students are supported through this part of the programme by scheduled workshops, tutorials and group activities. A variety of assessment methods are employed so as to develop a range of individual and collaborative skills and knowledge. Stage 1 – Taught Phase is covered by the [Examination & Assessment Regulations of the University of Portsmouth](#).

Stage 2 – Research Phase is covered by the [Regulations for Research Degrees](#). The Research Phase consists of the Professional Research and Development Project in which students research a

topic relevant to themselves as professionals and to their profession. Professional Doctorate students are supported during this part of the programme by the standard supervision arrangements for PGRS with a minimum of two supervisors, one of whom will be the First Supervisor as the main supervisor. In addition, it is expected that there will be a nominated workplace advisor to provide support for the student. The First Supervisor will be the contact for administrative matters relating to the PGRS, will ensure the PGRS completes all stages of the course and provide the relevant assessment details for the examination boards. The final assessment involves the completion of a thesis, a presentation and a *viva voce* examination. For further details see Part 3: Professional Doctorates.

10.3 PhD by Publication

The PhD by Publication is normally based upon research already undertaken before registration. It is normally considered on the basis of a series of peer-reviewed academic papers, books, citations or other materials that have been published, accepted for publication, exhibited or performed. It is usually accompanied by a commentary of 5,000-10,000 words linking the published work and outlining its coherence, significance and contribution to knowledge, followed by an oral examination (*viva voce*), at which the candidate defends their research. Applicants wishing to be considered for the PhD by Publication must be holders, of at least five years' standing, of a first or higher degree awarded either by a UK higher education institute or by a recognised equivalent non-UK degree of the same standard. PGRS are expected to submit their materials for examination within 1 year from the registration date.

This award is covered by the Regulations for the Award of Doctor of Philosophy by Publication which can be found at:

<http://www.port.ac.uk/accesstoinformation/policies/academicregistry/filetodownload,10398,en.pdf>

PART 2: The Postgraduate Research Student (PGRS) Cycle

1. Administrative support

1.1 Faculty and Departmental Support

In each faculty and MyPort Hub there are administrative staff appointed to support the admission and registration processes for PGRS. The Student and Academic Administration Manager in each Hub can advise on which staff are designated to support PGRS and who can be expected to help with issues such as:

- admissions support for Research Degree Programmes;
- bursary authorisation forms;
- annual registration of PGRS;
- assist with booking rooms, accommodation and refreshments for *viva voce* examinations.

1.2 DSAA Student Administration Services

In addition to the Faculty and Hub support, the DSAA Student Administration Services team will provide advice on all matters relating to PGRS, particularly the Academic Regulations and assessment processes.

The DSAA Student Administration Services roles and responsibilities include:

- Definitive source of advice, guidance and support to PGRS and staff, including external clients in relation to PGRS and quality management for Research Degree Programmes;
- Tracking and maintenance of all PGRS registrations, including preparation of reports for committees;
- Organisation and maintenance of records of quality assurance procedures and business processes for Research Degree Programmes, including formal progression and examination;
- Delivering training for Supervisors and PGRS with regards to regulations and processes for Research Degree Programmes.

Where a PGRS or supervisor is unsure about the requirements or processes during the PGRS registration, has any questions or wishes to seek advice regarding a specific situation then please contact the DSAA Student Administration Services. Guidance is also available on the University website at:

<https://myport.port.ac.uk/guidance-and-support/research-degrees/research-degree-guidance> .

2. Admission of a Postgraduate Research Degree Student (PGRS)

The Code of Practice for Postgraduate Research and the research regulations provide the principles and requirements for admission onto a research degree programme. The University has in place a process for the admission of PGRS which ensures that the PGRS are of the appropriate calibre, and that applicants are aware of the demands of a research degree programme. Further details of the requirements for admissions for a research degree can be found in the research regulations. Guidance on the business processes and areas for consideration during the application/admission stage can be found on the [How to Apply pages](#) and the [Admissions Policy](#).

3. Induction

All new PGRS are required to attend the University-wide induction which includes University-wide sessions and supporting events provided by faculties, schools and departments. New PGRS arriving at the University will have expectations, aspirations, hopes and concerns and the aim of induction is to clarify what the University provides and the PGRS' responsibilities. The First Supervisor will also meet with the new PGRS, and introduce the supervisory team. At this initial meeting the areas of expertise and support within the supervisory team should also be discussed, including a schedule of supervisory meetings and arrangements for annual leave and notification of absence.

Responsibilities of the First Supervisor:

- ensuring the potential PGRS meets the entry criteria*;
- completion of the RSR form ensuring it is signed by the DDPGR, HoD and FDPGR on behalf of the FRD Committee*;
- requesting the standard offer letter to be sent and liaising with PGRS as required ensuring that they are aware of the need to accept or reject the offer*;
- ensuring the PGRS has complete online registration promptly;
- completing any necessary paperwork relating to funding (where relevant);
- complete the [Induction Checklist](#) with the PGRS;
- inform the new PGRS of the requirement to attend the formal Induction Programme both University-wide and in the Faculty, school or department;
- ensure the PGRS attends the Induction events;
- discussing potential changes to registration with PGRS and approving appropriate paperwork to support changes to registration.

(* where relevant, if FS is part of the application/interview panel)

4. Registration

4.1 Annual Registration

Registration normally takes place in October, February or April each year, but exceptionally (by approval of the Academic Registrar's or representative) a June intake date may be possible. To gain approval for a June intake contact the DSAA Student Administration Services via email researchdegrees@port.ac.uk

All PGRS are required to register annually onto their programme via their [Student View](#).

New PGRS will receive an automatic email notification to their personal email account advising them to register when their record has 'rolled-over' from the admissions system to the student management system.

Continuing PGRS will receive a 'returning' email notification to their University email account issued by their administration Hub when their record has 'rolled-forward' to the next academic session.

PGRS may also be contacted if verification of identification and/or qualifications or other United Kingdom Visa & Immigration (UKVI) requirements are necessary. PGRS may be asked to bring documentary evidence for verification purposes before the registration process can be finalised.

Every year each PGRS must register and pay the appropriate fees. On completion of registration the PGRS has access to the University Library and IT Systems.

The final date for completion of registration is one month after each intake date and once this date has passed any outstanding registrations will be cancelled. If the registration is cancelled the PGRS will not be able to undertake their research or receive supervision and they may need to reapply to resume their research programme at a later date.

If there are any reasons why a PGRS has not registered please inform your local research administrator and/or the DSAA Student Administration Services. PGRS must be registered at the University in order to receive support and supervision.

4.2 Approved Periods of Registration for PGRS

A PGRS will be registered for, and expected to submit their thesis within the following approved periods:

MPhil full time	24 months
MPhil part time	48 months
PhD full time	36 months
PhD part time	72 months
MD full time	24 months
MD part time	48 months
PD (Research Phase) part time	48 months
PD (Research Phase) full time	24 months

4.3 Changes to Registration

Under delegated authority from URDC all changes affecting the registration of a PGRS should be approved by the FDPGR, under delegated authority of the FRD Committee, and are reported at the next meeting of the FRD Committee.

The FDPGR is required to approve all changes to a PGRS registration, such as, mode of study, interruption or an extension period. The PGRS and First Supervisor should complete either a form UPR4, Notification of a Change Affecting the Registration of a PGRS (including Stage 2 - Research Phase for Professional Doctorates) or UPR12, Application for Extension of Registration and submit to the FDPGR for approval.

If for any reason a PGRS' circumstances change it may be beneficial to interrupt studies or change the mode of study (full time to part time or vice versa), however please note that restrictions apply for international PGRS with a UKVI Student Route visa.

The PGRS should discuss the options with their First Supervisor as they will need their support to request a change to their registration. Once signed by PGRS and First Supervisor this form is

submitted to the relevant FDPGR for approval and then submitted to the DSAA Student Administration Services for processing. Please see the relevant section below for further details.

4.4 Change in Mode of Study

The mode of study for any research degree can be either full-time or part-time with the exception of PhD by Publication and Distance Learning PhDs which are part-time only.

A change in the mode of study can be requested for the following reasons:

- a change to the funding available, either increased through successful application to a funding body or sponsor, or decreased when funding is no longer available.
- the PGRS takes full-time employment;
- a change in personal circumstances.

When a change to part-time research is requested by an international PGRS their student status on their passport must be verified as in some cases part-time registration is not permitted. DSAA Student Administration Services, ukvi-student-compliance@port.ac.uk, can assist with this process.

4.5 Interruption of Study

Personal circumstances may arise during the registration which the PGRS should be able to raise with the First Supervisor and if necessary apply for a period of interruption. PGRS may request an interruption of up to a maximum of one year in total to their registration period. Requests for interruptions usually are required for the following reasons:

- ill health, where there is a prolonged medical condition;
- family or personal problems which need time to be resolved;
- unexpected pressure from employment;

In addition, interruptions may also be made for:

- maternity/paternity/adoption or shared parental leave (please also see the [Guidance for Supporting Students who are Pregnant or have Children](#)).

It is very important that all interruptions are recorded. A PGRS should apply immediately on [Form UPR4](#) when an event likely to need a break in the registration occurs rather than wait and apply retrospectively.

Full time International PGRS will need to consider the possible impact of an interruption on their current visa end date and should be reminded that they may be expected to return home and not stay in the UK during a period or interruption.

Please note that approved periods of interrupted study are not included in the registration period as the PGRS is not actively undertaking their research or receiving supervision during this time. Library and IT access may also be suspended for the duration of their interruption.

Following approval of a suspension or interruption the registration is re-calculated and the end date extended accordingly. Dates for submission for Major Review and/or Annual Review will also be taken into consideration. Details of these will be provided in the confirmation of interruption and revised dates notification sent to the PGRS from DSAA Student Administration Services. If applicable, bursary

payments are also suspended. PGRS in receipt of a bursary should refer to details in their Bursary Agreement regarding periods of interruption and payments.

On return from an interruption of study the PGRS should promptly contact their administration Hub to arrange re-registration. If for any reason the interruption needs to be extended this should be done through completing another UPR4 Form for approval.

Interruption can also be requested during the extension period and on a Referral or Re-Examination registration following the Examiners recommendation. See section 13 for further details regarding these recommendations.

Prior to requesting an interruption, it is recommended that students consult the Tuition Fee Policy and other guidance regarding tuition fees and refunds, available at <https://myport.port.ac.uk/article-hub/article/#2230>.

4.6 Extension to Registration Period

The expectation is that a PGRS will submit their thesis for examination within the approved period of registration (see section 4.3).

If a PGRS will not be able to submit their thesis for examination by the end of the approved registration period, then an extension to registration must be applied for.

To apply for an extension, the PGRS and First Supervisor should complete the [Application for Extension of Registration Form \(UPR12\)](#) before the PGRS reaches their current end date. The form must be signed by the First Supervisor and approved by the FDPGR before being forwarded to the DSAA Student Administration Services.

The DSAA Student Administration Services will send the PGRS confirmation of the outcome of the application for an extension. If the extension is approved, the PGRS will be reminded of the deadline for Annual Review (if applicable) and the new thesis submission deadline which is also the date of the end of the PGRS' registration. The thesis cannot be accepted after this date.

For all PGRS, FRD Committee may approve an extension of registration of up to one year, provided the registration period has not already elapsed. For part time PhD students who commenced their studies prior to October 2017, an extension of registration of two years is permitted, provided the registration period has not already elapsed. For part-time Professional Doctorate students who commenced their studies prior to October 2022, an extension of registration of two years is permitted, provided the registration period has not already elapsed.

An extension fee is payable for each year of the approved extension. If your approved extension is for less than 6 months then 50% of the extension fee will be charged. If it is for more than 6 months, up to 1 year, then you will be charged 100% of the extension fee. If a student is charged for 12 months and completes within 6 months, their extension fee will be reduced to 50%. Details are within the [Tuition Fee Policy](#).

Full time PGRS who are in an approved extension registration period are eligible for Council Tax exemption.

4.7 Change to the Approved Research or Award

Where a student wishes to make a substantial change in the academic discipline and/or expert supervision of the approved research project, the student will be required to withdraw from the programme of research. Provided the University is able to offer adequate expert supervision in the new area of research, the student may reapply by submitting a new application as if it were the first application.

Where a student wishes to transfer to an alternative research degree award, approval must be sought from the Faculty Research Degrees Committee.

4.8 Withdrawal

Withdrawal is the process whereby a PGRS ends their registration before the thesis is submitted. However, it may be appropriate to consider an interruption or change in mode of study as an alternative to withdrawal. See sections above for further details of these options.

PGRS should discuss the options available to them with their First Supervisor before completing the relevant form to change or end their registration.

Where the decision has been made to withdraw, the PGRS must complete the [Notification of a Change Affecting the Registration Form \(UPR4\)](#) which should be signed by the First Supervisor and approved by the FDPGR. The form should then be sent to the DSAA Student Administration Services.

It is important that when a PGRS decides to withdraw notification is made as soon as possible to ensure their PGRS record is updated. Where a PGRS does not maintain regular contact with the University and is non-responsive to communications, the University may withdraw the PGRS. In such cases the University will complete the withdrawal and write to the PGRS informing them that they have been withdrawn.

Responsibilities of First Supervisor:

- to sign the Form UPR4 and send to the FDPGR;
- to inform the relevant administrative contact in the relevant administration Hub of the interruption/withdrawal.

The University may withdraw a PGRS registration if:

- The PGRS fails to successfully complete an Annual Review (see Section 9 - Annual Review);
- The PGRS fails to successfully complete the Major Review (see Section 10 – Major Review);
- The PGRS fails to submit their thesis within final deadlines notified to them by DSAA Student Administration Services;
- No contact has been maintained and the registration has lapsed;
- Non-payment of tuition fees;
- The PGRS has not provided proof of identification or qualifications at registration;
- The PGRS does not register or re-register by the start date of the research degree programme.

4.9 Change to the Supervisory Team

If it becomes necessary to change a member of the supervisory team, it is the First Supervisor who is responsible for completing the [UPR3 Form](#) and returning this to the DSAA Student Administration Services. If the change in supervision relates to the First Supervisor it remains the responsibility of the currently appointed First Supervisor to complete the UPR3 Form and forward to the FDPGR. In the absence of the First Supervisor, the UPR3 form should be completed by the DDPGR. This will ensure records are amended and all future correspondence regarding a PGRS will be directed to the correct member of academic staff. See Part 1.4.8 regarding DDPGR/HoD approval.

4.10 Monitoring Progress

The First Supervisor and/or other members of the supervisory team should agree with the PGRS the frequency of meetings. Meetings for full-time PGRS are at least fortnightly during the first three months of the research degree programme. Thereafter, meetings should take place at least once every six weeks, but may be more frequent by arrangement. Meetings may be held face-to-face or by phone, video conference or similar. The majority of meetings should be with the First Supervisor and meetings with the entire supervisory team should take place at least once a term (3 times per year).

Part time PGRS should normally meet their First Supervisor and/or other members of the supervisory team at least monthly during the first three months and at two-monthly intervals thereafter with at least one meeting per year with the full supervisory team. The supervisory team are expected to agree the schedule of meetings with the PGRS.

Throughout the period of registration, the First Supervisor is the PGRS' main academic contact. As part of the working relationship between the supervisory team and the PGRS it is essential that accurate records of the meetings are kept in order to ensure that both parties have understood agreed actions. It is expected that the [Skills Forge](#) system is used to keep a permanent record of meetings as there is provision within the system for both the supervisor(s) and PGRS to 'sign off' any agreed actions. The meeting records are available to other members of the supervisory team if they have not been present at the meeting.

Meeting records are compulsory in accordance with the [Retention Policy](#) and will be called upon in the unusual circumstances where a PGRS submits a formal appeal or complaint to the University. The FDPGR and DSAA Student Administration Services are available to support and provide advice to both supervisors and PGRS, particularly if the PGRS-supervisor relationship is not working as anticipated. DSAA Student Administration Services can advise on the research regulations, the complaints and appeal procedures if required.

The responsibility for formal recording of supervisory meetings will be made clear at induction and followed-up at the Annual Review. See Section 9.

4.11 Annual Leave

In line with UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) studentship guidance, a full time PGRS may take a maximum of eight weeks' annual leave in the year (which equates to 6 weeks plus bank holidays and University of Portsmouth Christmas closure). PGRS and supervisors are expected to bear in mind their obligations for progress reviews and in ensuring timely completion of the research programme when planning leave. Annual leave must be agreed in advance with the supervisory team and records kept via Skills Forge.

As a full time PGRS, the main focus should be on completing the research in the expected time frame. Any part time work undertaken should not exceed 20 hours in a normal week (**or the restricted hours quoted in the individual's visa**) or up to 37 hours during the PGRS annual leave period(s). In particular, those PGRS who are in the UK on a UKVI Student Route visa are restricted to these hours under their visa.

However, where an international PGRS on a UKVI Student Route visa wishes to undertake work for more than 20 hours per week for the University on a temporary basis a member of the PGRS' supervisory team must email Human Resources at ukvi-student-compliance@port.ac.uk to confirm the dates of annual leave. If this email confirmation is not received the student will not be permitted to work more than 20 hours per week as per the restrictions of their visa.

For PGRS UKVI Students on a bursary, the 6 hours per week of assistance to teaching that you are expected to undertake would count towards the 20 working hours (in a normal week). International students here on a UKVI Student Route visa should also see Section 6 below.

Where working restrictions are compulsory for PGRS on a UKVI Student Route, they are in place as guidance for other full-time PGRS, as the main focus should be on completing the research in the expected time frame.

4.12 Jury Service

There may be instances where serving on a jury would interfere with a student's study and impact on assessment and examinations. In these cases, it may be possible for a student to request a deferral by writing directly to the Jury Central Summoning Bureau and explaining the potential impact on their study.

The normal expectation is that a juror will serve at the time of being summoned. If a student acting as a juror is asked to serve on a case that is likely to last more than 10 days, they may want to consider the potential impact on their programme and academic progress.

Contact researchdegrees@port.ac.uk for further information.

4.13 Support for Students

PGRS can seek support or guidance from a number of sources including their supervisory team, DDPGR, Head of Department, FDPGR, Student Support Services (based in Nuffield) or via the web at MyPort. Guidance is also available from the Equality and Diversity team with regards to supporting students. Please see their [website](#) for more details.

4.14 Support for Disabled Students

PGRS can seek support or guidance from the [Additional Support and Disability Support Centre \(ASDAC\)](#), and both students and supervisors can discuss concerns and seek guidance and support from their departmental Disability Coordinator.

ASDAC can advise the department regarding any reasonable adjustments that may be considered to ensure that a disabled student is able to undertake study and assessments without being placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to non-disabled students. It is the responsibility of the student to notify the University of any condition in a timely fashion. The exact nature of any reasonable adjustments shall be determined by the specific needs of the student but may involve adjustments to:

- a) Mode of participation to research training events and activities;
- b) Arrangements for undertaking research work related to the PG research project;
- c) Periodic reviews, discussion and completion of thesis, final examination or other final work.

5. Fees and Funding

5.1 The Payment of Fees

For each year of registration PGRS will need to arrange for the payment of their tuition fees. Policies, procedures and schedules regarding the payment of tuition fees can be found in [MyPort article #2230](#)

If the PGRS is sponsored for their tuition fees proof of sponsorship is required. Further information is available at www.port.ac.uk/sponsors.

Further tuition fees are also payable during any approved extension (see section 4.6).

PGRS who, on submission of their thesis, are referred prior to *viva voce* will be given one year to resubmit, will have to re-register and pay a referral fee.

PGRS who are not awarded the degree at the *viva voce*, but are given one year to resubmit, will have to re-register and pay a resubmission fee.

No refund of tuition fees can be given following submission during the approved registration periods listed at 4.3 above.

Non-payment of fees will result in the Withdrawal of Services procedure being initiated which may result in your registration being cancelled and exclusion. For any queries with regards to fees, please contact tuition.fees@port.ac.uk

5.2 Doctoral Loan

A postgraduate doctoral loan is available for some students. For more details, criteria and how to apply please see <https://www.gov.uk/doctoral-loan>.

The important point to note is that any student who will receive Research Council funding (for example, studentships, stipends, scholarships and tuition fee support), will not be eligible.

5.3 Student Bursary Award

Some faculties may offer funding for PGRS bursary awards which pay the fees and provide a maintenance award for registered full-time PGRS. These awards are linked to specific research projects and are offered after a competitive interview process.

The University Research and Innovation Committee (URIC) confirms the amount for bursary awards each year in line with the recommendation by UKRI.

Those PGRS who have been successful and are awarded a bursary, will be asked to complete a Bursary Agreement Form and to add their bank details to their Student View once invited to, to enable the bursary payments to be set up accordingly.

Standard periods of Bursary arrangements are set in line with the PGR programme (3 year FT or 6 year PT). If there is additional funding for any further time past the 3 year FT or 6 year PT then the Continuation of Bursary Payment form will need to be completed. The department/faculty will need to ensure that the payment of tuition fees is communicated via the Faculty Sponsorship report, to cover all registration periods, including any period of approved extension, if appropriate.

All PGRS in receipt of a University Bursary should undertake assistance to teaching as indicated in the agreement. Bursary payments are made monthly in advance, direct to the PGRS' bank account. If payment does not occur, please contact the DSAA Student Administration Services

PGRS must inform their First Supervisor and DSAA Student Administration Services, immediately if they are unwell for a period of more than two weeks (payments will continue for up to two months but may have to be suspended if the absence is prolonged). PGRS must submit a copy of a medical certificate for the period of absence to the DSAA Student Administration Services to enable payments to continue.

If a PGRS obtains additional funding from another source, e.g. after application to a Research Council, then the PGRS must notify the DSAA Student Administration Services immediately.

Changes to a PGRS registration (change of mode, interruption etc.) will affect bursary payments. For advice, PGRS and First Supervisors are encouraged to contact Student Administration Services, in advance of requesting any change to the registration and completing the UPR4 form (see section 4).

Heads of Department and supervisors should also be aware of the working restrictions, in particular for those PGRS students sponsored on a UKVI Student Route visa.

5.4 Research Council Funding

Departments that have gained quota awards or funding from Research Councils may apply for funding for an individual PGRS.

The department will advise the PGRS if they are going to apply for Research Council funding for them and the PGRS will be active in making the application.

An overview of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) PhD studentships and Charities and Trusts PhD studentships is available from the [funding pages](#) of the [Graduate School](#).

If a PGRS receives Research Council funding, it is very important that the PGRS notifies their First Supervisor and the DSAA Student Administration Services immediately of any changes that may affect their progress, as the University must notify the Research Council of any approved changes to the registration.

It is usually expected that the PGRS is also reported via Je-S, a web-based system for Research Councils. PGRS should discuss the requirements, terms and conditions of the Research Council funding with their First Supervisor. For those PGRS reported via Je-S, please note that the UKRI further details for those students who have received training grants. More details can be found at: <https://www.ukri.org/funding/information-for-award-holders/grant-terms-and-conditions/> or in the Bursary Agreement.

PGRS will need to confirm which Research Council is providing their funding and confirm their Research Council identification number.

5.5 Faculty Conference Bursary

Self-funded PGRS may apply for a Faculty Conference Bursary towards costs for attending conferences. Details of the application process and deadlines can be requested from the relevant FDPGR. Funding for conferences for other PGRS may be available from their sponsor.

Where conferences are being attended overseas, approval for overseas travel should be sought and confirmed prior to booking. Further details can be found in section 7.4 below. International PGRS who are sponsored by the University for their Student Route Visa should also see section 6.5 with regards to visa implications and requirements.

5.6 Council Tax Exemption for Full Time Registered PGRS

If the PGRS is full time and lives only with other full-time students, the house should be exempt from Council Tax. If the PGRS lives within the PO1–PO6 postcode area they will need to contact Portsmouth City Council on 023 9283 4556 and provide them with their name, student number and address. If the PGRS lives in a different council area then the PGRS will need to obtain a Council Tax Exemption Certificate from the [MyPort Information Hub](#) and send this to their local council.

In addition to the above only full time PGRS who are in an approved extension registration period are eligible for Council Tax exemption.

6. International PGRS

6.1 Visa Requirements – Attendance Monitoring

The University has a [Student Attendance and Engagement Policy](#) which is applicable for international PGRS undertaking their research at the University with a UKVI Student Route visa. If you are on a UKVI Student Route visa you will be required to meet attendance requirements as stipulated by the University. It is important that a letter of authorised absence is obtained by international PGRS prior to undertaking any research activity outside the UK, for further details see section 6.3.

6.2 Visa Requirements – Interruption of Studies

International PGRS who have an interruption of studies approved are expected to return immediately to their home country and this may impact on your UKVI Student Route visa. Contact the International Advisers (international.student.adviser@port.ac.uk) for advice and guidance relating to queries regarding visas, required documentation and [UK Visa & Immigration \(UKVI\)](#) requirements.

6.3 Authorised Absence

The [Student Attendance and Engagement Monitoring Policy](#) defines authorised absence. An authorised absence is defined as a period of absence from studies of **no more than 60 days** for reasons not connected to the PGRS' studies. An authorised absence can only be granted by the PGRS supervisory team and must be approved by DSAA Student Administration Services via email to ukvi-student-compliance@port.ac.uk. During a period of authorised absence the PGRS is not expected to be studying, however, the thesis submission deadline will not be extended.

Authorised absences should be rare and only granted in exceptional circumstances. Below is a list of circumstances (not exhaustive) of when it may be appropriate to grant an authorised absence:

- Family emergency;
- Medical treatment (supported by a doctor's letter);
- Other serious personal circumstances.

Please note that if the PGRS or supervisor is unsure as to whether a PGRS' situation could be considered an authorised absence, or whether it should be an interruption, they can contact DSAA Student Administration Services via email ukvi-student-compliance@port.ac.uk.

Please note that an Authorised Absence does not change a student's thesis submission date.

6.4 Interruptions

An interruption is defined as an agreed period of study break and, as detailed in section 4.6, this needs to be approved by the First Supervisor, the Departmental Director of Postgraduate Research (DDPGR), and the FDPGR.

For PGR UKVI Students an interruption may lead to a withdrawal of sponsorship of the student's UKVI Student Route visa and, as a result, the PGRS will be required to leave the UK for the duration of the interruption.

The Regulations for Research Degrees permit a student to interrupt their studies for up to one year. Once approved, the registration period and thesis submission deadline will be adjusted accordingly. Only in exceptional circumstances would further interruption be approved.

Please note that if the PGRS or supervisor is unsure as to whether a PGRS' situation could be considered an interruption (or could be authorised absence) they can discuss this with the DDPGR or FDPGR.

6.5 Offsite Activity

Offsite Activity is defined as a period of research or data gathering, or attending training or a conference conducted at a location that is not University of Portsmouth premises. This can be within the UK or overseas. During a period of Offsite Activity a PGRS is still expected to be actively engaging with their studies and therefore must continue to adhere to the attendance monitoring policy by maintaining regular contact at the specified times, which must be recorded in Skills Forge.

Examples of Offsite Activity are listed below (not exhaustive):

- Gathering data away from University of Portsmouth premises for research purposes;
- Conducting research away from University of Portsmouth premises;
- Attending training/conference away from University of Portsmouth premises.

DSAA Student Administration Services (ukvi-student-compliance@port.ac.uk) must be notified by email prior to the commencement of a period of Offsite Activity, giving details of the dates the PGRS will be offsite and a brief reason, as this must be reported to the UKVI.

Please note that if you are unsure as to whether a PGRS' situation could be considered Offsite Activity you can contact the University's UKVI Student Compliance team ukvi-student-compliance@port.ac.uk.

Supervisors must give consideration to the timing of when a PGRS undertakes such activities as there is no extension to the deadline for submission of the documents for Major Review, Annual Review or thesis submission.

6.6 Working Restrictions

As a full time PGRS, the main focus should be on completing the research in the expected time frame. Any part time work undertaken should not exceed 20 hours in a normal week (**or the restricted hours quoted in the individual's visa**) or up to 37 hours during the PGRS annual leave period(s). In particular, those PGRS who are in the UK on a UKVI Student Route visa [are restricted to these hours under their visa](#).

However, where a PGRS wishes to undertake work for more than 20 hours per week for the University a member of the PGRS' supervisory team must email Human Resources at ukvi-student-compliance@port.ac.uk to confirm the dates of annual leave in line with University policy. If this email confirmation is not received the PGRS will not be permitted to work more than 20 hours per week as per the restrictions of their visa.

For PGRS Bursary Students on a UKVI Student Route visa the 6 hours per week of assistance to teaching that you are expected to undertake would count towards the 20 working hours (in a normal week).

6.7 Right to Work

All Heads of Department should be aware of and follow the University's [recruitment guidance](#), and specifically the [Right to Work](#) checks. The Human Resources (HR) documents provide additional guidance for those managers who employ, or are likely to employ, students who are in the UK under a UKVI Student Route visa. This includes Undergraduate, Postgraduate Taught and Postgraduate Research Students.

PGRS Annual Leave (see section 4.11) and Working Restrictions (see section 6.6) should also be referred to for details regarding PGRS entitlements and restrictions.

6.8 Extensions to Visa/ATAS

The end date for a PhD programme will be 4 years from the student's course start date. The issuance of a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) for four years provides PhD students with the additional time to complete minor or major amendments, within a course that is due to be completed in three years in line with the University's Regulations for Higher Degrees by Research.

If a PGRS needs to extend their course then they will need to ensure that they have a valid visa and ATAS certificate, as appropriate.

In line with the University's Regulations for Research Degrees, the University will only issue a CAS extension for a Postgraduate Research (PGR) student if, on examination, they are given the decision of re-examination, which is to be completed within 12 months, with no differentiation for full time and part time study. Pass with minor amendments (time limited to 3 months for both full time and part time students) and a pass with major amendments (time limited to 6 months for both full time and part time students) examination is a pass outcome; similarly, a recommendation of a lower award or fail would not require an extension. See section 13 Examination, for further information on examination outcomes.

For further details please email the International Advisers regarding visa and ATAS queries, international.student.adviser@port.ac.uk.

6.9 Graduate Immigration Route

Students who have successfully completed their course and are eligible for the Graduate Route can undertake any work in the UK, including paid and unpaid employment, self-employment and engaging in business or any professional activity. The only restriction placed on a Graduate's ability to work is a prohibition on working as a professional sports person.

The Graduate Route is not sponsored by the University. The student is responsible for ensuring they meet all the Graduate Route eligibility requirements at the point they apply. For further information and guidance regarding eligibility and how to make a Graduate Route application please visit the [UKCISA website](#).

7. Development opportunities for PGRS

7.1 Researcher Development

The University aims to ensure that PGRS are trained as generic researchers within their disciplinary context and are prepared for a career after their research degree by providing various opportunities for training, development and networking.

New PGRS are required to attend Graduate School, Faculty and Department Inductions.

All PGRS registered for an MPhil, PhD, MD or Professional Doctorate (PD) at Stage 2 – Research Phase are expected to undertake 10 days for full time PGRS, and 5 days for part time PGRS, of research development activity during each year of registration. Researcher development should include material on research skills and methods, advanced subject specific knowledge and personal development. It also provides valuable opportunities for networking. Development activities will be monitored through annual or major reviews each year.

Supervisors should encourage PGRSs to participate in appropriate internal research seminars and events as part of the research community and to present their research plans or findings at conferences.

The Graduate Students' Professional Development Programme (GProf) is formal training provided within the University. It is available for all PGRS and must be completed by those who will be involved in teaching students in any capacity. PGRSs are expected to attend the first module before undertaking any teaching activity such as demonstrating, fieldwork, laboratories, seminars, marking, studio support, tutoring and project or dissertation supervision. Students can register for GProf by submitting an application form from the [GProf Moodle page](#) to apex@port.ac.uk; the First Supervisor must also sign this form. GProf will include information about how to apply for Associate Fellow or Fellow of the Higher Education Academy: these are awards given in recognition of teaching competency and can be helpful when applying for positions with teaching responsibilities in higher education institutions.

7.2 The Graduate School Development Programme (GSDP)

The GSDP provides a range of face-to-face workshops and e-learning resources for PGRS which can be found on the [Graduate School Hub](#). The GSDP is focused on developing the PGRS as a researcher and provides some of the research development expected by the UK Research and Innovation (UKRI)

for PGRS. Other subject-specific and advanced training may be available from the faculty, department or research group. The GSDP has been designed for both full-time and part-time PGRS, to offer resources to help PGRS succeed whether they are based in Portsmouth or at a distance. The aim is to provide development opportunities that will be relevant to individual PGRS whatever their subject area, throughout their research degree programme.

A Fair Use Policy is in operation for GSDP workshops. The First Supervisor and Heads of Department will be notified where a PGRS has failed to attend and a fine will be charged. For further details please see the [GSDP Fair Use Policy](#).

7.3 Skills Forge

Skills Forge ([www.port.ac.uk/Skills Forge](http://www.port.ac.uk/Skills_Forge)) is an interactive web-based system that is used to:

- Book a place on GSDP Workshops. Attendance at workshops that have been booked will be recorded on Skills Forge providing the PGRS has attended for the whole session;
- Manage professional development. The Skills Forge system enables a record of skills requirements to be kept as well as achievements. The GSDP has been developed in accordance with the UKRI endorsed Researcher Development Framework (RDF), and progress against each of the four RDF domains can be monitored;
- Keep a record of meetings with the PGRS and supervisory team. It is very important that a record of discussion in meetings with research supervisors is kept, and in particular that actions are agreed, recorded, and signed off when completed. It is expected that the Skills Forge system is used to keep a record which can be retrieved later if needed.
- View a guide to activities undertaken during the PGRS research programme that develop researcher and employability skills.

Responsibilities of the First Supervisor:

- To ensure the PGRS is aware of the expectation to undertake appropriate researcher development activities.
- To discuss any notification of non-attendance at booked GSDP workshops with the PGRS concerned.
- To ensure the PGRS understands that engagement with the GSDP is a requirement for approval of Major Review.

Further information about researcher development activity can be found at the Graduate School website www.port.ac.uk/graduateschool or by emailing gsdp@port.ac.uk

7.4 Work Based and Placement Learning

The supervisory team should discuss any work based learning or placement activity planned to be completed during the research programme. The [Code of Practice for Work based and Placement Learning](#) gives further information about the documentation that requires completion to ensure that appropriate risk assessment is undertaken and confirm that adequate insurance arrangements are in place.

Supervisors must consider the timing of a placement or other such activities as there is no extension to the deadline for submission of the documents for Major Review, Annual Review or thesis submission.

The [Health & Safety](#) and [Insurance](#) pages may also be useful, and for any activity that requires travel outside of the UK the PGRS will need to complete the online [Permission to Travel Form](#).

If the research is an incidental part of a business trip, the PGRS should seek clarification that the employer will provide insurance cover for the research activities. If not, they should purchase their own additional policy.

If uncertain as to the best course of action, PGRS are encouraged to contact the University Insurance Officer for advice, at insurancesupport@port.ac.uk.

7.5 Academic Skills Unit (ASK)

The Academic Skills Unit (ASK) promotes the development of the academic skills and literacy that students need to be successful at University-level study.

ASK lecturers can provide confidential one-to-one tutorials for students who have more complex skills needs, but students should make sure that they have utilised the workshops provided for PGRS (and the In-Sessional English course if English is not a first language) before requesting a one-to-one tutorial.

For more information please visit <https://myport.port.ac.uk/study-skills>

7.6 In-Sessional English (ISE)

The In-Sessional English modules have been designed for students for whom English is a second language. It aims to help students identify their own needs and working with a language teacher, help students to develop their use of academic English.

For more information please visit

<https://www.port.ac.uk/study/international-students/courses/english-language-support>.

8. Ethics and Intellectual Property

8.1 Ethical Review

All research must be reviewed using the [Ethics Screening Tool](#) available on the [Research Ethics](#) web page, and may need to be reviewed by the relevant Faculty Ethics Committee, particularly if it involves:

- human or animal participants;
- sensitive topics;
- the integrity of the environment.

Animal research must be referred to the specialist committee. The University has a [Working with Animals Policy](#)

Individual faculties may have different processes for completion of ethical review and PGRS are advised to discuss the requirements with their First Supervisor or the Chair of their Faculty Ethics Committee.

You can expect the First Supervisor to:

- Discuss the ethical considerations with the PGRS at interview, and throughout the development of your research programme, referring as appropriate to the UK Research Integrity Office (UKRIO) checklist;
- Discuss the requirement for the application for ethical approval and assist with any formal application;
- Ensure that ethical review is undertaken;
- Assist with the completion of a statement where formal review is not considered necessary;
- Ensure the PGRS' proposed timetable includes time for ethical review to be undertaken before the commencement of recruitment of participants or data collection;
- Discuss ongoing ethical considerations and assist with additional applications for ethical review arising from developments and progress in the research programme throughout the PGRS' registration.

No recruitment of participants or data collection can commence until ethical review has been undertaken and a favourable opinion obtained. Please see the [University of Portsmouth Ethics Policy](#) for further information.

During the Annual Review process the PGRS and the review panel will discuss and record that ethical review has been undertaken. Consideration should be given to any changes to the research which may require further ethical approval.

On submission of the thesis for examination PGRS must complete the [Research Ethics Review Checklist \(Form UPR16\)](#) and include this as an Annex within the thesis copies.

8.2 Theses: Ethical Review and Participant Documents

The following must be included in all theses, where relevant:

- The letter from the Ethics Committee confirming the favourable opinion;
- The [Form UPR16](#) declaring the ethical conduct of the research.

These documents should be included in an appendix or annex of the main thesis.

Inclusion of any or all of the following is voluntary:

- Any template letters used for the purposes of recruitment – they should not include any personal data (i.e. names and addresses of potential participants);
- Any letters sent to host organisations seeking permission to conduct the research; these would normally include details of the addressee in the case of public organisations but discretion should be exercised in cases of smaller private organisations and, *a fortiori*, individual gatekeepers;
- Any letters from host organisations – following similar caveats to those identified above;
- Participant information sheets;
- Consent form templates i.e. not including any personal data of participants;

- Data collection instruments approved for use in the course of ethical review; these might include survey instruments, interview schedules, topic lists etc.;
- Any wider communication from the Ethics Committee, for example regarding substantial amendments, seeking further advice etc.

Some ethics documents must be available to examiners, auditors and relevant regulatory authorities. It is normal to make this position clear at the time consent is sought; for example the consent form template includes the following clause:

I understand that data collected during the study may be looked at by individuals from (company name / University etc.), or from regulatory authorities. I give permission for these individuals to have access to my data.

These documents often include personal data (data which identify or might be used to identify an individual), sensitive data (for example the ethnicity, sexuality, religion, political opinions of the subject), confidential material, raw (as opposed to research) data, and transcripts including names, locations etc. These documents **must** be available at the time of examination and, if consent has been obtained, for an agreed period, after successful completion. These documents **must not** be included in the published thesis; they include:

- Signed consent forms;
- Personal letters to participants;
- Confidential documents – any document which has been obtained following assurance of confidentiality;
- Correspondence with any private organisation – unless permission has been obtained to publish it.

It is recommended that material of this nature be bound in a separate document which can be made readily available to any person with a 'lawful right to know'. The document can be hard copy or on a password protected database.

It is increasingly common for research data to be retained and made available for other research; this might well be a condition of public funding. These data must be made available in the agreed format, to the agreed parties. Research data are normally anonymised (either fully or linked to codes) and do not include any information which might be used to identify subjects.

8.3 Intellectual Property (IP)

All PGRS registering at the University agree to abide by the relevant regulations applicable to their research degree registration and have an obligation to maintain the confidentiality of any confidential information that may be disclosed as a result of the research. Guidance can be sought from the University [Ethics Policy](#).

If a PGRS is self-funded they own the IP that they generate during completion of their research programme.

If the PGRS is in employment while registered as a PGRS, the employer owns the IP if the work undertaken for the research programme is within their normal employment duties.

Students should read the [Copyright policy](#) and [Intellectual Property \(IP\) policy](#). Additional guidance can be sought from the First Supervisor.

Students should familiarise themselves with the implications of any potential intellectual property rights (arising from the policies above) of publication or otherwise bringing into the public domain their work before intellectual property protection is considered, since this may adversely impact on the ability to secure intellectual property rights.

With the appropriate permissions, the candidate will be free to publish material in advance of submitting the thesis, but reference should be included in the thesis.

If a student is sponsored by the University or an external sponsor, any intellectual property rights in the work which they generate may be owned by the University or the sponsor. This does not impact on the student's right to be recognised as a creator of the IP.

8.4 Process for a Confidential Thesis

PGRS may apply for their thesis to be approved as confidential to enable a patent to be lodged or to protect commercially or politically sensitive material. The Application for a Thesis to be Confidential [Form \(UPR15\)](#) should be completed following discussion with the First Supervisor and prior to the thesis being submitted for examination.

Where confidentiality is approved, the final thesis will be retained by the Department of Student and Academic Administration throughout the approved period of restriction for a maximum period of two years from the date of submission of the final thesis. At the end of the approved period of restriction the thesis will be lodged in the University Library.

9. Annual Review

9.1 Purpose and Process for the Annual Review

The purpose of the Annual Review is to provide an opportunity for independent formal monitoring to review PGRS progress.

The Annual Review is an annual regulatory requirement for all PGRSs except those who are on an approved period of interrupted study, or have already submitted their thesis for examination, and will take place every year except the academic year in which the Major Review takes place (see section 10). PhD by Publication students do not need to submit for Annual Review.

PGRS on an approved period of interrupted study will be expected to complete an Annual Review on their return and the date of submission will be confirmed by the DSAA Student Administration Services.

PGRS will be expected to confirm that their research has been submitted for ethical review as they undertake their research project.

Annual Reviews will be undertaken by a panel of at least two members of academic staff, at least one of whom - usually the Chair - will be independent of the supervisory team. They will review the annual reports submitted by the PGRS and the First Supervisor, along with the presentation and other evidence provided by the PGRS, and ask relevant questions of the PGRS. Other additional evidence may be considered such as:

- draft sections of the thesis;
- a thesis outline;
- publications;
- record of GSDP sessions attended and other training and development activities undertaken.

All evidence should be written in English.

The Faculty Research Degrees Committee agrees the Annual Review arrangements including the format of the review, the evidence that PGRS are required to submit and the panel arrangements.

Further information regarding individual Faculty requirements can be accessed from the [Annual Review Myport page](#).

For those required to complete a presentation, a suggested PowerPoint template is also available from [this link](#).

The PGRS and the supervisory team will be sent a reminder from the generic email annualreview@port.ac.uk, approximately three months prior to the submission deadline, which includes the web link to the current [Annual Review Student Form and Supervisor Form \(UPR8A/B\)](#).

9.2 Deadline for Submission of the Annual Review Documentation:

The Annual Review reports (UPR8A/B) and required evidence must be submitted to the DSAA Student Administration Services, at annualreview@port.ac.uk by the following deadline dates:

- PGRS registered in October must submit documentation by 30th September
- PGRS registered in February must submit documentation by 31st January
- PGRS registered in April must submit documentation by 31st March

If exceptionally a non-standard start date has been approved by the Academic Registrar who has delegated authority for this, or the PGRS has had an approved period of interruption, an alternative deadline for submission of the Annual Review Report Form UPR8A/B may be applicable.

The First Supervisor will confirm the arrangements for the Annual Review event, which will only take place once the necessary documentation has been sent to the review panel by DSAA Student Administration Services. The UPR8A Form includes the option for the PGRS to request that their First Supervisor is not present if they wish to disclose any issue that cannot be discussed with their First Supervisor.

Successful completion of the Annual Review is a formal requirement for the PGRS to have continued registration. If a PGRS does not submit the Annual Review documentation by the stated deadline the University may end their registration.

Further details regarding Annual Review including faculty requirements can be accessed from: [Annual Review](#)

9.3 Outcomes of the Annual Review

The outcome of the Annual Review will be one of the following:

- Progress;
- Progress with recommendations;
- Application insufficient. Defer to a Final Review Meeting.

The PGRS will be notified of the outcome of the Annual Review at the end of the meeting and this will be formally confirmed in writing by the Student Administration Services, Student Life, DSAA including any requirements for a Final Review Meeting which the PGRS is expected to attend.

9.4 Final Review Meeting following Annual Review

If the panel could not agree unanimously that the student is actively engaged in the research programme and making satisfactory progress, the Chair of the Review panel will arrange a Final Review Meeting of the panel to determine the outcome of the application. The Chair of the Review panel will inform the student in writing of the time, date and venue of the meeting. The meeting will take place at least seven days after the date on which the notice is sent to the student.

The student will submit further work to the Department of Student and Academic Administration annualreview@port.ac.uk as specified by the panel within an agreed deadline prior to the Final Review Meeting. Should there be an even number on the assessment panel, a further independent assessor will be appointed by the Faculty Research Degrees Committee.

The outcome of the Final Review Meeting following an Annual Review will be one of the following:

- PGRS may continue their registration (Progress) (with or without Recommendations);
- further supporting evidence is necessary - in which case the recommendation must make clear:
 - the nature of this evidence
 - the deadline for its submission to the Department of Student and Academic Administration
 - which member(s) of the panel will determine whether or not the further supporting evidence is sufficient;
- The PGRS registration for PhD is changed to MPhil with the appropriate decrease of the registration period;
- The PGRS registration is ended by the University.

If the PGRS has encountered extenuating circumstances which have prevented them from attending the Annual Review, they should discuss this matter with the First Supervisor at the earliest opportunity. Further guidance is included in Section 12 Extenuating Circumstances.

A PGRS may request a review of the outcome of their Annual Review by following the appeals process in the relevant [research regulations](#) for their research degree programme. PGRS should note that appeals cannot be made on the basis of disagreement with the academic judgement of the academic staff who undertook the Annual Review and the valid grounds for appeal are provided in the relevant research regulations.

Further details regarding Annual Review including faculty requirements can be accessed from: [Annual Review](#)

Responsibilities of First Supervisor:

- To be aware of the arrangements organised by their faculty for the formal Annual Review event which the PGRS attends.
- To discuss researcher development activity requirements and monitor the activities completed.
- To discuss with the PGRS the aims and objectives to assist with completion of the UPR8A & UPR8B Forms.
- To discuss the progress of the research project.
- To explore areas with the PGRS where problems have arisen and agree ways to overcome them, or refer to the FDPGR.
- To submit the Annual Report UPR8B to the DSAA Student Administration Services within the University deadlines.

10. Major Review assessment for MPhil, PhD and MD PGRS

10.1 Purpose and Process for the Major Review

The purpose of the Major Review is to confirm the PGRS' capability to satisfactorily complete a PhD or MD thesis. If the PGRS is registered for a PhD (other than PhD by Publication) or MD they will need to complete a Major Review to confirm their registration for the award. PGRS registered and submitting for the award of MPhil, on advice from their First Supervisor, may submit for Major Review if they wish to apply to upgrade to a PhD registration.

The PGRS and their First Supervisor will be sent a reminder approximately three months before the deadline date for submission of the Major Review documentation from the Student Administration Services, Student Life, DSAA using the generic email majorreview@port.ac.uk. This includes a web link to the First Supervisor Statement (Form UPR10).

10.2 Deadline for Submission of the Major Review Documentation

A full-time PGRS will need to submit the required documentation within 12 months of study or submit within 24 months if they are a part-time PGRS.

- PGRS registered in October must submit documentation by 30th September
- PGRS registered in February must submit documentation by 31st January
- PGRS registered in April must submit documentation by 31st March

An MPhil student may apply for a major review, should they wish to upgrade the programme to a PhD pathway, within the time limits stated above.

If exceptionally a non-standard start date has been approved by the Academic Registrar who has delegated authority for this, or if the PGRS has had an approved period of interruption, an alternative deadline for submission of the Major Review may be applicable.

PGRS and supervisors are advised to read the relevant [research regulations](#) for the research programme as these will provide information about the structure and content of the review.

The review panel consists of one assessor nominated by the First Supervisor, one assessor nominated by the FRD Committee and also the First Supervisor.

PGRS will need to submit the Major Review documents by email to majorreview@port.ac.uk and will receive confirmation by email to acknowledge receipt.

The First Supervisor will complete a [Major Review First Supervisor's Statement Form \(UPR10\)](#) and email it to majorreview@port.ac.uk.

Submission of the PGRS document and the Major Review First Supervisor's Statement Form (UPR10) will be logged and then sent by email to the approved assessors.

It is the responsibility of the First Supervisor to arrange the Major Review meeting, which will only take place once the necessary documentation has been sent to the review panel by DSAA Student Administration Services.

PGRS are expected to attend the Major Review meeting with the assessors and should be prepared to answer and ask any questions.

10.3 Outcomes of the Major Review

The outcome of the Major Review will be one of the following:

- the PGRS has the capability to complete satisfactorily a PhD (or MD) thesis (including upgrade from MPhil to PhD);
- the application is insufficient to determine this capability.

PGRS will be notified of the outcome of the Major Review at the end of the meeting and this will be formally confirmed in writing by the DSAA Student Administration Services.

10.4 Final Review Meeting Following Major Review

If the panel cannot agree unanimously that the student has the capability to satisfactorily complete a PhD or MD thesis, the Chair of the Review panel will arrange a Final Review Meeting of the panel to determine the outcome of the application. The Chair of the Review panel will inform the student in writing of the time, date and venue of the meeting. The meeting will take place at least seven days after the date on which the notice is sent to the student. The student will submit further work as specified by the panel within an agreed deadline prior to the Final Review Meeting to majorreview@port.ac.uk.

The decisions open to the assessment panel at the Final Review Meeting following Major Review are:

- The PGRS may continue their PhD or MD registration;
- If the PGRS is registered for an MPhil but submitted a Major Review to upgrade the registration, they may be permitted to change the registration to PhD and the registration period will be increased to cover the extra time permitted;
- Further supporting evidence is required before a decision is taken, in which case the recommendation must make clear:
 - the nature of this evidence,
 - the deadline for its submission to the Department of Student and Academic Administration,
 - which member(s) of the panel will determine whether or not the further supporting evidence is sufficient;
- The registration for PhD is changed to MPhil with the appropriate decrease of the registration period (for an MD PGRS where the application fails to support continuation, the registration ends as no lower award is available);
- The PGRS registration is ended by the University.

PGRS will be notified of the outcome of the Final Review at the end of the meeting and this will be formally confirmed in writing by the DSAA Student Administration Services.

If the PGRS encountered extenuating circumstances which prevented them from attending the Major Review, they should discuss this matter with their First Supervisor at the earliest opportunity. Further guidance is included in Section 12 Extenuating Circumstances.

PGRS may request a review of the outcome of the Major Review by following the appeals process in the relevant [research regulations](#) for the research degree programme. PGRS should note that appeals cannot be made on the basis of disagreement with the academic judgement of the academic staff who undertook the Major Review and the valid grounds for appeal are provided in the research regulations.

10.5 Suggested Structure of the Major Review Document

Please use 12-point type, 1.5 line spacing. The document can be 2,000–3,000 words in total but should not exceed 4,000 words. Documents exceeding 4,000 words may be returned immediately for revision.

All evidence must be written in English.

Title page: Name, school/department, title of project, duration of project.

1. Statement of aims (ca.100 words): Give a concise list. This might include reference to the development of theory of method (the collection and analysis of new information), contributions to knowledge and/or understanding, or contributions to policy/practice.
2. Literature review (up to 1,000 words, excluding references)

This review should give an analysis of previous work on a defined area of relevance to a chosen research topic (it may be extracted from existing drafts of the students' literature review). It

should include consideration of past methodologies as well as past findings. It will be expected to demonstrate an adequate knowledge of the literature on the chosen theme and skill in the use of literature search techniques and information technology (via word-processed text and figures).

The structure/format of the review is up to the PGRS; however, an extended review essay utilising thematic headings to break up the text is suggested. Annotated bibliographies will not be acceptable. Your review should address the following issues:

- A critical analysis of the background and context of the research topic;
- A review of other research studies similar to/the same as the one proposed (including evaluation of their methods/methodologies);
- Description of gaps in the research literature in the area;
- An explanation of why the proposed research is important and how it will contribute to the area. A full list of references must be given, in an appropriate format. All assignments should include a short one-page annex detailing the literature search techniques and sources employed;

3. Research outline (up to 1,000 words).

According to the nature of the work, sub-sections might include:

- a) The research design(s) involved;
- b) Description of the nature of (further) data that will be obtained, or work to be carried out and the methods to be used;
- c) Discussion of issues of confidentiality, ethical consideration and of access and strategies in the event of problems;
- d) Description of the methods for analysis; the reasons for their choice; identify any potential innovation;
- e) Outline of expected outcomes and plans for the dissemination of the research.

4. Provisional timetable for the programme of research (ca. 300 words).

This should present the research as a series of stages with approximate timescales attached and should show how the work will be completed in the time available. A Gantt chart or flow diagram is suggested.

5. Resource needs (ca. 200 words).

This should indicate the resources that are considered necessary to carry out the research;

6. Research progress (up to 1,000 words).

A short review of any results obtained so far and critical discussion of the work already completed and the methods used.

7. Outline of researcher development activities (ca. 200 words).

Please include, for training already taken or yet to be taken:

modules from the GSDP;

subject-specific training;

seminars, conferences etc. attended;

presentations delivered/plan to deliver.

PGRS may find a printout of your developmental activities from [Skills Forge](#) to be helpful in providing this information.

SUGGESTED TEMPLATE

Contents

1. Statement of aims (ca. 100 words)
 2. Literature review (up to 1,000 words)
 - 2.1 Background and research context
 - 2.2 Review of similar research studies
 - 2.3 Description of gaps in research literature
 - 2.4 Importance and contribution of proposed research
 3. Research outline (up to 1,000 words)
 - 3.1 Research design
 - 3.2 Data description
 - 3.3 Confidentiality and ethical considerations
 - 3.4 Methods and choice of analysis
 - 3.5 Expected outcomes
 4. Provisional timetable for proposed research (ca. 300 words)
 5. Resource needs and funding (ca. 200 words)
 6. Research progress (up to 1,000 words)

Brief description of work done so far, e.g. brief reference to literature review, any draft chapters, any work completed and any results obtained etc.
 7. Outline of researcher development activities (ca. 200 words)
 - 7.1 Prior qualifications and training
 - 7.2 Subject-specific training
 - 7.3 Seminars and conferences attended
 - 7.4 Presentations
 8. Conclusion
 9. References
- Annexes

Responsibilities of the First Supervisor:

- To provide help and guidance with the preparation of the Major Review document.
- To complete the form UPR10, First Supervisor Statement and submit by email to the FDPGR.
- To arrange the Major Review Panel meeting between the PGRS and the Review Panel.
- To return the completed Major Review Decision Form UPR13 to the DSAA Student Administration Services. To arrange a Final Review Meeting (if required) between the PGRS and the Review Panel.
- To offer guidance on the submission of any extra work required by the Final Review Panel.
- To return the completed Major Review Final Review Decision Form UPR14 to the DSAA Student Administration Services
- Interim examination

11. Interim Examination

11.1 Purpose and Process for the Interim Examination

If a PGRS does not seem to be progressing as anticipated at any point during their studies, an Interim Examination can be requested by the supervisory team to provide the PGRS with the opportunity to demonstrate that their standard of work and commitment to the work is sufficient to continue the registration. The PGRS will be notified that an Interim Examination will be arranged to assess the standard of their work.

If a PGRS is having difficulties, either study-related or personal, which are having an adverse effect on the progress of their research degree, they should inform their First Supervisor as soon as possible to avoid misunderstanding. Student Advice Services provides a network of support and details of individual services that can be accessed from <https://myport.port.ac.uk/guidance-and-support>.

Procedures for the Interim Examination:

- First Supervisor will submit UPR17 to FRD Committee to request an Interim Examination
- That Committee will decide whether to arrange an Interim Examination, and if so, will approve the form it will take, specify the arrangements for it, and state the membership of any panel including nomination of the Chair. The PGRS will receive notification of an Interim Examination and the work required from the Department of Student and Academic Administration;
- The PGRS prepares the work required for the assessment and attends the panel meeting;
- In order to allow the student sufficient time to prepare for the assessment, the Interim Examination will take place at least 10 working days after the date on which the Department of Student and Academic Administration sent the meeting notice to the student. If the student does not submit the work or attend the panel meeting, they will be deemed to have failed to reach the standard and their registration will be withdrawn;

- If the PGRS feels that this procedure has adversely affected their relationship with any of the supervisory team, PGRS are advised to discuss this with their DDPGR and/or FDPGR;
- PGRS should inform DSAA Student Administration Services immediately if they decide that they do not wish to be assessed but wish to withdraw.

11.2 Outcomes of the Interim Examination

The outcomes of the Interim Examination will be one of the following:

- PGRS may continue with their registration;
- The programme of research is discontinued and the PGRS' registration withdrawn by the University.

The PGRS will be notified of the outcome of the Interim Examination at the end of the examination and this will be formally confirmed in writing by the DSAA Student Administration Services.

If the PGRS encountered any extenuating circumstances which prevented them attending the Interim Examination, they should discuss this matter with their First Supervisor at the earliest opportunity. Further guidance is included in Section 12 Extenuating Circumstances.

PGRS may request a review of the outcome of the Interim Examination by following the appeals process in the relevant [research regulations](#) for their research degree programme. It should be noted that appeals cannot be made on the basis of disagreement with the academic judgement of the academic staff who undertook the Interim Examination and the valid grounds for appeal are provided in the research regulations.

Responsibilities of the First Supervisor:

- To initiate the procedure for Interim Examination by completion of the UPR17 Form if the PGRS fails to progress as expected.
- Advise the PGRS on the agreed form of assessment to be completed
- To provide advice and guidance with the preparation of the work for assessment.
- Arrange the date, time and place for the panel meeting and propose a deadline for submission of a written assessment, allowing sufficient time for the PGRS to complete the work required
- To return the Interim Examination Decision Form UPR18 to the DSAA Student Administration.

12. Extenuating circumstances

A PGRS may advise their First Supervisor that there are circumstances relating to their health and/or personal life which are of a sufficiently serious nature to result in them being unable to attend a review meeting or examination. Relevant circumstances are outlined in the [Extenuating Circumstances](#) criteria.

PGRS undertaking a higher degree by research may submit extenuating circumstances for:

- Major Review Meetings
- Annual Review Meetings
- Interim Examination Meetings

- *Viva Voce* Examination

The University operates a 'fit to sit' policy: if the PGRS attempts their Major Review, Annual Review, Interim Examination or *viva voce* Examination, they would not be able to claim they were affected by extenuating circumstances after the event. If a student is affected by extenuating circumstances while the review or examination is taking place, assessors or examiners should be notified immediately and a decision will be made in conjunction with the First Supervisor as to whether to continue.

The First Supervisor should be contacted at the earliest opportunity and before the affected review or examination, if a student wishes to raise extenuating circumstances.

In the case of Major Reviews, Annual Reviews and Final Review Meetings, extenuating circumstances must be agreed with the Chair of the Review panel. In the case of Interim examinations and *Viva voce* examination, extenuating circumstances must be agreed with the Faculty Director of Postgraduate Research. Should extenuating circumstances be agreed, the outcome will be to defer the review or examination to a future date by up to 20 working days.

First Supervisors are advised to contact the Student Administration Services, Student Life, DSAA to inform them of the details of the extenuating circumstances. The Student Administration Services will be able to advise on the approval process and liaise with the First Supervisor regarding the timescale of deferral once notification of approval has been received.

13. Examination

During the examination stage the PGRS is also known or referred to as the candidate.

13.1 The Examination Process

The examination process is completed in the following format:

- Examination of the thesis by the examiners;
- A presentation which is compulsory for PDs and optional for other PGRS;
- The *viva voce* examination of the candidate to defend the thesis.

13.2 Appointment of Examiners

The First Supervisor nominates the examiners by completing the relevant sections of the Proposal for the Appointment of Examiners [Form UPR5](#) and submitting it to the DSAA Student Administration Services, six months before the PGRS is due to submit the thesis. The criteria for appointing examiners are included within the [Research Regulations](#) Section 9, Examination Arrangements.

There should be at least one External and one Internal Examiner who must not have been a supervisor for the candidate.

Examiners shall have appropriate subject, research and/or professional expertise in the general area of the candidate's research topic and one external examiner shall normally have experience as a specialist in the topic to be examined. Also one examiner should have experience of examining research degree candidates at the appropriate level in the UK, and at least one external examiner shall have experience of examining research degree candidates at the appropriate level.

The [Research Regulations](#) include the circumstances when an Independent Chair will be appointed. The candidate can request the appointment of an Independent Chair and should contact the Department of Student and Academic Administration if they wish to do so.

The proposed Examiners are required to complete and sign part of the Proposal for the Appointment of Examiner [Form UPR5](#) and provide an appropriate short CV. Once the First Supervisor has completed the UPR5 with the nominated Examiners details they should send the UPR5 to DSAA Student Administration Services, who will send the relevant sections to the proposed External/Internal Examiners for completion. Examiners must confirm that there is no conflict of interest in their appointment and should declare any potential conflicts not addressed in the regulations for consideration.

On receipt of the fully completed and signed Proposal for the Appointment of Examiner Form with CVs the Student Administration Services will check and confirm the criteria for the appointment has been satisfied and if appropriate include a request for an Independent Chair to be appointed before forwarding to the relevant FDPGR for approval.

Under current UK Visa & Immigration legislation the University has to ensure that all those undertaking work for the institution have the right to work in the UK. Therefore, all External Examiners will be asked to send a photocopy of their passport (photo page) to the DSAA Student Administration Services. A short video call may then be required to complete the ID check. Further guidance regarding appointing an External Examiner who is not a UK/EU national is available from <http://www2.port.ac.uk/departments/services/academicregistry/qmd/researchdegrees/forms/RDFormsExamination/>

Please note that the fee and examination expenses are paid by the school/department and authorisation by a Head of Department should be sought before appointing an External Examiner if the travel expenses may be higher than normal. The department may be able to book travel tickets and hotel accommodation at a lower rate than the Examiner.

It is noted that situations arise where examiners who have been formally approved are no longer able to continue with the role due to changes in circumstances. On such occasions then a relevant replacement examiner would be nominated and need approval from the relevant FDPGR prior to the examination process continuing for the candidate.

Further guidance or advice can be sought from the DSAA Student Administration Services and the relevant forms and guidance are available at: <https://staff.port.ac.uk/departments/services/academicregistry/qmd/researchdegrees/forms/RDFormsExamination/>

13.3 Procedure for Submission

A candidate for the award of a research degree will submit an electronic copy of the thesis or, in the case of a PhD by Publication, the commentary, to the Department of Student and Academic Administration, along with any other materials to be submitted.

Procedure for submission of the thesis before the *viva voce* examination:

It is strongly recommended that PGRS use Turnitin before submitting their final draft of their thesis to the First Supervisor for agreement that it is ready to be examined. Turnitin is an internet-based

plagiarism prevention service that can be used to check that the work is correctly referenced. It can be found in the Graduate School GSDP [Moodle site](#) along with guidance and videos on how to use it.

As part of the appendix or annexes of the thesis PGRS need to include:

- The letter from the Ethics Committee confirming the favourable opinion;
- The [Form UPR16](#) declaring the ethical conduct of the research.

See Section 8 – Ethics for further details of the requirements for ethical review.

The presentation of the thesis should follow the essential points as described at 13.7. PGRS are asked to submit one electronic copy of the thesis (including Ethics Form UPR16) to researchdegrees@port.ac.uk by their deadline date. The PGRS will be provided with a receipt and guidance note 'The *viva voce* Examination'.

If a PGRS is unable to submit their thesis for examination within the approved registration period for their research programme they should apply for an extension to their registration – see Section 4.7 for guidance.

If a paper copy is requested by an examiner, the First Supervisor will be asked to supply this in collaboration with the student to ensure there are no issues with formatting. The presentation of the thesis should follow the essential points as described at 13.7. Printing can be requested via the [Online Store](#). The printed thesis can then be submitted to the Research Degrees Team, Student Administration Services, Floor 5, Mercantile House, for posting to the examiner.

13.4 Covid-19 Impact Statement

The University recognises that the pandemic is likely to have had multiple impacts on the type and quantity of Postgraduate Research (PGR) students' work, as well as on their mental health and well-being. Any PGR student affected by the pandemic who submits a thesis may include a Covid-19 impact statement as described in [this document](#). A statement is not compulsory and should only be included where a PGR student wishes to highlight the impact of the pandemic and the steps taken to adjust their research activities.

The Covid-19 impact statement can be submitted (i) as a cover note submitted to the examiners to accompany the thesis, or (ii) as part of the thesis itself between the abstract and the author's declaration.

PGR students should discuss the inclusion of a Covid-19 impact statement with their supervisory team and draft the content together, but the decision to include the statement ultimately rests with the student.

13.5 Extenuating Circumstances

If a PGRS has encountered extenuating circumstances which have prevented them from submitting their thesis for examination during the approved period of registration they should discuss this matter

with their First Supervisor at the earliest opportunity and contact the Student Administration Services for advice.

13.6 Presentation of the Thesis

The thesis must be presented in English in a permanent and legible form either in typescript or print and the text of a satisfactory quality (e.g., Arial, Calibri, Tahoma, etc.).

Pages shall be numbered consecutively through the main text and reference list, including photographs and/or diagrams that are included as whole pages.

The size of character used in the main text, including displayed matter and notes, should be no less than 2mm for capitals and 1.5mm for lower case (e.g., font size between 10 and 12). Double or one-and-a-half spacing must be used in typescript except for indented quotations or footnotes where single spacing may be used.

The following is the suggested order for the sections of the thesis before the main chapters:

- An abstract must be included which provides a synopsis of the thesis stating the aims, scope, results and conclusions of the work undertaken and of the contribution made to the knowledge of the subject treated;
- The abstract should be approximately 300 words in length and must not include abbreviations (this word count is not included in the overall word count for the thesis). The abstract is self-standing and can be read without reference to the main body of the thesis;
- Contents list, giving the title of each chapter, principal sub-headings and page numbers;
- PGRS will need to include the following declaration:

‘Whilst registered as a candidate for the above degree, I have not been registered for any other research award. The results and conclusions embodied in this thesis are the work of the named candidate and have not been submitted for any other academic award’;

- The word count should be included on this declaration page;
- List of tables, numbered by each chapter, giving their title and page numbers;
- List of figures, numbered by each chapter, giving their title and page numbers;
- Abbreviations. This should be listed on a separate page after the main index. They should be defined at their first appearance in the text. Use abbreviations sparingly as they make the text harder to read;
- Acknowledgements and dedication, if any;
- Dissemination. A concise list of the PGRS’ relevant publications, abstracts, presentations and posters.

As an alternative to a traditional doctoral thesis (monograph-style), the thesis may be prepared in the format of a Compilation-Style Thesis. [The Compilation-Style Thesis Guidance](#) should be referred to for further information.

It is expected that the maximum length of the thesis should not exceed the following guidelines, excluding ancillary data such as footnotes, bibliographies, diagrams and references. Please note that unless specified there is no minimum word limit.

- PhD 80,000 words
- MPhil 40,000 words
- MD 40,000 words
- PD 50,000 word
- PhD by Publication 10,000 words (Commentary) See Part 4 for further details.

Any reference list submitted does not count towards the maximum length of the thesis.

If the length of the thesis goes over the maximum word limit then the examiners may refuse to look at the thesis and/or reducing the word count could be one of their requirements for referral, minor/major amendments or re-examination.

Faculty Research Degree Committees may prescribe alternative minimum or maximum word lengths for particular subject areas which must be agreed by the University Research Degrees Committee prior to submission of the thesis. The following lower limits have been agreed:

- MPhil Biology, Pharmacy and Biomedical Science, Mathematics: 20,000 words
- PhD Biology, Pharmacy and Biomedical Science, Mathematics: 40,000 words

Where the thesis is accompanied by material that is not in written form, e.g. a Practice Research PhD may include film, video photographic records, etc., the written thesis should normally be within the range:

- For PhD 30,000–40,000 words
- For MPhil 15,000–20,000 words

When a thesis incorporates Creative Writing, the above ranges apply to the commentary but not to the creative artefact component.

The title page shall give the following information:

- The full title of the thesis;
- The full name of the author;
- The statement worded as follows for PhD, MD or PD.

'The thesis is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Doctor of (insert the award – e.g. Philosophy, Medicine or relevant Professional Doctorate title) of the University of Portsmouth.'

- The statement worded as follows for MPhil:

'The thesis is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy of the University of Portsmouth.'

- The Collaborative establishment, if any;

- The month and year of submission.

You can expect the First Supervisor to:

- Propose the examiners and submit details for approval by the FDPGR on behalf of the FRD Committee;
- Advise on the editing and content of the thesis before submission;
- Arrange a mock *viva voce* for the PGRS;
- Organise a mutually convenient date for the examination and notify the DSAA Student Administration Services, of the date, time and venue.

13.7 Plagiarism

If plagiarism is suspected, normally during the examination of a thesis prior to the *viva voce* examination, the [Procedure for the Investigation of Allegations of Misconduct in Research](#) should be followed. All initial allegations of misconduct in research should be made to the University Secretary/Director of Corporate Governance, although members of staff may choose to raise the issue with their Head of Department/School or line manager in the first instance and request that they take this forward on their behalf. This will start the investigation which may result in disciplinary action being taken and the procedures to deal with assessment offences are included in the [Code of Student Behaviour](#). The Head of Department will be informed and will notify the DSAA Academic Standards and quality team to initiate disciplinary action.

Supervisors may wish to advise PGRS to use 'Turnitin' (which is available via the GSDP Moodle site) to help avoid plagiarism and ensure academic integrity in their thesis before submission.

13.8 Independent Chair

It is normal practice for one of the Examiners (usually the External Examiner) to act as the Chair during the *viva voce* examination, however in certain circumstances it may be helpful to have an Independent Chair and the PGRS may request the appointment of an Independent Chair for the examination.

If a PGRS wishes to have an Independent Chair at the *viva voce* examination they should make a request in writing to the DSAA when submitting the thesis to them.

The role of an Independent Chair is to chair and maintain a record of the examination and assist the examiners in following University procedures for the conduct of *viva voce* examinations. The Independent Chair appointed will be a member of University of Portsmouth staff who is not from the PGRS' department and must not have been involved in the candidate's research at any stage. They will also have experience of at least 2 previous research degree oral examinations (as an internal or external examiner), and be an experienced supervisor of research degree students.

An Independent Chair does not act as an additional examiner and is not involved in the decision making process. It is not necessary for them to receive a copy of the thesis however they may request a copy.

PGRS may take advice from their First Supervisor, members of the supervision team, the FDPGR or the Student Administration Services, Student Life, DSAA prior to making a decision to request an Independent Chair.

For the full list of circumstances in which an Independent Chair may be appointed, please see 11.6.2 in the [research regulations](#) and the [Independent Chair Notes and Guidance](#).

The DSAA Student Administration Services will formally confirm in writing the appointment of the Independent Chair to the candidate, the First Supervisor, Internal and External Examiners and the Independent Chair, including the regulation under which the Independent Chair is required.

13.9 Examiners' Preliminary Examination Report

The thesis will be sent to the approved Examiners following submission to the DSAA Student Administration Services.

The Examiners are asked to confirm that they wish to proceed to a *viva* or they may decide that the thesis is not acceptable and recommend referral of the thesis prior to the *viva* taking place.

Following review of the thesis by the Examiners, the Independent Preliminary Report Form UP7A, is completed by each Internal and External Examiner and returned to the DSAA Student Administration Services at least 10 working days before the date set for the formal oral examination (*viva voce*). If the required assessments are not received by the due date, the examination may be postponed on the authority of the Academic Registrar or their representative.

In the event that the Examiners recommend that the *viva* does not proceed, the First Supervisor will be contacted as soon as possible by the DSAA Student Administration Services..

13.10 Examiners' Recommendation not to proceed to *viva*

If an Examiner's recommendation is that the *viva voce* should not proceed, the Examiner must notify the DSAA Student Administration Services immediately. On notification, the DSAA Student Administration Services, will follow up the other Examiner(s) independent report(s).

Where the Examiners' preliminary recommendations differ then the DSAA Student Administration Services, will contact the FDPGR, who will liaise with the Examiners to attempt to reach an agreed decision on whether or not the *viva* should go ahead. If an agreement cannot be reached, then new Examiners shall be appointed.

If all Examiners have separately recommended that the *viva* should not go ahead the First Supervisor will be notified as soon as possible. A formal written notification of the referral will follow which will include the requirements of the work to be completed prior to re-submission of the thesis and a *viva* examination re-arranged. See Referral Section below.

13.11 Examiners' Recommendation - Referral

If the examiners decide, independently, that a thesis is not of the standard to proceed to a *viva voce* examination they must notify the DSAA Student Administration Services immediately via a completed Form UP7A. They will be required to submit a joint written report indicating the reasons why the thesis is not satisfactory. The report must include advice for the candidate and be sent to the DSAA Student Administration Services. The candidate will be formally notified in writing by the Student Administration Services, Student Life, DSAA. The First Supervisor will be contacted immediately by the DSAA Student Administration Services. and asked to contact the PGRS personally prior to the result letter being sent. The candidate will be required to re-register and given up to one year to re-submit their referred thesis. This option may be exercised when, in the opinion of the examiners, a thesis exhibits gross deficiencies

in presentation or a failure to meet the key precepts for a Masters or Doctoral award (as appropriate) as set out in the [QAA FHEQ HE Framework](#).

The supervisory team will be expected to continue providing support during the period of referral.

Further details and guidance can be found in the [Examiners Guidance notes for the Examination of Higher Degree by Research](#).

13.12 Arrangements for the *viva voce* (oral examination)

It is the responsibility of the First Supervisor to arrange the date, time and venue of the *viva voce* and to inform everyone involved, including the candidate. The DSAA Student Administration Services

must be notified of the arrangements on the Confirmation of Arrangements for a *viva voce* Examination form, [Form UPR5\(A\)](#)

The thesis should be defended in English.

When arranging the examination, the First Supervisor should try to ensure that at least a month has elapsed between dispatch of the thesis to the Examiners and the *viva voce* date. Please note that the DSAA Student Administration Services will advise on the process but is unable to make arrangements for *viva voce* examinations (e.g. video call invitations, room and hotel bookings etc.).

13.13 Conduct of the *viva voce*

Viva voce examinations are held at the University or virtually. In exceptional circumstances and with the prior agreement of the examiners, the University Research Degrees Committee may allow the examination to be held elsewhere. Such a decision and the reasons for it shall be recorded in the minutes.

There is no dress code for the *viva voce*, but this is a formal examination and it is expected that the candidate will dress accordingly.

Members of the supervisory team may be permitted to attend the examination with the agreement of the candidate. If the First Supervisor does not attend it is preferable that they are available prior to and following the examination to offer advice and support to the candidate.

If attending, a supervisor should enter and leave the room at the same time as the candidate and should only participate in the discussion if asked to provide clarification on a specific matter. Supervisors are not permitted to take part in the discussion regarding the recommendation made by the examiners on the outcome of the examination.

A request may be submitted by the candidate to appoint an Independent Chair for the examination. The role of the Independent Chair is to chair and maintain a record of the examination and assist the Examiners in following University procedure. The Independent Chair will not act as an examiner of the thesis. (See section 13.8).

The *viva voce* may not proceed unless all the examiners, the Independent Chair (where applicable) and the candidate are present. If there is a problem, e.g. due to unexpected personal reasons, transport delays on the day or technical issues with virtual vivas, please contact the DSAA Student

Administration Services for advice. Procedures to deal with problems will vary depending on the circumstances.

Unless an Independent Chair has been appointed, the examination will normally be conducted under the chairmanship of the External Examiner. If two External Examiners are appointed then it is normally the most senior who chairs but may be either, by mutual agreement. The tone of the questioning during the oral examination should be such that it provides the candidate with the opportunity to show their full potential in their understanding of the research, appropriate research methods, and to defend their views and interpretation without being confrontational.

At the *viva voce* the Examiners will test the candidate's knowledge of matters relevant to the subject of the thesis. The purpose is to enable the Examiners to clarify any ambiguities in the thesis and to satisfy themselves that the thesis is the candidate's own work. They will ensure the candidate is familiar with the relation of their work to the field of study from the literature review and that their knowledge of understanding of the subject is of the standard required for the award of the degree. The relevant qualification descriptors from [the FHEQ HE Framework](#) must be met.

On completion of the *viva voce* examination the candidate will leave the room while the Examiners discuss their recommendation. The candidate will be asked to return and will be advised of the intended recommendation to the Academic Registrar on behalf of Academic Council. The DSAA Student Administration Services will formally notify the PGRS in writing of the Examiners' decision.

As part of the consideration in reaching a recommendation for an award, Examiners are confirming that in their view the standards of the work meet the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications applicable to the award submitted for (level 8: doctoral degree qualification - PhD, MD, Prof Doc; or level 7: master's degree qualification - MPhil).

Further details and guidance can be found in the [Examiners Guidance notes for the Examination of Higher Degree by Research](#).

13.14 Recommendations Following the *viva voce* Examination

One of the following recommendations will be made by the Examiners at the end of the *viva voce* examination:

- the degree is awarded;
- the degree is awarded subject to minor amendments; (submit within 3 months)
- the degree is awarded subject to major amendments; (submit within 6 months)
- the degree is not awarded but the candidate will be allowed up to one year to submit a revised thesis for further examination (with or without a second *viva voce*); (submit within 12 months)
- the degree is not awarded;
- if a PhD was submitted, the Examiners may award an MPhil, subject to appropriate amendments.

As part of the consideration in reaching a recommendation for an award, Examiners are confirming that in their view the standards of the work are appropriately at the Framework for Higher Education

Qualifications applicable to the award submitted for (level 8: Doctoral degree qualification - PhD, MD, Prof Doc; or level 7: Master's degree qualification - MPhil)

The recommendation made by examiners at the *viva* must be based on academic grounds as to whether or not the thesis satisfies the criteria for award and whether the required learning outcomes have been met. Amendments must be determined by nature rather than what can be done within a time frame.

13.15 Following the *viva voce* Examination

The Internal Examiner should immediately return the completed form (UP7B).

The DSAA Student Administration Services will formally write to the candidate informing them of the Examiners' recommendation.

Further details and guidance can be found in the [Examiners Guidance notes for the Examination of Higher Degree by Research](#).

Candidates should ensure that their contact details are kept up to date. Any changes should be notified to the DSAA Student Administration Services to ensure that the notification of results, letters and parchment are sent to the correct address.

13.16 Award – Pass

Where the Examiners have recommended Pass at the *viva voce* examination then the date of the award will be the date when the *viva* was held.

DSAA Student Administration Services will write to the candidate confirming the Examiners' recommendation and provide information regarding the candidate's responsibilities and the final requirements to be eligible to receive the parchment and attend Graduation. See section 14 for further details.

13.17 Award - Subject to Minor Amendments

In many cases the Examiners require minor amendments to the thesis. Award subject to Minor Amendments is recommended when the Examiners can confirm the standard of the work is at the appropriate level for the award, in line with the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ).

Minor amendments refers to cases where changes suggested are for moderate omissions of substance, moderate typographical errors, limited further analysis (but such that it does not affect the originality of the central thesis) and/or limited revision of material. Candidates would not be expected to carry out any further empirical research.

Minor Amendments should not constitute changes to more than 10% of the work. The candidate should complete and submit these within 3 months of the *viva*.

Details of the minor amendments will be provided by the Examiners when the candidate is told of their recommendation at the end of the *viva voce* examination. It is usual for the Internal Examiner to provide further clarification if required. The examiners are asked to indicate who will check the corrections on [Form UP7B](#).

On completion of the amendments the candidate should submit to the relevant Examiner(s) by the required deadline. This may be done via the First Supervisor, depending on the preference of the Examiner(s).

In due course, the Examiner(s) will complete a [Form UP7C](#) forwarded by the DSAA Student Administration Services confirming the amendments have been satisfactorily completed. On receipt of this confirmation the Student Administration Services will notify the candidate that their amendments have been approved and provide information regarding the candidate's responsibilities and the final requirements to be eligible to receive the parchment and attend Graduation. See Section 14 for further details.

The DSAA Student Administration Services will contact the Examiners to obtain their feedback on the candidate's performance throughout all aspects of the examination following the *viva voce* examination.

Further details and guidance can be found in the [Examiners Guidance notes for the Examination of Higher Degree by Research](#).

13.18 Award – Subject to Major Amendments

Award subject to Major Amendments is recommended when the Examiners can confirm the standard of the work is at the appropriate level for the award, in line with the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ).

A Pass with Major Amendments examination outcome is a Pass. This means the thesis has met the learning outcomes for the award of a PhD. The nature of amendments are more substantial than minor corrections and typographical errors, but are not of the extent that the learning outcomes have not been met, and the thesis would not require a significant rework. Such revisions might include, for example, amendments to more than 10% of the thesis, typographical/grammatical errors so numerous as to suggest carelessness, or so intrusive as to distract the reader's attention from the argument.

Details of the major amendments will be provided by the Examiners when the candidate is told of their recommendation at the end of the *viva voce* examination. The candidate should complete and submit these within 6 months of the *viva*.

On completion the candidate should submit these to be considered and signed off by the Internal and External Examiners by the required deadline. This may be done via the First Supervisor, depending on the preference of the Examiner(s).

In due course, the Examiner(s) will complete a [Form UP7C](#) forwarded by the DSAA Student Administration Services confirming the amendments have been satisfactorily completed. On receipt of this confirmation the Student Administration Services will notify the candidate that their amendments have been approved and provide information regarding the candidate's responsibilities and the final requirements to be eligible to receive the parchment and attend Graduation. See Section 14 for further details.

The DSAA Student Administration Services will contact the Examiners to obtain their feedback on the candidate's performance throughout all aspects of the examination following the *viva voce* examination.

13.19 No Award - Re-examination without viva

Re-examination should be used where the standard of the award has not yet been met and the candidate is to be given the opportunity to make good the deficiencies of the first submission.

Re-examination should be used when substantial additional work or research is required for the candidate to bring the thesis up to the required standard. This may consist of cases where whole chapters have to be significantly rewritten, the methodology requires extensive revision, or where limited further empirical research is required.

A Re-examination may include the restructuring of the thesis and should be capable of being completed within 12 months from the date of the *viva voce*. This recommendation by the examiners can be with (see section 13.20) or without a further *viva*.

Where a candidate is required to re-submit the thesis for examination, the candidate is allowed up to 12 months from the date of *viva* in which to do so. The Examiners are required to submit a joint written report which details the amendments the Examiners consider necessary for the thesis to reach the standard required for the award to be made, within ten working days following the *viva voce* to the DSAA Student Administration Services. This will be sent to the candidate with details of the time limit and procedures. The candidate will be required to re-register for the re-examination period and pay a further fee.

The First Supervisor will be expected to continue providing support during the re-submission period. If, due to extenuating circumstances, an extension to the 12 month period is required by the candidate, the candidate will write to the DSAA Student Administration Services requesting an extension. A request for this to be granted will be sent to the Examiners and the candidate notified of their decision.

The revised thesis must be submitted to the DSAA Student Administration Services. The thesis will be sent to the Examiners following the same procedures as for the first submission. The title page and front cover should show the date of the resubmission. The date of the award will be the date when the examiners notify the DSAA Student Administration Services, that the thesis is satisfactory, with or without minor amendments required.

Further details and guidance can be found in the [Examiners Guidance notes for the Examination of Higher Degree by Research](#).

13.20 No Award - Re-examination with viva

Where a candidate is required to re-submit the thesis for examination, the candidate is allowed up to 12 months from the date of *viva* in which to do so. The Examiners are required to submit a joint written report which details the amendments the Examiners consider necessary for the thesis to reach the standard required for the award to be made, within ten working days following the *viva voce* to the DSAA Student Administration Services.. This will be sent to the candidate with details of the time limit and procedures. The candidate will be required to re-register for the re-examination period and pay a further fee.

The First Supervisor will be expected to continue providing support during the re-submission period. If, due to extenuating circumstances, an extension to the 12 month period is required by the candidate, the candidate will write to the DSAA Student Administration Services requesting an extension. A request for this to be granted will be sent to the Examiners and the candidate notified of their decision.

The revised thesis must be submitted to the DSAA Student Administration Services. The thesis will be sent to the Examiners following the same procedures as for the first submission. The title page and front cover should show the date of the resubmission.

As with the first *viva voce*, it is the responsibility of the First Supervisor to arrange the date, time and venue of the *viva voce* with the candidate, Examiners and Independent Chair (where applicable). See sections 13.12 Arrangements for *viva voce* and 13.13 Conduct of *viva voce* above for further details.

The recommendations available to the Examiners are the same as at first *viva voce*, except there is no option for a further resubmission.

Further details and guidance can be found in the [Examiners Guidance notes for the Examination of Higher Degree by Research](#).

13.21 No Award - Fail

If a candidate is failed, the Examiners will be required to submit a joint report detailing their reasons for this decision. DSAA Student Administration Services will write to the candidate confirming the Examiners' recommendation.

Professional Doctorate candidates who are failed will be eligible for an exit award of Postgraduate Diploma in Advanced Professional Research, subject to approval by the Board of Examiners.

13.22 Fail - Lower Award Recommended

This is only available for those candidates who submitted for PhD. If a candidate has failed to meet the required standard for the award at level 8: Doctoral degree qualification but has met the standard of level 7: Master's degree qualification, then the Examiners can recommend a lower award of MPhil subject to any minor amendments or corrections to the thesis.

The Examiners will be required to submit a joint report detailing their reason for this decision, including any minor amendments that would need to be made. DSAA Student Administration Services will write to the candidate confirming the Examiners' recommendation.

Also see Section 13.18 Award – subject to Minor Amendments with regards to process for approval of minor amendments.

Responsibilities of First Supervisor:

- To advise on editing and content of the thesis before examination.
- To organise a mock *viva voce*
- To complete the [Form UPR5](#) to nominate the examiners and submit it to the DSAA Student Administration Services..
- To organise a mutually convenient date, time and place for the *viva voce* and notify the DSAA Student Administration Services on the [Form UPR5A](#).
- To attend the *viva voce* examination, unless the PGRS requests otherwise.
- To continue supervision to provide guidance on the Examiner's amendments during any period of referral or resubmission.

- To contact the Examiners on the PGRS' behalf if clarification about the amendments is required.
- To inform the PGRS personally when a referral is recommended.
- Provide guidance about the Examiners' amendments during any period of referral or re-examination

14. Following the Award of a Research Degree

14.1 Submission of the Final Thesis

Following the Examiners' recommendation for the award of MPhil, PhD, MD or PD as appropriate, the candidate should wait until they are contacted by the DSAA Student Administration Services to confirm that any amendments have been approved by the Examiners. DSAA Student Administration Services will then confirm to the candidate that they can now submit an electronic PDF copy of the corrected and approved thesis to researchdegrees@port.ac.uk. The contents of the thesis must be identical to the version submitted for examination, including ethical documentation (see section 8.1), except where amendments have been made to meet the requirements of the Examiners. This copy will be stored in and be the property of the University Library.

The final requirement for the award is the submission of the final version of the thesis and must include a statement of the candidate's objectives and acknowledge published or other sources of material consulted (including appropriate reference list) and any assistance received.

The candidate will also need to submit a completed University of Portsmouth EThOS Agreement to the DSAA Student Administration Services. The Agreement permits the Library to include the thesis in their catalogue of resources and, if the candidate has given permission, allows the thesis to be held in digital format by the British Library.

The EThOS Deposit Agreement Form for University of Portsmouth theses is available from <https://myport.port.ac.uk/guidance-and-support/research-degrees/examination>

The candidate will need to submit their final electronic thesis, including the EThOS form, before the recommendation of the award is confirmed by the Academic Registrar on behalf of Academic Council and the parchment printed.

The award date of a candidate shall be defined as one of the following:

- a) the date of a successful formal oral examination (viva voce) where the decision made was that the degree should be awarded as at 11.7.1.a and 11.9.2 a, where successful means a recommendation for an award being made without further amendments being required; or
- b) in the case of an award being made subject to minor or major amendments, the date on which the examiners confirm that the amendments are satisfactorily completed; or
- c) in the case of re-examination where the re-examination is not by means of a formal oral examination (viva voce), the date on which the examiners make the recommendation of the award.

Should the PGRS wish to submit a final bound copy to their First Supervisor to be held in their School/Department, the physical presentation of the final thesis should be in accordance with the

following requirements for the binding and text on the cover. The requirements for the contents will have already been followed when the PGRS submitted for examination:

- The binding shall be of a fixed type so that the pages cannot be removed or replaced. The front and rear boards shall have sufficient rigidity to support the weight of the work when standing upright;
- The outside front board should be black with gold lettering and must include the title of the work in a least 24pt type. The name and initials of the candidate, the degree for which the thesis is being submitted and the year of submission shall also be shown on the front board. The same information (excluding the title) of the work shall be shown on the spine of the work.
- The year of submission is the year in which the thesis was submitted and recommended for the award.

14.2 Confirmation of the Research Award

The award of the research degree will be confirmed when:

- The approved final thesis and EThoS form have been submitted to the Student Administration Services, Student Life, DSAA by the candidate.
- The examination reports have been signed by the Academic Registrar on behalf of Academic Council;

Additionally:

- The relevant Board of Examiners for the Professional Doctorate has agreed the award.

The DSAA Student Administration Services will send the successful candidate a certificate and letter of congratulations from the Vice-Chancellor. Unless there is a confidential embargo on the thesis, the pdf copy will be forwarded to the University Library who will retain a copy and record of the thesis and send to the British Library. Details are also held on the [Index to Theses](#), which enables the thesis to be accessed internationally.

Candidates must ensure that their contact address held on the Student Record System is correct so that the certificate and letter of congratulations are sent to the correct address.

14.3 Attending Graduation

Candidates will not be eligible to attend graduation until they have submitted the approved final thesis as a PDF and their University of Portsmouth EThoS Agreement Form.

The final copy of the thesis, as approved by the Examiners', must be submitted to DSAA Student Administration Services by 31st May of the year in which the candidate wishes to graduate. If the thesis is submitted after this date the candidate will be invited to graduation in the following year.

Candidates will be contacted by the Graduation Team about booking their place, guest tickets, gowns etc., for the July ceremonies.

In order to secure a place at graduation candidates will need to reply to the invitation to attend graduation by the date specified. This will be before the 31st May deadline to submit the final thesis and candidates should book to attend graduation if they think they will have completed all the requirements to be eligible to attend.

It is important that candidates do not wait until the award is confirmed as seats at the ceremony are allocated early. To avoid any disappointment, it is best to book in advance.

If the candidate does not complete all the requirements within the deadlines and is not eligible to attend the ceremony, any money for graduation tickets purchased will be refunded and the candidate will automatically be included in the list of those invited to the ceremony in the following year.

Candidates can contact the Graduate Office and further information and contact details can be found at <http://www.port.ac.uk/graduation/>.

15. Complaints

The University is committed to treating complaints seriously and in confidence. In all cases a timely, informal resolution which is fair to all parties is the ideal outcome.

A PGRS may submit a complaint during the period of registration and up to three months after the end of their registration. The PGRS is likely to discuss concerns relating to the research project with the First Supervisor and it is expected that in most cases the First Supervisor will be able to deal with them.

If a PGRS is dissatisfied with any aspect of their academic studies or of the services and facilities provided by the University of Portsmouth, they may lodge a complaint. In the first instance this should be raised informally by speaking or writing to an appropriate member of University staff. If this does not satisfactorily resolve the issue they may lodge a formal complaint by submitting a Complaints Form to the University Complaints Officer. The complaint should be submitted no later than 20 working days from when the matter occurred.

Although PGRS are advised to resolve concerns informally by discussion with the member of staff concerned, the PGRS can also ask for a problem to be dealt with by FRD Committee through the PGRS representation on the committee.

If informal actions do not bring about a resolution that the PGRS is happy with, they may submit a formal complaint using the complaints procedure. This includes the PGRS providing further details in a letter within 20 working days of either the date of the event occurring or the date the informal process was completed. Guidance setting out how the procedure works is available from the University webpages see [How do I make a complaint against the University?](#)

Where a school or Faculty receives a complaint from a PGRS alleging inadequate supervision, this will be handled in accordance with the University's complaint procedures as mentioned above. The Head of Department is usually the member of staff asked to investigate a formal complaint.

For further details on the complaints procedure, contact the University's Complaints Officer on complaints@port.ac.uk or contact the [Students' Union](#) for advice on submitting a complaint.

16. Appeals

A PGRS may appeal against the decision of Annual Review assessment, the Major Review assessment, the decision result of an Interim Examination or the result of the *viva voce* examination of the final thesis. Appeals cannot be made on the basis of disagreement with the academic judgement of the Examiners.

The only valid grounds for appeal will be:

- that there has been a significant and material administrative error in the information received and considered by the Examiners.
- that the examination had not been conducted in accordance with the University's research regulations.
- that some other material irregularity had occurred in the examination procedure.
- that the PGRS' performance was adversely affected by illness or other good cause that related to personal circumstances that she or he had been unable, for a sound and acceptable reason related to the circumstances themselves, to divulge before the meeting of the Examiners and which might have had a bearing on the Examiner's decision.

Any PGRS who wishes to appeal must submit their case in writing to the Academic Registrar within ten working days of notification of the publication of the decision. All appeals shall be made in accordance with the approved procedure for academic appeals to be found in section 11 of the [Research Regulations](#).

PART 3: Professional Doctorates (PD)

There are two phases: the taught phase consists of 180 credits with a minimum of 60 credits at level 8 (doctorate level). Before the professional doctorate student can commence the research phase, the progression must be confirmed by the relevant Board of Examiners. A supervisory team is appointed for the research phase and the role of the team is the same as that for a higher degree by research.

Differences in the regulatory requirements for Professional Doctorates are as follows:

Approval of Professional Research and Development Programme for progression to the Research Phase

- The taught phase is covered by the [Examination & Assessment Regulations](#) of the University of Portsmouth.
- The research phase is covered by the [Regulations for Research Degrees](#).
- As part of the approval process the First Supervisor and at least one other supervisor are approved by completion of the RSR Form.

Major Review

A Major Review is not required for Professional Doctorate students. The Annual Review process is completed each year of the registration during the Research Phase within the standard Annual Review period.

viva voce Examination Process

- **Requirements of the Examination**
The examination of a Professional Doctorate differs from other higher degrees in that a presentation of the research is given prior to the detailed *viva voce* examination by the Examiners. The Examiners attend the presentation and will examine the overall content and delivery. The Examiners' recommendations for the award following the *viva voce* are similar to those for a higher degree. If the candidate fails, an exit award of MA/MSc in Professional Research Methods will be awarded by the relevant Board of Examiners (via Chair's Action).

Award of Degree

The Examiners complete the recommendation form on the date of the *viva voce* and the candidate fulfils any amendments required which are then approved by the Examiners.

The award is not ratified until the Chair of the relevant Board of Examiners confirms the candidate is eligible to receive the award (via Chair's Action). All Professional Doctorates have the date of the *viva voce* or when the Examiners approve the amendments following a re-examination, as the date of award.

PART 4: PhD by Publication

PhD by Publication provides an alternative route to the PhD qualification. As per a PhD following the more familiar route, it demonstrates that the candidate has acquired rigorous research skills, a comprehensive understanding of the existing knowledge in their discipline and that an original contribution to knowledge has been made. For some people who already have a number of publications but, for whatever reason, never undertook a PhD, or for others who feel the more pragmatic approach of writing and publishing a series of papers offers more tangible results, a PhD by Publication is often a preferable way to attaining the award.

The PhD by Publication award is made on the basis of a commentary (normally 5,000-10,000 words) which provides a detailed discussion of the publications that have been submitted. It will usually cover aspects of the existing literature that has been reviewed, developed or tested, together with a discussion of the methodology(ies) that has been used in the research, the findings from the research, and how the work has made an original contribution to knowledge. The publications that the commentary is based on, need to be submitted at the same time as the commentary.

The Regulations do not state a minimum or maximum number of publications. The number will be based on the quantity and quality of work that is necessary to provide a coherent commentary that substantiates the case. Nor do the Regulations state that the publications have to be solely the work of the candidate (i.e. single author). Publications that are jointly authored are acceptable, but there will need to be a discussion of the contribution to each of the papers submitted that demonstrates that the candidate's contribution is a significant contribution.

To register for a PhD by Publication, which can only be in a part-time mode, the candidate will need to submit (along with the standard application documents) two key documents: 1) a statement on the nature and significance of the work (1000 words) and 2) a statement of the candidate's contribution to jointly authored publications. These two documents are extremely helpful, in that if you are able to write these fairly easily, then you are in a good position to register; you are clear what the theme of your work is and you are clear what part you played in each of the publications. If you are struggling to write these, then it's possibly an indication that you are not quite ready to register.

PhD by Publication students will have a minimum of one and a maximum of two supervisors. The research has been completed and the papers published so the role of the supervisor(s) is more that of a mentor in providing guidance and feedback on the commentary, and preparing the candidate for the *viva voce*. The supervisor will also need to find appropriate examiners. For a PhD by Publication, two external and one internal examiners are required.

From the date of registration the candidate has 1 year to submit the materials, although they cannot be submitted for at least 6 months.

Submission for the award of a PhD by Publication should include:

- a) an abstract summarising the research contribution in approximately 300 words;
- b) a commentary of between 5,000 and 10,000 words putting the work into context and identifying its suitability for the award of a PhD; this commentary should provide details of where, by what means and under what conditions the research and related scholarly activity were undertaken. Exceptionally, and in agreement with the local Faculty Research Degrees Committee, where the submission wholly or mainly consists of non-text-based materials, (e.g. artwork, performance pieces, etc.), a longer

commentary of up to 25,000 words may be submitted to allow greater clarity and depth of explanation about the significance of the work;

- c) a statement that the work has not been submitted for any other qualification;
- d) in the case that publications or other material that are jointly authored are submitted, a clear indication of the candidate's own contribution in each case;
- e) a set of all publications or other materials on which the submission is based, ordered appropriately;
- f) an appropriate listing of the publications/artefacts, etc. in (e) above; and
- g) a reference list stating relevant publications/artefacts considered in the commentary.

A *viva voce* is arranged at a mutually convenient time for all parties. Three examiners will be appointed of whom one will be an internal examiner and two external.

The candidate will be examined orally to determine whether:

- a) the work submitted demonstrates that the programme of research and study is at least comparable with that undertaken by a research degree candidate for the award of PhD;
- b) the candidate has personally made a systematic study in the chosen topic and has demonstrated originality and the exercise of independent critical powers.

The PhD can be either awarded, awarded subject to minor amendments (submission within three months), subject to major amendments (submission within six months), or not awarded.

For many, a PhD by Publication provides an alternative, possibly less daunting route to a PhD, but enables the candidate to earn the recognition for the results they have achieved.

PART 5: Visiting Research Students

This section is for reference to assist members of staff who wish to host a visiting research student. A visiting research student will not be registered or aiming for an award of the University of Portsmouth. The research needs of a visiting research student may vary by department and funding source with requirements discussed and agreed with the Head of Department.

As there is no University of Portsmouth award, tuition fees are not applicable. The Department may be able to charge the visiting research student a bench fee.

The following points are applicable to a visiting research student:

1. No tuition fees are payable.
2. They are all registered as a visiting student on the relevant visiting/exchange programme on the student records system.
3. Supervision arrangements may be agreed along with the provision of physical resources such as a desk and computer etc.
4. Access to the Graduate School Development Programme (GSDP) as agreed by the Department and Graduate School.
5. Usually here for a short period of time (e.g. the summer) or up to a year.

The above arrangements have generally been working well in many departments, add greatly to research culture, and provide good flexibility.

Alternatively the following may be considered more appropriate:

1. Registration on specific non-credit bearing short courses (fees charged as scheduled).
2. Visiting research assistant, formal agreement/contract letter in place confirming arrangement and purpose of visit. Person is recorded via HR and their systems, no supervision but will be linked to at least one member of staff (can be here for any length of time from a few months to a year or more).

For both of the above, access to the Graduate School Development Programme (GSDP) and/or early career researcher development training agreed as appropriate.

Links to useful web pages

Skills Forge login page

<https://skillsforge.port.ac.uk/>

The research web pages are now split into internal and external pages. The external pages give links to essential documents such as this Handbook, regulations and change of circumstances forms, as well as information on Annual Review and examination:

<https://myport.port.ac.uk/guidance-and-support/research-degrees>

The internal pages are organised by different areas such as Admissions, Registration etc. and you can access the relevant forms from the link below:

<https://staff.port.ac.uk/departments/services/academicregistry/qmd/researchdegrees/forms/>

Examination & Assessment Regulations of the University of Portsmouth

<https://staff.port.ac.uk/departments/services/academicregistry/qmd/assessmentandregulations/>

Research Regulations

<https://myport.port.ac.uk/guidance-and-support/research-degrees/research-degree-guidance>

University Ethics Policy

<http://policies.docstore.port.ac.uk/policy-028.pdf>

Research EQUiP Template and Guidance

<http://www.port.ac.uk/reviewcycle>

QAA UK Quality Code, The Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies

<https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code>

Additional Support and Disability Advice Centre

<https://www.port.ac.uk/student-life/guidance-and-support/additional-support-and-disability-advice>

Complaints and Information Disclosure

<http://policies.docstore.port.ac.uk/policy-047.pdf>

Student Advice Services

<https://www.port.ac.uk/student-life/help-and-advice>

Appendix A: Glossary of Abbreviations

AHRC	Arts and Humanities Research Council
EQuiP	Annual Standards and Quality Evaluative Review
BBSRC	Biotechnology and Biological Science Research Council
CRDP	Collaborative Research Degree Programme
DCQE	Department of Curriculum and Quality Enhancement
DDPGR	Departmental Director of Postgraduate Research
EPSRC	Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council
EQuiP	Excellence and Quality Improvement Plan
ESRC	Economic and Social Research Council
FDL	Flexible and Distributed Learning
FRDC	Faculty Research Degrees Committee
FDPGR	Faculty Director of Postgraduate Research who Chairs the FRDC
GProF	Graduate Student Professional Development Programme
GSDP	Graduate School Development Programme
GSMB	Graduate School Management Board
IPR	Intellectual Property Rights
MD	Doctor of Medicine
MOA	Memorandum of Agreement
MPhil	Master of Philosophy
MRC	Medical Research Council
NERC	Natural Environment Research Council
PD	Professional Doctorate
PDP	Personal Development Programme
PGRS	Postgraduate Research Student
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
PhD by Publication	Doctor of Philosophy by Publication
QAC	Quality Assurance Committee
QMD	Quality Management Division
RDF	Researcher Development Framework
RSR	Research Student Registration Form
RIS	Research & Innovation Services
STFC	Science and Technology Facilities Council
UKRI	UK Research and Innovation
URDC	University Research Degrees Committee
UKVI	United Kingdom Visa & Immigration

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