



Postgraduate Research Student Handbook and Guidance

Health Sciences University

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Postgraduate research degrees validated
and awarded by Solent University

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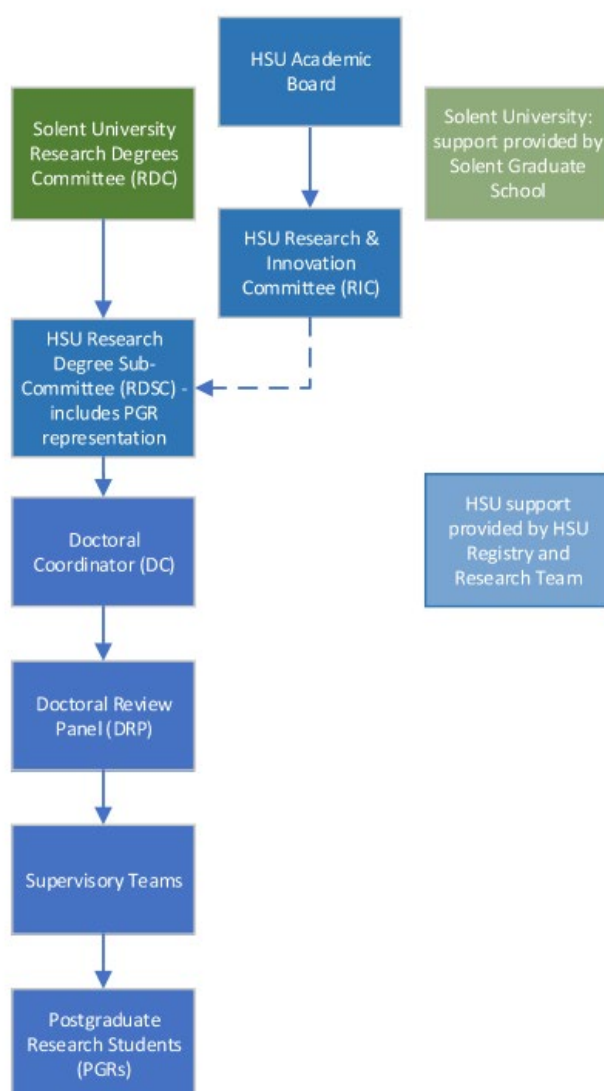
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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Institutional Arrangements and Key Principles

Health Sciences University (HSU) as an educational partnership with Solent University under which Solent University validates research degrees delivered through HSU. Solent University will award the degrees of MPhil and PhD to postgraduate research students (PGRs) who successfully complete approved programmes of supervised research in accordance with the approved Regulations. The Educational partnership between Solent University and HSU is governed by a contract signed by both institutions that sets out the requirements, roles and responsibilities on both sides, and approved annually by the Chair / Deputy Chair of the Solent Research Degrees Committee (RDC).

The governance of the research degree provision is shown below, with Solent University committees and support in green and HSU committees, roles and support in blue:



This Postgraduate Research Student Handbook and Guidance (henceforth PGR Handbook) is the principal guidance for those involved with postgraduate research at HSU. This includes PGRs and

all staff involved in the provision of postgraduate research degrees, including supervision, administration, assessment and examination. It sets out HSU's regulations, policies, procedures and guidelines relating to research degrees. All those involved with research degrees must make themselves familiar with the content of this Handbook.

This PGR Handbook aims to:

- ensure that PGRs and staff have a common understanding of their respective roles and responsibilities
- set out policies and procedures which protect the academic standards of HSU's research degrees
- set out the processes involved in all stages of a research degree.

The PGR Handbook is revised annually to reflect changes in HSU policy and national guidelines and in order to continuously improve the research degree experience. All those involved in research degrees must abide by the **current PGR Handbook at all times**.

Programmes of research at HSU may be proposed in any field of study, subject to the requirement that:

- the proposed programme is capable of leading to scholarly research
- HSU has the expertise and resources to adequately supervise the research
- the completed submission is capable of being assessed by appropriate examiners.

The submission may be in the form of a final thesis or by previously published work that is accompanied by a written commentary placing it within its academic context.

All proposed research programmes will be considered for research degree registration on their academic merits and without reference to the concerns or interests of any associated funding body. However, HSU and Solent University cannot guarantee that PGRs will be able to work with any particular supervisor, or that they will have the same supervisor throughout their period of study.

Individual programmes of research must take due regard of [HSU's Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Policy](#) and [Solent University's Student Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy](#).

All forms referred to in this PGR Handbook are available on the VLE.

1.2 Co-operation

HSU and Solent University encourage co-operation with industrial, commercial, professional or research establishments for the purposes of research leading to research degree awards. Such co-operation is intended to:

- encourage outward-looking and relevant research
- extend the PGRs own experience and perspectives of the work
- provide a wider range of experience and expertise to assist in the development of the project
- be mutually beneficial
- enable the PGR to become a member of a research community (where appropriate).

Co-operation with one or more bodies external to HSU may be formal or informal. Formal co-operation is known as collaboration and will normally require financial support for the project from the Collaborating Establishment and/or use by the PGR of its facilities and other resources, including supervision.

In such cases a formal letter from the Collaborating Establishment confirming the agreed arrangements should be submitted with the application, except where the collaboration is an integral part of the project. The name(s) of the Collaborating Establishment(s) will appear on the PGR student's thesis and degree certificate.

Informal co-operation need not require financial support for the project but could allow the PGR access to facilities and resources. In both cases, however, it is the responsibility of the Director of Studies (DoS) to ensure that prior permission is obtained from the relevant persons at the chosen establishment(s) for the use of necessary facilities, resources and access before embarking on the research project. All such agreements must be reported to the relevant Doctoral Review Panel (DRP) as part of the application for project approval.

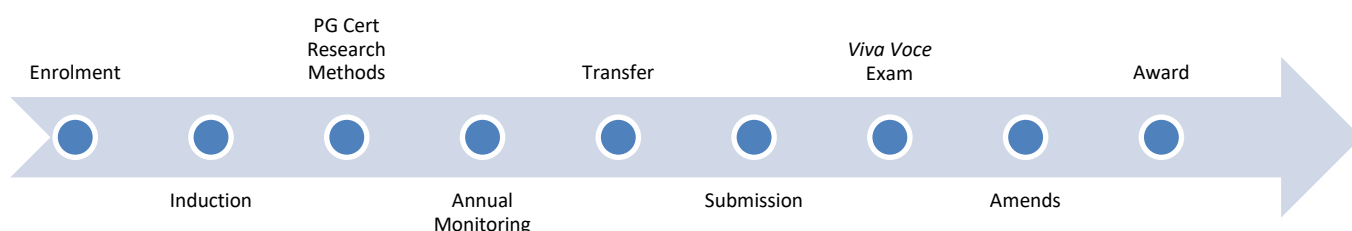
2 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 Roles and Responsibilities

The quality of HSU's research degree provision rests on the core relationships and activities which form the PGR student experience. The respective responsibilities of the key relationships in the research degree process are set out in this PGR Handbook:

- Postgraduate research students (PGRs)
- Supervisory Team
- Doctoral Coordinator (DC)
- Director of Studies (DoS)
- HSU Registry
- HSU Research Team
- Doctoral Review Panel (DRP)

Each of the above stakeholders are responsible for ensuring that the PGR student progresses through each stage of the research degree:



2.2 Postgraduate Researchers

2.2.1 Responsibilities of the Postgraduate Researchers

The PGR will:

- attend induction, which is mandatory for all new PGRs.
- have an HSU and a Solent University e-mail address. All formal communication about the programme of study) will be via these email accounts.
 - All day-to-day communications about the research degree programme of study, including arrangements for supervisory meetings, the annual monitoring, transfer and examination processes will be via the **HSU e-mail address**.
 - All communication regarding the Postgraduate Certificate in Research Methods, and access to electronic resources, will be via the **Solent University e-mail address**.
- ensure they monitor both e-mail addresses regularly or set up a reliable forwarding system. **Setting up a forwarding system is a PGR's responsibility.**
- PGRs are responsible for re-registering at the start of each academic year and for paying their fees on time. Failure to register or to pay fees may result in removal of access to facilities and resources including the library and PGR email accounts. **PGRs who have not completed registration cannot be examined or progress their studies.**

2.2.2. Postgraduate Certificate in Research Methods

All new PGRs who register for a research degree, whether full-time or part-time, are required to successfully complete the **Postgraduate Certificate in Research Methods** during their first year of registration, unless an approved exemption is granted. Exceptions must be recommended by

the Chair of the HSU Research Degrees Sub-Committee (RDSC) and will only be considered where the supervisory team confirms in writing that they are satisfied that the PGR has sufficient understanding of the elements covered in the course from a previous qualification or experience. All such requests must be approved by the Chair/Deputy Chair of Solent University RDC.

The Postgraduate Certificate in Research Methods runs concurrently with PGR's first year of their postgraduate research degree programme and is complementary to it. Continuation on the research degree programme will be subject to successful completion of the Postgraduate Certificate in Research Methods.

2.2.3. Expectations for PGRs

PGRs should be familiar with all applicable regulations, policies and processes and working with their supervisory team to ensure they comply with HSU's and Solent University's regulatory requirements, ethical and health and safety considerations, progression timeframes and monitoring milestones.

In discussion with their supervisory team, PGRs should establish a regular schedule of meetings whether in person or virtual and advise their DoS in good time of any planned absences which will take them away from HSU or out of contact for an extended period. When a PGR is ill and unable to study, they must inform their supervisory team as soon as is practicable. PGRs studying on a Student visa should be advised that any prolonged absence from study may have implications on their Student visa and should consult the HSU UKVI Compliance Manager about the potential impact on their visa (studentvisas@aecc.ac.uk).

It is an important aspect of being a researcher for PGRs to respect the contribution and intellectual property rights of their supervisors and other collaborative relationships in external outputs. It is expected that all communication and interaction between PGRs and their supervisory team is conducted in a professional manner and in the spirit of mutual respect.

PGRs should pro-actively address issues or problems that arise which may affect the progress of their research with their DoS in the first instance and make formal application for approval of periods of suspension or extension as appropriate. PGRs who do not wish to share sensitive information with their DoS can also seek confidential support from the DC. PGRs may also raise general issues relating to resources or facilities affecting their progress with HSU's Research Team (research@aecc.ac.uk), or through their PGR representative, for consideration by the HSU RDSC.

It is the responsibility of the PGR to decide when to submit their thesis for examination, taking into consideration the opinion of their supervisory team. The opinion of the supervisors at this stage is advisory and PGRs should note that their agreement to submission cannot be taken as a guarantee of success.

Submission of the thesis for examination within the expected period of registration (3 years for full-time, 6 years for part-time) is also the PGR's responsibility, as well as meeting all submission requirements laid out in this PGR Handbook. It is for PGRs to inform their supervisors or other individuals with whom their work is being discussed of any conflict of interest, for example in relation to joint publications, so this may be considered when examiners are recommended for appointment.

2.2.4. Expected hours of study

PGRs should ensure that they are meeting their registration mode obligations for a average weekly engagement with their doctoral studies.

The expected hours of full-time study are 35 hours. A full-time PGR may undertake a small amount of paid work compatible with their full-time studies, with the expectation that the total demand on their time for duties within HSU is no more than 6 hours per week.

The expected hours of part-time study are 17.5 hours. PGRs registered as part-time are responsible for managing the demands of research degree study alongside any employment or other commitment, such that they can devote an average of 17.5 hours per week to their studies.

PGR research activity is not restricted to term / semester time only. PGRs must submit a request for any period of annual leave to their supervisory team and agreed dates should be reported as part of the Annual Monitoring Review. PGRs are entitled to 6 weeks' annual leave per year (Monday to Friday) plus Public Holidays and University closure days. Leave can be taken as occasional days and/or blocks of days/weeks.

PGRs studying on a Student visa should be advised that any period of annual leave more than that outlined above may have implications on their Student visa. They should consult the HSU UKVI Compliance Manager immediately about the potential impact on their visa (studentvisas@aecc.ac.uk).

	Expected hours of study per week	Recommended attendance at HSU	Annual Leave
Full-time	35 hours	Minimum of 3 days per week	6 weeks per year
Part-time*	17.5 hours	Minimum of 6 weeks per year	

* Members of HSU staff who wish to register for a research degree in the part-time mode must discuss how they will devote an average of 17.5 hours per week to the research with their line manager and Head of School as part of the application process.

2.2.5. Recording supervisory meetings

In discussion with their supervisory team, PGRs should maintain a complete record of all supervisory meetings, including dates, times, agenda/points of discussion and agreed actions, which must be submitted to the Annual Monitoring Review by the PGR. PGRs must record notes of the supervisory meeting and forward them to the supervisor/s present at the meeting for amendment as necessary and sign off. Copies of all supervisory meeting records must be submitted by the student to HSU Registry (Registry@aecc.ac.uk) at the relevant progression monitoring points within the current academic session.

PGRs should regularly review their development needs with their DoS, respond to supervisory guidance and advice and pro-actively seek supervisory comment to support their development towards independence in the research process. It is expected that PGRs will frequently submit their work for supervisory review and, especially at key monitoring stages, ensure, on the advice of their supervisory team, that work is submitted in reasonable time for supervisory feedback to be received and acted upon.

It is important that PGRs prepare, in good time, to meet all the reporting requirements of each monitoring milestone:

- Annual monitoring progress report
- Transfer to PhD
- *Viva Voce* examination.

It is important to understand that it is the supervisors' role is to offer constructive advice on academic content and general presentation of work. However, it is the PGR's responsibility to proof-read their own work; the supervisors are not expected to provide detailed correction of written English.

PGRs are expected to actively engage, guided by their supervisory team, with current developments and debates within their own and wider disciplinary contexts through publication, external and internal events such as discipline specific conferences, symposia, seminars, and workshops, and participate fully in the research culture and research PGR community of HSU.

PGRs should be advised to pro-actively address issues or problems that arise which may affect the progress of their research with their DoS in the first instance and make formal application for approval of periods of suspension or extension as appropriate. PGRs who do not wish to share sensitive information with their DoS can also seek confidential support from the DC. General issues relating to resources or facilities affecting their progress may be raised with HSU's Research Team (research@aecc.ac.uk), or through the PGR representative, for consideration by the HSU RDSC.

2.3 The Supervisory Team

2.3.1. Appointment of supervisory team

HSU is committed to providing support as outlined in this PGR Handbook. All PGRs will be allocated with a supervisory team throughout their research degree, provided HSU continues to have the appropriate subject knowledge and capacity within the current academic staff base. All supervisors should be familiar with the approved regulations for research degrees. It is the responsibility of the DC to propose and get approval for the supervisory team as part of the admission process. Members of staff have a duty to make an appropriate declaration where there are personal conflicts of interest with other members of the supervisory team, or with the PGR.

The supervisory team is composed of one primary supervisor (the DoS), and one or two co-supervisors.

- the first supervisor, the DoS, must be an HSU member of staff
- the second, or subsequent supervisor(s), may be either an HSU or Solent University member of staff or, exceptionally, external
- at least one supervisor must hold a doctorate, normally the HSU or Solent University member of staff
- at least one supervisor must have experience of supervising at least one PGR through to successful completion of the research degree in question (or a research degree at a higher level).

One or more advisors may also be appointed to support the PGR on aspects of their work during their registration to contribute some specialised knowledge or a link with an external organisation. Advisors have no formal supervisory role.

The DoS will undertake management of the supervisory team's procedural and monitoring responsibilities. The DoS will have the responsibility to ensure that the PGR is supervised on a regular and frequent basis by the supervisory team and that PGR progression reviews are undertaken within timeframes stipulated by these regulations.

All supervisors should be appropriately qualified, that is they should have a doctorate and be an active researcher with discipline or methodological expertise, or they must be an experienced and active researcher as evidenced by a track record of public output and/or previous PGR completions.

All supervisors are expected to be active in terms of their own Continuing Professional Development. All HSU supervisors are required to attend Solent University's supervisors' training prior to, or within 6 months of, starting to supervise. It is expected that supervisors will regularly refresh their currency with Solent University's mandatory doctoral supervisor training sessions or equivalent training provided through HSU, as agreed with Solent University, and avail themselves of the development opportunities provided by HSU and other sector bodies. Failure to do so may constitute grounds for the DRP to decline to approve supervisory teams.

Members of staff may not act as supervisors if they are currently registered for a research degree (this does not apply to staff members registered for a doctorate by previously published works). Upon being awarded their research degree, staff members will become eligible to hold the role of supervisor.

If a member of staff is currently a DoS and decides to study for a research degree, they must cease undertaking this role immediately for the duration of their studies. With the consent of the Chair of HSU RDSC and the Chair/Deputy Chair of Solent University RDC, the member of staff may exceptionally remain on the supervisory team as co-supervisor.

If the DoS were to be temporarily unavailable, PGRs would be informed of who would be their first point of contact. This would normally be the second supervisor. In the event of a supervisor becoming unable to continue supervising a PGR, a replacement supervisor would be nominated, after consultation with the DC, and submitted to the Chair/Deputy Chair of Solent University RDC, for approval. In the meantime, the designated person (see above) will assume the role of the DoS.

2.3.2. Responsibilities of supervisory team

A supervisory team:

- will have expertise in the relevant subject or discipline area of research and knowledge of those methodologies and skills required for the research
- may also include an external supervisor as a subject or methodology specialist, but not as the first supervisor. This may be of particular relevance for Professional Doctorates where the additional input of Professional Practice experience is required.
- will engage in supervisory development every three years.

HSU and Solent University believe that effective supervision is a skill that is best learnt experientially, with the support of more experienced colleagues (the apprenticeship model). Schools should, therefore, encourage staff who are new to supervision to gain experience of the supervisory process through serving as second supervisors and on the DRP. A DoS who has not

seen a PGR through to successful completion of the research degree in question (or a research degree at a higher level) should be paired with an experienced second supervisor.

2.3.3. Supervisory meetings

PGRs needs for supervision vary depending on the rate of their progress, where the PGR is in the life cycle of their research project, and by the nature of the discipline. Based on the PGR's needs there should be explicit agreement between PGRs and supervisors on the actual frequency of supervisory meetings. It is expected that communication and interaction between supervisors and PGRs are conducted in a professional manner and in the spirit of mutual respect.

Supervisors will provide regular constructive guidance and criticism to the PGR on their research, methodology and written work both in meetings and through written feedback. At a minimum:

- full-time PGRs should meet with a member of their supervisory team at least **every 6 weeks** (9 meetings per year)
- part-time PGRs at least **every 8 weeks** (7 meetings per year).

If a PGR student has a Student visa, all supervisory meetings should take place in person unless there is an unavoidable reason for a meeting needing to take place online or by phone.

Supervisors should ensure that the PGR is aware that they should keep a record of the supervisory engagement (a template 'PGR Supervision Record' can be accessed on the VLE). Supervisors should contribute to PGR's record of all formal supervisory meetings: the actions arising from each meeting must be agreed by the supervisor and PGR following each meeting.

Copies of all supervisory meeting records must be submitted by the PGR to HSU Registry at the relevant progression monitoring points within the current academic session. Registry will provide this information to Solent University as required. The supervisory meeting record will be included as part of the annual monitoring process of PGR progress. The supervisory meeting record may be referred to in the event of an appeal or complaint.

It is the role of the supervisory team to provide guidance on relevant literature and exemplars of good research practice in the relevant field encourage the PGR to engage with current developments. Supervisors should encourage PGRs to engage with debates within their own and wider disciplinary contexts through:

- publications
- external and internal events such as discipline specific conferences
- symposia, seminars and workshops
- participate fully in the research culture and PGR community of HSU.

It is the responsibility of supervisors to advise their PGRs on health and safety, risk assessment, including any parts that may be carried out away from HSU. They should also consider and advise PGRs on research integrity including consideration of research ethics and integrity and HSU's Research Ethics Policy and Procedures, available on the [HSU website](#).

All supervisors are required to undertake to attend the mandatory Supervisor Training Sessions (at least every three years) and regularly engage with further Supervisor Training delivered by Solent University and/or HSU. They must keep up to date with any amendments to the regulatory

framework published at the start of each academic year either via the relevant supervisor training session or by accessing the latest iteration of the PGR Student Handbook & Guidance.

Supervisors should support their PGRs to prepare for key monitoring milestones and the final *viva voce* examination, including reading and commenting on completed drafts prior to their submission, provided that they are made available by the PGR in reasonable time for feedback.

2.3.4. Changes in the supervisory team

Exceptionally, where an HSU supervisor leaves the university at a point where the PGR is near to completion and/or it would disadvantage the PGR, the supervisor may be asked to continue as an external supervisor.

The DC is responsible for the oversight of supervisory teams and, in the event that a supervisor needs to be permanently or temporarily replaced, the DC should recommend a suitable replacement to the HSU RDSC for consideration and submission to the Chair/Deputy Chair of Solent University RDC for formal approval.

2.3.5. Supervision of PhD by Prior Publication

HSU staff members undertaking a PhD by Prior Publication will normally be appointed a DoS and co-supervisor. The DoS will be a member of staff with broad disciplinary experience and have experience of supervising at least one PGR to the successful completion of a UK doctoral level degree or equivalent international qualification. They will have responsibility to ensure the PGR progression within the timeframes stipulated by these regulations. Where the DoS does not have prior supervisory experience of the PhD by Prior Publication, this will be provided by the co-supervisor or an advisor to the supervisory team.

2.3.6. Establishing the Supervisory Relationship

It is recommended that supervisors and PGRs meet as early as possible after induction to establish a mutual set of expectations. Discussion of roles and responsibilities should be recorded in an agreed set of expectations in the PGR meeting record that can be referred to and reviewed over the period of registration. Items to consider may include:

- defining roles within the team, determining who is responsible for what and on what timescale
- recording the PGR meeting: the PGR will maintain and update the PGR meeting record, obtain sign off by all those party to the meeting, and circulate to the whole team including HSU Registry (registry@aecc.ac.uk).

Principles for supervisory meetings should include consideration of the frequency and timing of meetings:

- agreed schedule should be mutually convenient and meet the minimum frequency requirements
- sufficient time should be allowed between meetings for supervisory feedback on PGR's previously submitted work
- PGR is expected to proactively request supervisory meetings and engage with their supervisory team's requests for meetings
- Supervisory meetings should be conducted in a spirit of supportive and constructive criticism by supervisors and measured and reflective response by the PGR

- The PGR is expected to ensure that they make every and ongoing efforts to maintain contact with their supervisors
- **PGRs who remain out of contact with HSU for more than 60 days may be subject to withdrawal of their registration.**

2.4 The Director of Studies (DoS)

In addition to the expectations placed on supervisors listed above, the DoS is also responsible for:

- ensuring that the PGR is aware of the facilities and resources available to them across HSU and, where applicable, within Solent University
- engaging with the Postgraduate Certificate in Research Methods, which will entail:
 - providing their PGR with support and guidance around the completion of the core assessment tasks embedded within the 2 modules
 - attending collaborative workshops where their PGR is required to give a presentation on their work (1 per module)
 - marking and provision of constructive feedback of their PGR's core assessment tasks embedded within the 2 modules (1x presentation and 1x written piece of work per module).
- ensuring that the PGR is familiar with the relevant policies and procedures and relevant legislation including, but not limited to, health and safety, research integrity and ethics, data protection, PGR academic integrity and academic misconduct, research misconduct and intellectual property rights
- tracking the institutional deadlines applicable to each of their PGRs and ensuring they are prepared to meet the requirements of each deadline and monitoring point, including Annual Monitoring, Transfer and *viva voce* examination
- ensuring that the PGR submits drafts through Turnitin and reviewing the similarity reports prior to Transfer and *viva voce* examination
- ensuring that the PGR undertakes a training and skills assessment on commencement of their studies, which is kept up to date throughout their studies, and that the PGR engages with internal and external training and development where appropriate to their programme of work
- ensuring that PGRs are aware of their responsibility to maintain records of the frequency and content of supervisory meetings and that the maintenance of the supervisory meeting record is current
- discussing with the PGR on a timely basis any issues of inadequate progress, barriers to accessing resources or to progressing with their research, or failure to engage with the Supervisory Team or HSU Registry
- prior to the completion of the thesis, discussing with the PGR and supervisory team options for internal and external examiners, and forwarding the nominations to the DC no less than six months prior to submission of the completed thesis
- ensuring that the PGR is familiar with the conduct, regulations and expectations of the final *viva voce* examination
- supporting dissemination of information about training and development opportunities and offering professional development and career planning advice to PGRs.

2.5 The Doctoral Coordinator (DC)

The DC supports the processes described below.

Admissions:

- Undertakes initial review of applications and project proposals, arranges applicant interviews with academic staff, reviews preliminary supervisory arrangements and, when successful, authorises the offers to applicants, following Solent University approval.

Supervisory arrangements:

- Proposes and coordinates supervisory team composition (including any external supervision arrangements, or proposed amendments to supervisory teams) to meet the regulatory requirements of HSU and Solent University.
- Ensures that supervisors have training and support required to undertake effective supervision.
- Seeks out suitable solutions and / or replacements when a member of a supervisory team leaves or where a supervisory relationship has irretrievably broken down.

Monitoring and progression

- Coordinates the Transfer milestone.
- Chairs the Annual Monitoring Review and reports to HSU's RDSC and Solent University as required.

The DC is responsible for overseeing the key milestones for PGRs within their area:

- **Annual monitoring:** chairs the DRP meeting, facilitating and providing oversight of the Annual Monitoring Review process. They record agreed outcomes of the Annual Monitoring DRPs, initiate appropriate action to resolve issues arising from the reviews, and report on these to HSU Registry and through RDSC to Solent University as required.
- **Transfer and final *viva voce* examination:** offers support and guidance as required.

The DC is expected to contribute to sustaining the research environment and culture at HSU. They will:

- contribute to research supervisor training and leadership events
- ensure awareness across HSU PGR training and events, external speakers and research seminars
- support and enhance the research environment for PGRs
- ensure that communication and interaction with PGRs is conducted in a professional manner and in the spirit of mutual respect.

The DC acts as Chair of the DRP, coordinates the activities of the panel and reports on the findings of the panel to the HSU RDSC, and to Solent University as required. This includes feedback from the PGR body, analysis of progression and attainment rates, and analysis of external examiner reports.

2.6 HSU Registry

HSU Registry will:

- provide advice on the regulations for PGRs
- receive PGR applications and initial enquiries, and facilitate admissions and registration in liaison with the DC and Solent University
- process relevant forms relating to admission and offer, supervisory team approval, change of registration mode, and change or registration to writing-up status; Change of supervisory teams, suspension, exceptional extension or withdrawal from registration
- process the forms and procedural elements of the PGR milestones

- maintain up-to-date records and produce statistical and monitoring data to inform DRP and HSU RDSC in liaison with the DC
- support the DC to make arrangements for Annual Monitoring Reviews, Transfer and *viva voce* examination information
- ensure that communication and interaction with PGRs, supervisory teams and the DC is conducted in a professional manner and in the spirit of mutual respect
- ensure relevant documentation is shared with Solent University for formal approval or for note, as set out in the Schedule of Responsibilities in the Validation Agreement
- provide secretariat and clerking support to the HSU RDSC.

2.7 HSU Research Team

HSU Research Team will:

- provide advice on the regulations for PGRs
- process PGR applications in liaison with the DC and Solent University
- co-ordinate the PGR induction events
- ensure that communication and interaction with PGRs, supervisory teams and the DC is conducted in a professional manner and in the spirit of mutual respect
- review and update HSU documentation to support PGRs, including this Handbook and other policies and procedures
- provide expert support to the HSU RDSC
- manage the budget for the researcher development funds.

2.8 Doctoral Review Panel (DRP)

The DRP is comprised of subject experts and senior academics with supervisory experience. The DRP is chaired by the DoS. Formal panel meetings are held in June.

Further meetings of the Panel, either in full or in sub-groups, either in person or virtually, will be arranged to consider PGR applications and outcomes of monitoring exercises. Members may be asked to contribute, where appropriate, to panels for Transfer or *Viva Voce* examinations in the role of internal examiner or independent chair where they have relevant experience and have undertaken the appropriate training. The DC may elect to co-opt other academics with relevant experience to contribute to the DRP and PGR reviews as appropriate.

The DRP will meet, either in person or virtually, in good time prior to the HSU RDSC to consider, at appropriate points in the annual cycle, PGR data, PGR feedback, analysis of progression and attainment rates and external examiner reports to identify issues relating to PGR provision and experience for reporting within HSU and the Solent University RDC.

3 GOOD RESEARCH PRACTICE

3.1 UKRIO *Code of Practice for Researchers*

HSU follows the guidance of UK Research Integrity Office (UKRIO) *Code of Practice for Researchers* and promotes and encourages the highest standards in research, including research data management, research ethics and academic good conduct. Researchers at HSU, including PGRs and supervisory teams, are responsible for observing the following principles:

- quality: striving for quality both in their conduct of research and in their publications
- honesty: in relation to their own research and that of others
- ensuring accuracy of data and results, acknowledging the contribution of the work of others, and neither engaging in nor concealing academic misconduct
- integrity: complying with all legal and ethical requirements of the field of study and declaring any potential or actual conflicts of interest, including where necessary how these are to be addressed
- openness: engaging in the open exchange of ideas, research methods, data and results, including discussion, scrutiny and debate, subject to considerations of confidentiality as appropriate
- accountability: recognising researchers' ultimate accountability to the public and engaging in research which meets all requirements of applicable agreements, legislation, terms and conditions and professional bodies. Including responsibility to maintain high standards of explicitness and transparency in the design and conduct of their research
- safety and risk: only initiating research where the anticipated benefits justify any risks involved. Bearing in mind the dignity, rights, safety and well-being of all involved in the research, including the researchers themselves. Avoiding unreasonable risk to research participants, patients, colleagues, researchers and others, reporting any concerns or breaches
- training and development: ensuring that the researcher has the necessary skills, training and resources to safely conduct their research, either through their own professional training and development or through agreed collaboration with specialists in relevant fields.

3.2 Good practice in responsible and ethical research

PGRs will recognise their responsibility to conduct research of the highest ethical standards and to inform themselves of HSU's policies and procedures relating to good research practice available on the HSU VLE. Similarly, supervisors should be aware of their responsibilities and ensure they have the necessary training, time and resources to carry out their role and undertake to request support if required.

PGRs should ensure their training and skills meet the requirements of their research and keep their skills up-to-date, as required.

PGRs and supervisory teams should be aware of any contractual or other collaborative agreements relating to the research and undertake to seek guidance or assistance in maintaining the standards and procedures required of collaborative research, including reporting where necessary any concerns or irregularities they become aware of to the appropriate person(s).

PGRs should work with their supervisory teams to anticipate any issues that might arise from working collaboratively and agree in advance between all parties how these will be addressed,

including questions of authorship, responsible roles and intellectual property, and undertake to review the agreement should individual's contributions alter within the duration of the research.

PGRs and supervisory teams must recognise and declare conflicts of interest and make all reasonable efforts to mitigate or address these when they arise. Measures may include making themselves conversant with HSU's policies and procedures, putting in place safeguards or declarations when appropriate, or halting the research pending approval to continue, to avoid poor practice or potential misconduct.

PGRs should be prepared to co-operate with the monitoring and audit of their research projects by applicable bodies. They should co-operate with any outcomes of monitoring or audit and if they become aware of a need for monitoring and audit where it is not already scheduled, they should report this to the appropriate person(s).

It is good practice to build consideration of data management and storage into the project design at an early stage to ensure any monitoring or audit required can be carried out effectively and efficiently.

3.3 Good practice in research design

PGRs and their supervisors should be satisfied that the research adheres to HSU's [Research Data Management Policy and Procedures](#) and that:

- the proposed research addresses a pertinent research question and is designed either to add to existing knowledge or develop new methods of research into it
- the design of the study is appropriate to the question and adequate resources and facilities are in place to ensure timely delivery of the project within the standard thesis submission deadline
- a research data management plan is in place addressing how data will be gathered, analysed, stored and managed including:
 - secure storage of sensitive data
 - confidentiality and anonymization of personal data meeting GDPR requirements
 - planned management of expectations for open research data (see the Concordat on Open Research Data Management)
 - planned retention and deletion in accordance with relevant policies and funder agreements.
- where the design of the project has received ethics, regulatory or other approval, PGRs should ensure that any subsequent alterations to the design are presented for appropriate review, to determine they will not compromise the integrity of the research, or any consents previously given.

3.4 Research integrity

3.4.1. Research involving human participants

Any research involving human participants, human material or personal data must comply with all legal and ethical requirements any other applicable guidelines, such as those issued by a professional or regulatory body. PGRs must also submit their research project for approval by the relevant HSU ethics panel and abide by the conditions of the approval they receive. PGRs should also be conversant with any external ethical approval processes with which they should also comply:

- Research with vulnerable participants, such as the very old, children or those with mental illness or other relevant categories (see HSU's Ethics Policy and Procedures, available on the [HSU website](#)) must be subject to an HSU ethics panel review.
- PGRs whose projects involve participation by staff or patients of the NHS, or human material accessed through the NHS, must additionally apply for approval of their research by the Health Research Authority (HRA). All such applications must be approved by HSU's HRA Sponsor (the Head of Research).
- The dignity, rights, safety and well-being of participants must be paramount in the design and rationale for the research.
- Research conducted with participants from other countries must be subject to ethical review under the legal and ethical requirements of the UK and in the countries where the research is being conducted. Similarly, researchers based overseas who are undertaking a research programme at HSU should comply with the legal and ethical requirements of the UK as well as those of their own country. Where overseas fieldwork is envisaged, a risk assessment must be drawn up by the PGR and DoS and submitted to the DC for review prior to commencing the fieldwork.
- PGRs must ensure all projects including human subjects verify and retain evidence that participants receive adequate information about the project such that they can provide informed consent. Clarity on the aims of the project, the purpose of the participation in meeting those aims, any specific activity the participant is being asked to undertake, the use to which their data will be put, including any planned publication or dissemination activity and their right to withdraw from the research at any stage, and to withdraw their data from the research at any stage prior to the anonymization and publication of results.
- It is the PGR's responsibility throughout their registration to ensure that no research or fieldwork is undertaken for which ethics approval has not been obtained. PGRs who breach this principle will be subject to HSU's Research Misconduct Policy and Procedures, available on the [HSU website](#).

3.4.2. Academic writing

HSU has a reasonable expectation that applicants for a research degree are fully conversant with acceptable standards of referencing the work of others within their writing. Failure to observe referencing conventions is considered a very serious breach of academic integrity at this level of study, and this is reflected in the investigation of any reported case of academic misconduct by a PGR.

PGRs should give reference to any work quoted, mentioned, or otherwise referred to, in their writing using the APA7 referencing system. Information and guidance on using referencing systems can be obtained from HSU Library and Learning Services (<https://libguides.aecc.ac.uk/referencingandendnote> or contact by email at learningservices@aecc.ac.uk).

PGRs submitting written work for supervisory review or for formal programme milestones (Annual Monitoring Review, Transfer, Thesis submission) should meet the expected standard of referencing and should be aware that discrepancies may be investigated under HSU's Research Misconduct Policy and Procedures, available on the [HSU website](#).

3.4.3. Health and safety

Consideration of health and safety should adhere to all requirements of legislation and good practice, including, but not limited to, use of hazardous materials, off site safety, research conducted in zones of conflict or other environmental risk. PGRs should consider health and safety to include risks to the physical or mental health and well-being of themselves, participants, other researchers and any others affected by the conduct of the research. Where such risks are identified, PGRs must carry out a health and safety risk assessment in accordance with HSU's [Health and Safety Policy](#) and with support and approval from HSU's health and safety officer (safety@aecc.ac.uk).

PGRs should demonstrate that they have submitted to all appropriate reviews of the health and safety for the project and have introduced all mitigation of risk as indicated by any health and safety assessment in consultation with HSU's health and safety officer.

4 ADMISSIONS

4.1 Application Process

An individual may apply to be admitted to undertake a research degree of:

- Master of Philosophy
- Master of Philosophy with possibility of transfer to Doctor of Philosophy
- Doctor of Philosophy by Prior Publication.

An applicant for admission to read for a research degree should hold:

- a first or upper second- class honours degree of a UK university or an overseas equivalent in an appropriate discipline
- a Masters degree of a UK university or an overseas equivalent in an appropriate discipline
- other qualifications, publications and/or appropriate professional training and experience, which the DRP, the Chair of HSU Research Degree Sub- Committee, and the Chair/Deputy Chair of RDC considers equivalent to the above.

Permission to register directly for a Doctor of Philosophy award with advanced standing will only be considered where an applicant can demonstrate:

- they have achieved the equivalent of the MPhil transfer stage at another university; or
- they have considerable research experience, including peer reviewed publications or public exhibitions/ performances and can provide evidence that following the MPhil/PhD route will be disadvantageous.

4.2 English Language Qualification

For applicants whose first language is not English it is necessary to demonstrate a satisfactory standard in English by one of the following:

- holding a first degree from a UK University taught in English or a degree that has been taught and assessed in English
- reaching a satisfactory standard in an approved test equivalent to, an overall IELTS (International English Language Testing System) score of 6.5 with minimum sub- scores of 6.0 in all component sections (writing, reading, listening and speaking)
- obtaining an overall TOEFL IBT 94- 95 score, with a minimum score of 22 in each of the four component sections (writing, reading, listening and speaking).

Applicants requiring Student visas must meet the English language requirements of the UK Government.

Permission to present a thesis in another language is not allowed.

4.3 Admission to a research degree programme

All applicants must complete the HSU application form, which requires details of the applicant's academic achievements, a research proposal and source of funding, and the applicant must provide copies of any qualifications (presentation of the originals will be required as part of the enrolment process).

Applications will be submitted via HSU Registry. The application will be assessed by the HSU DC for potential suitability. If the DC believes that the applicant and proposal are suitable and the university has the relevant expertise and capacity to supervise the applicant and an appropriate research environment, they will arrange for an interview panel consisting of a member of the HSU

DRP and a member of the potential supervisory team, using HSU standard PhD interview questions and assessment criteria.

The interview panel must satisfy themselves that:

- the applicant is suitably qualified and has access to adequate financial support for the duration of registration
- the applicant is embarking on research in a field that will yield a viable research project within the designated time limit and for which expert supervision is available within HSU
- HSU is able to provide appropriate facilities and resources, taking into account any special learning needs
- there is critical mass of relevant research and researchers at HSU
- there has been an appropriate preliminary allocation of DoS and co-supervisor(s).

In cases where an applicant's work forms part of a larger group project, each individual project must in itself be distinguishable for the purposes of assessment and be appropriate for the award. The application should indicate clearly each individual contribution and its relationship to the group project.

Where a research degree project is part of a piece of funded research, the interview panel must establish that the terms on which the research is funded do not detract from the fulfilment of the objectives and requirements of the applicant's research degree.

The interview panel can:

- recommend the applicant for acceptance, in which case the panel must include an indicative training needs analysis
- reject the applicant, giving reasons.

Where the applicant is recommended for acceptance, the DC must finalise the proposed supervisory team and the relevant Head of School must approve both the staff and the physical resource commitment.

The application will be considered and if appropriate endorsed by the HSU RDSC for submission to the Chair/Deputy Chair of Solent University RDC, for formal consideration/approval of the PGR's registration on behalf of the validating university.

Students who do not hold a UK passport will be referred to the HSU UKVI Compliance Manager for the purposes of confirming their existing or expected immigration permission allowing study in the UK.

New PGRs can only register on the Solent University RDC approved registration dates. HSU Registry is responsible for monitoring timelines and progress chasing to ensure applications are dealt with in a timely fashion.

Members of staff of HSU are permitted to apply to register for a research degree through Solent University. To ensure that the proposed programme of work can be completed within the designated timescale, the amount of time the applicant can devote to the research must be agreed with the Head of School before registration and giving due regard to the requirements of part-time registration. Applications from staff will be considered in accordance with the standard

entry criteria and staff must meet the eligibility criteria and follow the application procedure set out in the [HSU Staff Undertaking Doctoral Qualifications Policy and Procedures](#).

4.4 Admission to a research programme of PhD by Prior Publication

Members of HSU staff beyond their probationary period may apply to submit a portfolio of their previously published works for consideration for the award of PhD by Prior Publication. Those who wish to undertake such a submission must be supported by their Head of School. Staff must meet the eligibility criteria and follow the application procedure set out in the [HSU Staff Undertaking Doctoral Qualifications Policy and Procedures](#). Applications will be considered initially by the HSU DC and DRP or appropriate reviewer co-opted by the DC.

The work submitted must, in aggregate, be broadly comparable in quality and quantity to that expected to be embodied in a PhD thesis in the same discipline and have been published within the past five years.

Jointly authored works will only be considered if the applicant is the first author, or if the application is accompanied by testimonials from the co-author(s) as to the percentage of the applicant's substantive contribution to the published work(s).

If the DC and DRP determine that there is a *prima facie* case for a PhD by prior publication, the DC will establish an interview panel which will proceed with the admissions process as outlined above.

5 REGISTRATION AND CHANGES TO CIRCUMSTANCES

5.1 Enrolment and Registration

PGRs must register at the start of each annual academic session, and/or following any agreed period of suspension where applicable, within their prescribed registration period until submission of the thesis. PGRs' registration in each academic session can only be completed when they have paid the appropriate fee.

Students with immigration permission to study in the UK are required to provide their original passport and immigration status document to complete enrolment.

PGRs who do not complete their registration at the commencement of the annual academic session, or following return from any authorised period of suspension, will be withdrawn as a PGR. They will not be eligible for supervision and may not use HSU's resources or facilities or those of Solent University.

5.1.1. Registration periods

A PGR's registration is deemed to run from the formal enrolment and induction date of their intake. PGRs who elect to enrol after the formal enrolment date do so at their own risk and will not have this time added to their maximum registration period.

All PGRs are expected to complete their programme of study, including any 'writing-up', within the 'standard' registration period. Exceptionally, PGRs who have made unusually rapid progress may apply to the Chair of HSU RDSC for permission to submit a thesis in advance of the minimum period. Such decisions will require confirmation by the Chair/Deputy Chair of Solent University RDC. Applications for MPhil 'writing-up' status before 12 months (24 months part-time) or for PhD before 24 months (48 months part-time) will not be approved (see also Section 10).

PGRs registered for the MPhil or MPhil/PhD, except for those registered for PhD by Prior Publication, may submit an application to transfer their registration to PhD. PGRs should apply to transfer their registration to PhD between 12-18 months (full-time) or 24-36 months (part-time) from initial enrolment. PGRs whose application to transfer does not meet approval may be granted a probationary period to resubmit their transfer application (see section on Transfer). PGRs registered for the MPhil/PhD may elect to re-register for the MPhil or may be required to do so as an outcome of the Transfer application.

Where a PGR wishes to amend their registration from MPhil/PhD to MPhil prior to Transfer, they must address the request by e-mail to the Chair of the HSU RDSC.

Where a PGR has requested an amendment of registration from MPhil/PhD to MPhil, or they have received a Transfer *viva voce* examination outcome of 'write-up for MPhil' this will result in reduction of the registration period remaining to them.

Very exceptionally, a PGR who has successfully transferred from MPhil to PhD registration may request to change their registration to MPhil. Requests should be addressed to the Chair of HSU RDSC and are considered on a case-by-case basis in respect of any adjustment to the remaining registration period.

PGR students with a Student visa must seek advice from the UKVI Compliance Manager in advance of any change to their course as the change may impact their immigration status. This does not apply for the usual and expected progression from MPhil to PhD.

5.1.2. Registration modes

PGRs may be registered for full-time or part-time study modes. A PGR may change mode at any point during their studies by completing parts A and B of the Change of Registration Mode form and forwarding it to HSU Registry for processing. If approved, a new set of deadlines relating to remaining milestones, the expected thesis submission date and the maximum registration period will be advised to the PGR and their supervisory team.

Where a PGR transfers from full-time to part-time registration, their remaining maximum registration will be recalculated to twice that of the registration period remaining to the PGR at the date of the transfer of mode being granted. Where a PGR transfers from part-time to full-time registration, their remaining maximum registration will be recalculated to half that of the registration period remaining to the PGR at the date of the transfer of mode being granted.

The registration periods during which a PGR will normally submit their thesis for final examination are as follows:

MPhil	Minimum	Standard	Maximum
Full-time	18 months	24 months	36 months
Part-time	36 months	48 months	72 months
MPhil/PhD	Minimum	Standard	Maximum
Full-time	24 months	36 months	48 months
Part-time	48 months	72 months	96 months
PhD by Prior Publication*	Minimum	Standard	Maximum
Part-time	6 months	12 months	18 months

*HSU staff only

PGR students will be registered on the MPhil/PhD programme and the Postgraduate Certificate in Research Methods. It is not recommended that PGRs concurrently register for another award at Solent University, HSU or another Higher Education Institution. However, if this situation arises, the express permission of both the Chair of the HSU RDSC and the Chair/Deputy Chair of RDC is required.

5.2 Induction

All new PGRs are required to attend mandatory induction sessions arranged for incoming PGRs delivered by HSU and Solent University. The supervisory team will also undertake a training needs analysis with new PGRs, incorporating any relevant activities and how these will be provided. The training should be designed to ensure competence in research methods and/or knowledge related to the subject of the thesis. The agreed training programme must be recorded in the Annual Monitoring Review progress review report.

The induction introduces PGRs to the resources and services available to them. Induction also provides PGRs with an opportunity to meet new and existing members of the HSU research community.

5.3 Changes to Enrolment

5.3.1 Suspension of studies

PGRs are normally expected to pursue their research on a continuous basis for the duration of their programme of study. Where the PGR is prevented by ill-health or other compelling cause from making progress, they may apply to suspend their studies for a period of not less than 1 month and normally not more than 6 months, and exceptionally to a maximum of 12 months.

Where a period of suspension is formally approved, the equivalent amount of time will be added to the end of the PGR's maximum registration period. For extensions beyond the maximum registration period see Extension of studies below.

PGRs may wish to discuss any reasons for interruption to their studies through suspension with their DoS and/or co-supervisor(s) in the first instance, and they may also wish to meet the DC.

PGRs studying on a Student visa must speak with the HSU UKVI Compliance Manager before applying to suspend their studies as there may be implications for their Student visa conditions (studentvisas@aecc.ac.uk).

PGRs wishing to suspend their studies must ensure parts A and B of the Application for Suspension Form are completed and forwarded to HSU Registry for processing and submission to the HSU RDSC for approval. Decisions will be reported to the Chair of the Solent University RDC. PGRs will receive notification of the outcome of their application from Registry. Applicants should note that approval is not guaranteed, and all applications will be assessed individually based on the grounds and evidence provided.

Where a PGR is ill and unable to study, they must inform their DoS or a member of the supervisory team as soon as practicable, and also inform HSU Registry (registry@aecc.ac.uk). Where a PGR is absent due to ill health for a period of 6 weeks or more, the supervisory team is required to inform Registry in order that HSU can suspend their studies and where relevant inform UKVI. HSU will report such suspensions to the Chair of Solent University RDC.

Retrospective applications to suspend studies will not normally be granted.

PGRs with outstanding fees who wish to suspend should contact studentfinance@aecc.ac.uk for guidance.

PGRs who are sponsored by HSU under the Student visa route and who are considering suspending their studies must seek guidance from the HSU UKVI Compliance Manager about the potential impact on their visa. HSU will inform the UKVI of all suspended international PGRs sponsored on the Student visa route (studentvisas@aecc.ac.uk).

If a PGR suspends their studies, HSU will adjust the PGR's liability for fees in accordance with the [HSU Tuition Fees Policy](#). During a period of suspension, the PGR:

- will not be liable for fees
- will not have access to supervision or other support from HSU or Solent University
- will not be expected to make any progression, and dates of key milestones will be recalculated

PGRs are required to return to their studies on the expected return date agreed with them when their suspension request was approved. They are required to contact their supervisory team and the DC at least 5 working days before their expected return date for all administrative processes to be undertaken. Failure to return on the specified date will trigger the lack of engagement process (see section 5.3.4) and the student may be withdrawn from the programme. If an additional suspension period is required, a new application must be submitted and approved.

5.3.2. Extension of studies

PGRs should review their programme of work in relation to their remaining permitted registration period regularly with their supervisory team. They should take advantage of Annual Monitoring Review and the Transfer milestone to assess the ongoing viability of their programme of work and make appropriate adjustments to ensure the project is deliverable within the normal timeframes.

The research project, up to submission of the thesis for examination, should always be planned to be achievable within the standard registration period (see table above). An application for extension beyond this period will therefore be considered only on an exceptional basis and it is advisable for PGRs to discuss any issues that may require an application for extension with the supervisory team and/or the DC.

Where exceptionally, due to circumstances beyond their control, a PGR wishes to make an application to extend their maximum period of registration, they should do so as soon as the risk of exceeding their maximum registration period becomes apparent and normally at least 6 months before the end of this period. An application may be submitted for an extension period of normally not more than 6 months, and exceptionally to a maximum of 12 months. PGRs should ensure parts A, B, C and D of the Application to Extend Research Degree Registration Form is completed before forwarding to HSU Registry for processing and submission for approval (registry@aecc.ac.uk). Applicants should note that approval is not guaranteed, and all applications will be assessed individually on the basis of the strength of the grounds and evidence provided.

Applications for extension to the maximum registration period on the basis of pressure of work are ineligible for consideration (unless the work and study are inextricably linked); for example, PGRs who have taken up a full-time job before they have submitted their thesis, however demanding the job. PGRs will be required to pay tuition fees for extension periods. PGRs reaching the end of their maximum registration who have not submitted their thesis will not be permitted to submit for examination without an approved extension to their period of registration in place.

PGRs whose extension has been approved will be required to pay an appropriate fee, which may be calculated pro-rata for the period of the extension. It is recommended that PGRs who are considering applying to extend their studies and are sponsored by HSU under the Student visa route seek guidance from the HSU UKVI Compliance Manager about the potential impact on their visa (studentvisas@aecc.ac.uk).

5.3.3. Change to the approved research programme

Where a PGR wishes to make a substantial change in the academic discipline and/or expert supervision of the approved research project, the PGR will be required to withdraw from the programme of research. Provided HSU can offer adequate expert supervision in the new area of

research and there is a critical mass of relevant research and researchers at HSU, the PGR may be considered for re-registration by submitting a new application as if it was a first application.

5.3.4. Withdrawal of registration

A PGR may elect to withdraw their registration at any time. A PGR's registration may be withdrawn at any of the review points where progress is deemed to have fallen below required standards and a period of probation is not warranted or, if following a period of probation, the standard of work remains unsatisfactory, or as an outcome of an investigation under HSU's Academic Integrity and Academic Misconduct Policy or Research Misconduct Policy and Procedures, available on the [HSU website](#).

A PGR who is in fees arrears will not be eligible to be progressed, re-enrolled, examined, receive tuition or have access to Solent University or HSU facilities and resources until the outstanding debt has been cleared or a payment plan agreed. PGRs will be informed in writing by HSU of the intention to impose sanctions. Any subsequent failure to clear any debts will result in withdrawal of registration.

A PGR may also be withdrawn from registration where they have:

- failed to engage with their supervisory team and not responded to formal correspondence from HSU for a period of 60 days
- failed to complete the registration or re-registration process at the start of each academic session until submission of the thesis has taken place
- not made satisfactory progress with their studies, for example, not successfully completing the Transfer Review
- failed to pay such fees as published by HSU and failed subsequently to clear any debts following being informed by HSU of the intention to impose sanctions (see the [HSU Tuition Fees Policy](#))
- breached a policy within the HSU Student Conduct Policy Framework (see the 'student conduct, concerns, and complaints' section of the [HSU Academic Regulations, Policies and Procedures webpage](#)).

PGRs whose registration has been withdrawn through debt and who wish to resume their studies following payment of the outstanding debt must submit a new application as if it was a first application. The university is under no obligation to re-admit PGRs.

To complete a withdrawal from registration, the Application to Withdraw From Research Degree Form must be completed and returned to HSU Registry (registry@aecc.ac.uk) following consultation with the PGR's supervisory team, DC and / or other relevant professional services where they are in receipt of the PGR's notification of intent to withdraw. If the PGR has disengaged as per paragraph 33, the form will be completed by HSU Registry.

HSU will inform the UKVI of all withdrawn international PGRs sponsored by HSU under the Student visa route. For further information contact the HSU UKVI Compliance Manager (studentvisas@aecc.ac.uk).

5.4 Appeals

A PGR may make a formal appeal to request reconsideration of decisions related to their progress, that is:

- a decision to withdraw a PGR through lack of academic progress and/or failure to engage
- a decision to suspend a PGR due to ill-health or
- the outcome of a review or examination (including Transfer).

Appeals can only be lodged by the PGR (with limited exceptions for third parties) and can only be made using the process and on eligible grounds as outlined in the HSU Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure (PGRs), available on the [HSU website](#).

If a PGR is dissatisfied about any other aspect of their experience, including withdrawal on the basis of non-payment of fees, they should refer to the HSU Student Complaints Policy, available on the [HSU website](#).

6 QUALIFICATION DESCRIPTORS

In alignment with the *Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree- Awarding Bodies (2024)*, PGRs who are awarded a research degree should meet the relevant level descriptors in full.

6.1 Doctoral Degree

The descriptor provided for this level of the Frameworks is for any doctoral degree which should meet the descriptor in full. This qualification descriptor should also be used as a reference point for other Level 8/Level 12 qualifications.

Doctoral degrees are awarded to PGRs who have demonstrated:

- the creation and interpretation of new knowledge, through original research or other advanced scholarship, of a quality to satisfy peer review, extend the forefront of the discipline, and merit publication
- a systematic acquisition and understanding of a substantial body of knowledge which is at the forefront of an academic discipline or area of professional practice
- the general ability to conceptualise, design and implement a project for the generation of new knowledge, applications or understanding at the forefront of the discipline, and to adjust the project design in the light of unforeseen problems
- a detailed understanding of applicable techniques for research and advanced academic enquiry in their discipline

Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

- make informed judgement making on complex issues in specialist fields, often in the absence of complete data, and the ability to communicate their ideas and conclusions clearly and effectively to specialist and non-specialist audiences.
- continue to undertake pure and/or applied research and development at an advanced level, contributing substantially to the development of new techniques, ideas or approaches.

And holders will have:

- the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and largely autonomous initiative in complex and unpredictable situations, in professional or equivalent environments.

6.2 MPhil Degree

The descriptor provided for this level of the Frameworks is for any master's degree which should meet the descriptor in full.

Master's degrees are awarded to PGRs who have demonstrated:

- a systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of their academic discipline, field of study or area of professional practice
- a comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship
- originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline;

- conceptual understanding that enables the PGR:
 - to evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline;
 - to evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses; and

And holders will have:

- the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring:
 - the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility
 - decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations
 - the independent learning ability required for continuing professional development.

7 TUITION FEES AND TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT

7.1 Payment of Tuition Fees

New PGRs must pay such fees as determined by HSU before they can enrol, and subsequently all PGRs must pay the annual fee before they attempt to re-register at the start of each year of study. PGRs wishing to pay their fee on a payment plan must contact studentfinance@aecc.ac.uk to discuss how they might pay for fees by instalment well in advance of their registration due date.

PGRs' annual registration takes place each year at the anniversary of their original entry point.

Non-payment or incomplete payment of the fee may result in a PGR being withdrawn. PGRs who have been withdrawn through non-payment of fees should refer to HSU's Student Complaints Policy, available on the [HSU website](#).

PGRs should be aware that the fees, once published, will be set for that year of entry, but are subject to increase year on year. Any change will be applied to both new and continuing PGRs. The fees for the current academic period can be found on the HSU website. Please also refer to the [HSU Tuition Fees Policy](#).

If a PGR suspends their studies (section 5.3.1), HSU will adjust the PGR's liability for fees in accordance with the [HSU Tuition Fees Policy](#).

PGRs who have submitted their thesis for final examination remain registered at HSU. If PGRs submit before the end of their registration year they may be eligible for a pro-rata refund and will remain registered on a 'no fee' basis pending their *viva voce* examination. PGRs who submit their thesis for final examination at the end of their registration year will register for the following year on a 'no fee' basis pending their *viva voce* examination.

7.2 Writing-up Fees

PGRs who are ready to enter the writing-up period (see Section 10), may apply to pay a reduced writing-up annual fee for a maximum of one registration year for full-time students or a maximum of two years for part-time students. PGRs will be eligible for a pro-rata refund if they submit before the end of the academic year in which they are 'writing up'. The 'writing-up' period is part of the registration period of the PGR and cannot exceed the maximum registration period of the degree for which they are registered.

If a PGR subsequently fails to submit by the end of their 'writing-up' period and is eligible to continue their registration within the maximum registration period, they will again become liable for the full annual tuition fee appropriate to their mode of study. If they then submit before the end of the academic year, they will be eligible to receive a *pro-rata* refund as set out in the [HSU Tuition Fees Policy](#).

For further details on the writing-up period, see Section 10.

7.3 Major Amendments

Following the *viva voce* examination, PGRs who receive an outcome of major amendments (6 months), re-examination subject to major amendments (12 months) or revision for the award of MPhil (PhD students only, 6 months), will continue receive full access to supervisory support and

HSU resources and facilities. Fees will not normally be payable during any period post *viva voce* examination whilst corrections or amendments are carried out.

7.4 Training and development support

At the commencement of your studies, you will work with your supervisory team to undertake a training and skills assessment, which must be kept up to date throughout your studies.

As noted in Section 2.2.2, in your first year as a doctoral researcher, you will complete the Postgraduate Certificate in Research Methods with Solent University. This will provide you with a springboard to success in your doctoral studies as well as a set of vital transferable skills applicable to a wide range of study and employment. The Postgraduate Certificate will be delivered via a mixture of synchronous (in real-time) and asynchronous (with a time delay) sessions.

HSU and Solent University both offer a range of opportunities for researchers (including doctoral researchers) to develop research, professional and personal skills. This includes face-to-face and online sessions, as well as access to online training materials. You will have access to the Vitae Researcher Development Framework planner to map your professional development as a researcher.

Every doctoral student is entitled to apply for up to £500 (or £250 for part-time students) in each academic financial year (1 August - 31 July) to undertake research development activities. You should speak with your supervisory team and DC to apply for funding.

8 ANNUAL MONITORING

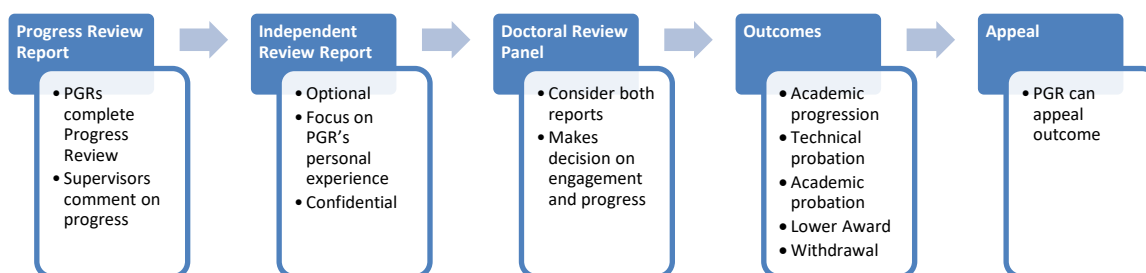
8.1 General Principles of Annual Monitoring

In addition to the research degree milestones of transfer and *viva voce* examination, the experience and academic progress of PGRs is formally monitored once a year in May/June. This is referred to as Annual Monitoring and involves a Progress Review and optional Independent Review to be held at the PGR's request.

Monitoring in these two ways ensures that all PGRs are receiving timely and constructive feedback about their academic progress and that they can access all appropriate support available to them. Through this monitoring the whole student experience is reviewed at regular intervals without placing an undue burden upon PGRs.

The PGR and the DoS must complete the monitoring progress report documentation. Failing to do so may jeopardise the PGR's continued registration.

The process for annual monitoring is as follows:



8.2 Progress Review

The Progress Review requires the PGR and the DoS to submit an academic progress report. The Independent Review, held at the PGR's request, comprises the PGR attending a meeting with an academic staff member who is independent of their programme of study, who will also submit a report (see Section 8.3). Both reports will be considered by the DRP. The DC will be responsible for appointing members of the monitoring panel and, at a minimum the panel must consist of members of the relevant DRP and academic staff with relevant expertise.

The Progress Review is mandatory (except for withdrawn or suspended PGRs, or PGRs post-submission of their final thesis). A PGR not completing their review, or failing to meet the annual deadline as advised, will not be eligible to continue their studies and their registration as a PGR can be withdrawn. Other than the exceptions above, there are no exemptions to the requirement for sections A, B and provision of the required number of supervisory records to be completed by the PGR, and completion of Section C by the DoS.

The Progress Review is a formal review of PGRs' academic progress for the annual cycle (a reflection on progress for the previous 12 months, or since first registration for first year PGRs). The aim of the review is to confirm whether the PGR is actively engaging with their programme of study, training and supervisory provision. The Progress Review form is in 3 sections and is available from the VLE or HSU Registry. Notification to complete this documentation will be sent by HSU Registry in February/March each year.

Sections A and B must be completed by the PGR and forwarded in good time to their DoS who is then responsible for completing Section C and submitting this to HSU Registry by the published deadline in May.

- Section A is a record of the PGR's details
- Section B consists of 4 parts:
 - questions relating to research good practice, training and development over the previous 12 months (or since first registration for new PGRs)
 - Activity Summary, which is designed to assist in determining how much the PGR has achieved to date and ascertain whether the work remaining on the project is in line with the proposed timelines
 - questions relating to experience of supervisory support
 - questions relating to overall experience
 - PGR signoff.

In addition to the above report, PGRs are required to keep records of meetings with their supervisory team. Meeting records need to be approved and signed off by member/s of the supervisory team present at the meetings. The meeting record include:

- dates
- supervisors present at each meeting
- points of discussion
- actions agreed as outcomes of each meeting.

Section C addresses supervisory input, feedback about the PGR completed sections (A and B) and review of the PGR's engagement, specifically:

- agreement/disagreement with what has been reported within Sections A and B (PGR content)
- DoS's overall feedback about the PGR's progress
- good research practice (i.e. research ethics and health & safety considerations). Each year a PGR should work with their supervisory team to consider the ongoing health and safety and research ethics implications of their project and if appropriate have made the relevant submissions for approval. This must be kept under review and if significant changes are made to their research project, such that amendments to research ethics approval or risk assessment have been made within the past 12 months, this section must be updated with the relevant information. If no changes have been made, PGRs can simply answer 'Yes' or 'No' to the questions as appropriate.
- researcher development activities within the wider research community, such as attendance or contribution to events relevant to their development (conferences, symposia), publishing/exhibiting, peer review or other relevant activities.

Section C must be completed by a member of the supervisory team (normally the DoS) and returned by the supervisor with Sections A and B to Registry@aecc.ac.uk. Section C addresses the PGR's overall academic quality and performance, review of any actions or changes to the health and safety arrangements with the PGR, and any changes or issues in respect of the ethical aspects of the project and makes a recommendation to the DRP assessors regarding the academic progress of the PGR.

Sections A, B and C must be submitted by the deadline given on the form. Failure to meet the deadline will mean the PGR will be automatically placed on probation as the DRP will be unable to

consider that any progress has been made at the scheduled panel meeting in June. Subsequent failure to meet probationary deadlines may jeopardise the PGR's registration and ability to continue their studies.

The DRP will indicate a formal decision regarding the PGR's continued registration on the award. The panel may decide any of the following outcomes:

- the PGR has demonstrated satisfactory engagement and academic progress
- technical probation pending submission of missing or incomplete Annual Monitoring documentation (within 3 months)
- academic probation pending submission of work meeting an agreed plan set out by the DRP (within 3 months)
- where evidence is such that the DRP are not satisfied that a probationary period is warranted, they can recommend withdrawal of registration (or where appropriate require the PGR to re-register for MPhil write-up).

The DRP may elect to select both technical and academic probation outcomes from the review. In this case, the 3-month probation periods will run concurrently.

Where HSU RDSC confirms termination of registration or transfer to MPhil, the PGR will have the right of appeal. The DRP will review all the reports and the DC will present the key findings to HSU RDSC and to the Chair/Deputy Chair of the Solent RDC as required.

8.3 Independent Review

The Independent Review, which is optional and held at the PGR's request, is an optional one-to-one meeting with an academic member of staff who is an experienced researcher and is independent of the PGR's supervisory team. This review focuses on the PGR's personal experience. It is an opportunity to discuss any barriers or challenges they feel are affecting them personally or in their research environment. The aim of the review is to ascertain if there are any issues affecting the PGR personally or academically which HSU can address through its various services. Issues arising from the independent reviews may be escalated to the DC.

The DC will arrange the one-to-one meetings when required. Normally the nominated independent reviewer will make the meeting arrangements.

The meeting will normally take place between March - May with sufficient advance notice to reserve this time within respective diaries.

At the meeting, the independent reviewer and PGR will jointly complete the Independent Review Questionnaire Form. This should include any additional concerns highlighted and discussed in the meeting. The form must be returned to HSU Registry before the May deadline and will be forwarded to the DC to follow up any individual actions.

Independent Review forms will also be reviewed by the DRP who will consider these in the context of both the individual PGR's Annual Monitoring outcome, and overall to identify any common factors or improvements to practice that may be indicated, and where appropriate these will be escalated to the HSU RDSC, and to Solent University as required.

8.3.1. Confidentiality

PGRs should indicate on the Independent Review form if they wish for part or the whole of their Independent Review responses to be kept confidential from the DRP.

Normally the DC will review all Independent Review forms to address any individual actions. In cases where an action is warranted, but the PGR has requested confidentiality which includes the DC, the Independent Reviewer may elect for the action to be forwarded to a designated academic member of HSU RDSC to mitigate the PGR's desire for confidentiality. This should be discussed between the PGR and independent reviewer and the PGR's preference clearly indicated.

8.4 The Doctoral Review Panel (DRP)

The DC will convene the DRP, or sub-panels representative of the DRP with relevant expertise, to consider the Independent Review and Progress Review forms in June each year. Any documentation submitted after the May deadline will not be considered in June and will be subject to review when the DC is able to reconvene the DRP, or a sub-panel, such that a review may take place. Each PGR must satisfy the DRP in the following:

- their Progress Review provides evidence of satisfactory progress during the preceding 12 months (or in the case of first year PGRs, since their first registration)
- they have provided an appropriate plan for the forthcoming 12 months.

PGRs who have been granted a probationary period will be notified in writing of an agreed programme of remedial work. They must submit their revisions or evidence of additional work (as stipulated in the agreed plan) within 3 months. The DC will arrange for these to be reviewed. The reviewers will consider whether the PGR has satisfied the criteria of the probation and may continue with their studies. Failure to submit required work can result in withdrawal of the PGR's registration.

At an appropriate phase of the programme of study, the panel may consider a PGR's progress is such that an application for 'writing-up' status at the next annual registration point for their award would be appropriate. This should be stated in the panel report.

If there is no improvement in the PGR's performance after a period of probation and serious concerns remain about their progress and/or there is a significant probability that the PGR will not be able to submit a thesis within the permitted registration period, a recommendation to withdraw the PGR's registration should be made to the Chair of HSU RDSC, for recommendation to Solent University. Where appropriate the PGR may be required to re-register for the MPhil award in lieu of withdrawal from their studies.

8.4.1. Appealing an Annual Monitoring outcome

A PGR who believes they have eligible grounds to appeal their Annual Monitoring outcome may make a formal appeal under the Academic Appeals Policy and Procedures (postgraduate research degree students) on the [HSU website](#).

9 TRANSFER OF REGISTRATION FROM MPhil TO PHD

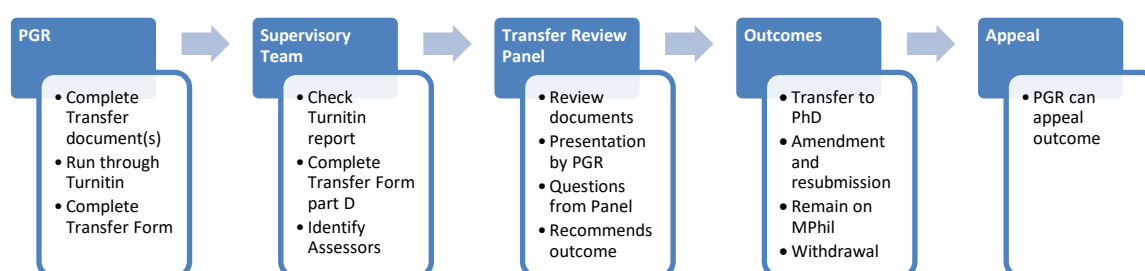
9.1 Context of Transfer Review

The transfer process is a key milestone and an opportunity to take stock of what has been achieved and reflect on the remaining body of work that needs to be done before submitting a thesis. It is also one of the occasions when PGRs get careful feedback from experienced academics who are not directly involved in their project. Experience shows that meticulous preparation for the transfer process can substantially increase the likelihood of timely and successful completion of a PhD thesis.

PGRs should seek supervisors' guidance and advice in a timely manner about appropriate timing and preparation for the transfer. PGRs should agree a schedule of meetings with their supervisory team to discuss transfer, and factor into their preparation:

- sufficient time for their supervisory team to read and comment on the written drafts
- time to think about the supervisory team's comments and respond before the deadline for submission
- time to obtain the necessary approvals to support their application.

The process for transfer review is as follows:



9.2 Timeframe for Transfer Review

PGRs registered for the MPhil/PhD route are expected to Transfer from MPhil registration to PhD, normally between 12- 18 months for full- time study (24- 36 months for part- time study). PGRs who have registered for the PhD by Prior Publication route will not be required to Transfer. PGRs who have registered for an MPhil only can elect to apply to transfer to PhD in the same timeframe as those PGRs registered on the MPhil/PhD.

In the event of an unsatisfactory Transfer submission, a full- time PGR may be offered a 3- month period (6 months part- time) in which to amend the submission in response to the feedback from the Doctoral Transfer Panel. If the transfer document(s) remains unsatisfactory, the Doctoral Transfer Panel will either recommend the PGR remain registered for an MPhil, which may result in a reduction to their registration period (see section on Registration and change of circumstances), or that the PGR be withdrawn from their studies.

Failure to submit a Transfer document(s) within 18 months of the commencement of full- time study, or part- time equivalent (36 months), may result in a recommendation that the PGR remain registered for an MPhil or that the registration be withdrawn.

MPhil/PhD	Transfer window for registration for PhD	Probationary period
Full-time	12- 18 months	3 months
Part-time	24- 36 months	6 months

A PGR who is registered for the degree of PhD and who is unable to complete the approved programme of work may, at any time prior to the submission of the thesis for examination, apply in writing to the Chair of the HSU RDSC for their registration to revert to MPhil.

9.3 The Transfer Process

9.3.1. Submitting the transfer form and associated documents

In support of the transfer application, the PGR shall be required to submit evidence in the form of:

- Transfer document(s), plus other material subject to the nature of their research
- Turnitin similarity report, and
- completed Transfer form.

They will also be required to attend a Transfer Panel at which they must successfully demonstrate the work has the potential to meet the learning outcomes for the doctoral award.

The PGR must submit their transfer report to Turnitin, complete the Transfer form, and then forward all the above documentation to their supervisory team for their DoS or co-supervisor to confirm that they have checked and are satisfied with the Turnitin report and to complete part D of the transfer form. The supervisory team must identify and make the initial contact to confirm the assessors for the Transfer. Each assessor must be contacted independently to avoid conflicts of interest.

When all the above actions have been completed, all documentation i.e. the transfer document(s), the Turnitin similarity report and the Transfer form, should be forwarded by the DoS to HSU Registry. Registry will record the submission and forward it to the DC who will convene a Transfer Panel (see below)

If any part of the documentation is incomplete when it is submitted, HSU Registry will return it to the PGR for revision.

9.3.2. Submitting to Turnitin

The following should be noted:

- PGR should allow up to 24 hours for the Turnitin similarity report to generate
- PGRs must download the similarity report and forward it to their DoS or co-supervisor for review
- submission to Turnitin does NOT result in submission of the transfer report to Registry.

9.4 The Transfer Form

When completing the Transfer Form, PGRs are asked to take particular care not to alter the layout of the form or delete sections. In any section of the form where there is no applicable information, PGRs should indicate 'n/a' (e.g. if there are no collaborating establishments). PGRs must complete sections A, B and C. The DoS (or a co-supervisor) must complete section D.

9.5 The Transfer Document(s)

The Transfer assessment process is centred on the submission of a Briefing Paper (up to 3,000 words \pm 10%, or equivalent, supported by an abstract of 300 words, with supplementary examples of progress to date). The content and structure of the Briefing Paper will be agreed between the student and the supervisory team and will be based on the nature of the research project. Examples of work that could form the basis of transfer documents are as follows (this is neither a prescriptive nor an exhaustive list):

- A clear statement of the area of research including appropriate aims and objectives.
- A synopsis of the work undertaken so far.
- A reasonable first draft of the literature review.
- A schedule of further work that includes a timetable of completion of the thesis from the date of initial registration as well as consideration of any potential challenges to the project's successful completion (i.e. circumstances that could impact the project) and any steps or contingency plans that can be taken to minimise the impact of these challenges.
- Draft chapter(s) of the thesis and/or a chapter-by-chapter plan for the thesis.
- Examples of progress to date.
- Evidence of some preliminary data or evidence that the data collection will commence shortly.
- Details and reflection of any training undertaken, as well as future training plans, e.g. a completed Training Needs Analysis.

The Briefing Paper should include the following documents as standard:

- A data management plan.
- An ethics application.
- A risk assessment.

PGRs should give reference to any work mentioned, or referred to, in their proposed plan of work using the APA 7 system. For information, please consult Library and Learning Services (learningservices@aecc.ac.uk). Failure to observe referencing conventions at this level of study is considered a serious breach of academic and research integrity and this is reflected in the investigation of any reported case of academic misconduct by a PGR.

9.6 The Transfer Panel Review

9.6.1 The panel meeting

It is the DC's responsibility to complete the following actions:

- arrange a Transfer Review Panel, appointing an independent chair and contacting the two assessors provided by the supervisory team. The assessors will not be members of the PGR's supervisory team and will normally be internal to HSU. An external assessor may be appointed, if approved by the DC.
- ensure the report by the Transfer Panel assessors (Part E of the Transfer form, is complete, has all relevant signatures.
- when a final transfer outcome, including any amendments, has been reviewed and agreed by the panel, the completed Transfer form is submitted to HSU Registry, to be forwarded to the Chair of HSU RDSC for consideration and recommendation to Solent University for approval.

At the Transfer Panel, the PGR will normally open with a short presentation, which will be followed by questions and answers, and informal discussion.

PGRs will be asked to confirm whether they wish one of their supervisory team members to be present at the panel meeting as an observer. The supervisor may take notes of the discussion to share with the PGR after the meeting; however, the supervisor is not permitted to take part in the discussion. The HSU Registry will advise the DC and issue the invitation to the named supervisor. The Panel should give the PGR informal verbal feedback at the end of the review meeting. Written notification of the outcome will be forwarded to the PGR following approval of the decision by Solent University.

9.6.2. Transfer panel assessment criteria

In reviewing the transfer documents and the PGR's *viva voce* examination performance, the Transfer Panel must be convinced of that the Panel have received sufficiently detailed material to ascertain:

- if progress to date has been satisfactory, and if there is a feasible and realistic plan of work to ensure that the project will be completed within the standard registration period (3 years full-time, 6 years part-time)
- what methods have been used, how they have been deployed and the rationale for their use
- what findings have emerged or are expected to emerge
- that the project, as it has developed, is going to deliver an original contribution to knowledge (which is what distinguishes the PhD from an MPhil)
- that the style and presentation of the transfer report represents the qualities of PhD level work
- that the PGR can write clearly and in a manner appropriate for an advanced piece of academic writing
- that the concepts, theories and relevant methodological issues are confidently and accurately handled
- that data is presented in ways that comply with academic conventions, and does the PGR understand how to interpret these data and know their limitations
- that the PGR distinguish clearly between explanations, interpretation and speculation in the discussion of findings and the inferences to be drawn from them.

9.6.3. Transfer panel report

The Transfer Panel will complete a report in section E of the Transfer form, which the independent chair will submit to the DC, copied to HSU Registry. The report will:

- assess the PGR's transfer outcome against the above criteria
- clearly acknowledge the strengths of the project, as well as identify any areas of weakness or limitation, and where possible provide constructive suggestions for addressing these
- provide an explicit recommendation for one of the four possible outcomes (listed in Transfer Panel outcomes below)
- in cases where the recommendation is for amendment and resubmission, state clearly what issues need to be addressed and how this will be achieved. The Transfer Panel should ensure that any recommendation for probation also nominates the Panel member(s) who will review the resubmitted documents, or state if the Transfer Panel should be reconvened on resubmission,
- In cases where the recommendation is for approval, the Transfer Panel may give consideration to stating whether the PGR is likely to be in a position to make an application for 'writing-up' status at the next annual registration point for their award.

9.6.4. Transfer panel outcomes

The Transfer Panel can decide one of the following outcomes:

- Transfer to PhD is approved
- Transfer report is subject to amendment and resubmission within 3 months (full-time) or 6 months (part-time) to the satisfaction of the Transfer Panel
- registration to remain as MPhil (NB: this will result in an amended final submission deadline)
- registration withdrawn.

PGRs will receive formal notification of the outcome in writing as soon as possible after the Transfer after the above processes have been completed and formal approval is confirmed. In the event that the PGR requires further guidance on the panel outcome, they should contact the DC in the first instance. PGRs can also seek informal feedback from the DC and / or from the supervisor they invited to be present where appropriate.

If the PGR has submitted revisions for transfer report being subject to amendments outcome, and the panel reviewer(s) conclude that the transfer report remains unsatisfactory, they will normally recommend to the Chair of HSU RDSC that the PGR's registration be retained at MPhil or, that the registration be withdrawn. If endorsed the recommendation will be submitted to Solent University for approval.

9.6.5. Appealing a transfer review outcome

A PGR who believes they have eligible grounds to appeal their Transfer outcome may make a formal appeal under the Academic Appeals Policy and Procedures (postgraduate research degrees) available from the [HSU website](#).

10 WRITING UP

10.1 'Writing up' Period

PGRs who have finished their data collection and analysis and are engaged in completing the writing and final preparation of their thesis for submission are considered to be writing up their thesis. During their writing-up period, PGRs should not normally undertake any active/core research (e.g. lab work, experiments, fieldwork, archival research, primary data collection and analysis, etc). If further active/core research is required during this period, this should only be permitted on a time-limited basis and must be approved by the DoS and the DC. In addition, the writing-up period should not be used for the completion of stand-alone publications, undertaking researcher training or development, or for undertaking other work that is not directly related to the completion and submission of the thesis, for example teaching. The emphasis should be on completing and submitting the thesis as soon as possible.

In addition, sufficient time in advance of the submission of the final thesis should be allowed for the following:

- nomination of examiners
- comments and feedback from the supervisory team on the whole draft thesis
- proof-reading the final thesis for typographical, grammatical and formatting errors
- agreement on the final title of the thesis
- if required by the external examiners, arrange for copies of the thesis to be printed.

During the writing-up period, PGRs will continue to be entitled to supervision in line with the expectations of the PGR Student Handbook (see Section 2.3.3). This is to ensure that PGRs receive the guidance and support they require during the final stages of completing their thesis and to assist Schools in monitoring progress and ensuring that the student is on course to submit before their time limit. PGRs will continue to have full access to IT and library resources at HSU and Solent University throughout the writing-up period.

PGRs should apply to transfer to a reduced 'writing-up' fee before the beginning of their final year (or final two years if a part-time PGR) of standard registration when they are, or expect shortly to be, in the position described above. As outlined above, the Annual Monitoring or Transfer Panel may be appropriate points to consider when to transition to 'writing-up' fee status depending on the progress of the PGR to that point. A panel may make a recommendation that the PGR and supervisory team consider making the application at the next registration point or offer a projection of at which future annual registration point an application may be appropriate.

The PGR and their supervisory team will discuss the decision, as supervisory approval of the application for 'writing up fee' status is required. The PGR's supervisory team must review the PGR's progress after Transfer is successfully completed prior to each annual re-registration point and when appropriate approve the PGR's application for 'writing-up fee' status.

PGRs wishing to make an application for 'writing-up fee' status should consult with their supervisory team well in advance of their next annual registration point in order that supervisory approval can be obtained in time to have the fee applied. Applications to transfer registration to 'writing-up fee' status can be made by completing parts A, B and C on the Application for Writing-Up Status form and forwarding it to HSU Registry.

10.2 Eligibility for 'Writing-up Fees'

PGRs must have completed Transfer before they are eligible to apply for 'writing-up' status. Full-time PGRs who have successfully transferred may apply after a minimum of 12 months registration. Part-time PGRs who have successfully transferred may apply after a minimum of 36 months registration.

10.3 Thesis Submission after the 'Writing up' Period

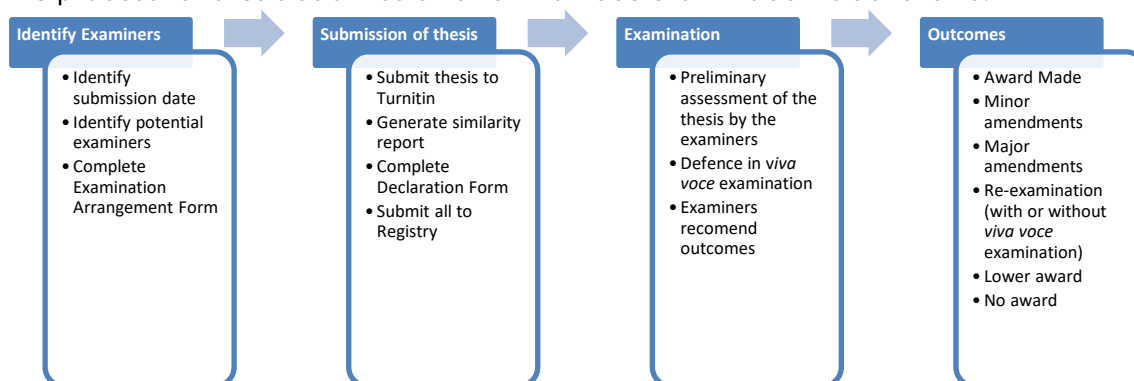
If a PGR has not submitted their thesis for final examination within the 'writing-up fee' period appropriate to their mode of study (full-time / part-time), they will no longer be eligible for a reduced fee. Subject to being eligible to continue their registration within the maximum registration period for their mode of study they must resume payment of the full annual fee at that point.

PGRs who are not ready to submit their thesis at the end of their 'writing-up' period may continue to register at the full annual fee until they have reached the end of their maximum registration period.

11 THESIS SUBMISSION AND *VIVA VOCE* EXAMINATION

11.1 Examination Process

The process for thesis submission and *viva voce* examination is as follows:



11.2 Deciding to Submit

The submission of a thesis for examination is at the sole discretion of the PGR, subject to satisfying the conditions of eligibility required by the regulations for PGRs. While a PGR would be unwise to submit the thesis for examination against the advice of their supervisors, it is their right to do so. Equally, PGRs should not assume that a supervisor's agreement to the submission of a thesis guarantees the award of the degree.

A PGR must ensure that the thesis is submitted to HSU Registry before the expiry of their registration period. PGRs with exceptional circumstances must complete an application to extend this period prior to the expiry of their registration period.

11.3 Pre-Submission

The writing, preparing and submitting of the thesis within the permitted registration period is the PGR's responsibility. The thesis must be the PGR's own work and in their own words except for quotations from published and unpublished sources which must be clearly identified and acknowledged using the APA7 referencing system. There are copies of successful theses available through Solent University. In preparation for the final version of the thesis, PGRs might find it useful to look at other theses to guide them in achieving the required standard.

Exceptionally, a PGR who has completed the Transfer stage and is registered for the PhD may request in writing, at the time of submitting their PhD thesis, that the thesis be considered for MPhil. Any such decisions must be reported to the Chair/Deputy Chair of Solent University RDC.

11.4 Research Degree Examination Arrangements

The predicted date of submission must be stated on the Research Degree Examination Arrangements form (submitted six months in advance of thesis submission). This date cannot exceed the maximum registration period. PGRs should notify HSU Registry as soon as possible if their expected submission date will be subject to change.

At least six months before a PGR expects to have completed their thesis for submission for examination, they should discuss with their supervisory team their predicted thesis submission date and who might be appropriate to invite to act as external examiner(s).

The supervisory team are responsible for completing the Research Degree Examination Arrangements form. This is the formal notification of the date on which the PGR intends to submit the thesis for examination and includes the nomination of examiners and the independent chair.

11.4.1. Nomination of examiners

It is important to begin discussions of potential external examiners early, as confirmation of the examination panel takes some time and having the arrangements in place prior to submission of the thesis will ensure that a PGR's *viva voce* examination can take place within reasonable time of the thesis submission.

The PGR will be examined by at least two and not more than three examiners of whom at least one will be an external examiner. Internal examiners should have experience in the general area of the PGR's work. External examiners should have experience in the specialist area of the PGR's thesis and demonstrate a consistent and extensive record of relevant publication. The examination team should have substantial experience of successful supervision and examination of research degree students. Normally, the external examining team should have completed a minimum of two examinations.

Where the thesis includes submission of a non-textual form, or is a portfolio of previously published works, it is desirable that at least one examiner has previous experience in examinations of such formats.

Where the PGR is a member of HSU staff the examiners must all be external to the university but may include a Solent University member of staff who does not have any conflict of interest. No member of the PGR's supervisory team will act as an internal examiner. An internal examiner should declare any potential conflict of interest with the PGR before the appointment is made. An internal examiner may have acted as panel member at the PGR's Transfer.

An external examiner must be independent of HSU and Solent University and must not have acted previously as the PGR's supervisor or advisor and must have no other conflict of interest involving the PGR. Former members of staff of HSU or Solent University should not be approved as external examiners until at least three years after the termination of their employment with HSU or Solent University. Where an internal examiner has recently left either institution following a PGR's *viva voce* examination and the PGR is eligible for a further *viva voce* examination, their continuation in the role will be reviewed as to the interests of the PGR.

A nomination for an external examiner who has been in formal collaboration, or who has authored a research paper, with a member of the supervisory team or the PGR within the three years prior to the examination, would not normally be regarded as independent.

11.4.2. Examiner appointment process

The supervisory team should discuss potential examiners with the PGR prior to requesting approval of an examination panel. The DoS should submit to the DRP proposals for the PGR's examiners at least six months before the expected thesis submission date. The PGR's examination may not take place until the arrangements have been approved. In special circumstances, the DRP may act directly to recommend examiners and arrange the examination of a PGR. The DRP recommendation should be considered by HSU RDSC and submitted to the Chair/Deputy Chair of Solent University RDC for formal approval.

Once approved by the DRP, the DC must complete the Research Degree Examination Arrangements form parts A, B and C and must include CVs of the proposed examiners including details of their PhD examination and supervision experience and recent relevant research and publications. The form must be sent to HSU Registry for onward transmission for consideration/approval.

The HSU RDSC should ensure that the same external examiner is not approved so frequently that their familiarity with the University might prejudice objective judgement.

A PGR registered at HSU, Solent University or another university cannot act as an examiner.

11.5 Submission of Thesis

Submission must include the following actions:

- thesis must be submitted electronically to Turnitin and the Turnitin similarity report must be generated
- the full thesis, the Turnitin similarity report and the Thesis Submission – Candidate Declaration form must all be submitted by the PGR to HSU Registry
- thesis must be presented electronically. If specifically requested by an external examiner, the PGR must also provide a printed hard copy version of the thesis – the cost for this must be covered by the PGR student.

Enquiries about the format, binding or number of copies should be made to HSU Registry in good time.

11.5.1. Submitting to Turnitin

The following should be noted:

- PGRs should allow up to 24 hours for the Turnitin similarity report to generate
- PGRs must download the similarity report and include it with their submission to HSU Registry
- submission to Turnitin does NOT result in submission of the transfer report to HSU Registry.

11.5.2. Thesis submission – declaration form

PGRs must complete parts A to I of the Thesis Submission – Declaration form. This includes:

- identification of any aspects of the thesis which have previously been published
- where published work has been jointly authored with others, which parts of the work(s) are the PGR's responsibility
- any aspects of the thesis which have already been submitted for a degree or comparable award
- a declaration of research integrity.

11.6 Thesis Format

Section	Details
Language	The thesis must be presented in English.
Body of text	Theses are normally in A4 format, but the DC may give permission for a thesis to be submitted in another format where it is satisfied that the contents of the thesis can be better expressed in that format. Any format larger than A4 may preclude the production full-size enlargements.
Margins	If being printed (at the request of the external examiner(s)), the margin on the binding edge of the paper should be not less than 40 mm and 20mm on all other edges. When printing double sided, mirror margins should be used with 40mm on the inside margin and 20mm on all other edges.
Character size, line length and spacing	<p>The font size should not be less than 10 point, with Arial, or similar formal font, being the preferred font. If smaller fonts are used in notes, etc., care should be taken to avoid serious loss of legibility when copies are made.</p> <p>Text should be right and left justified - with even spacing between words and word division at the ends of lines avoided if possible. In the main text, one and a half line spacing is recommended, although double spacing may be used.</p> <p>In notes, the space between lines at any point should be not less than the space between words.</p> <p>Lines that contain mathematical formulae, diacritical marks or strings of capital letters may need additional space.</p>
Paragraphs	Paragraphs should be set in one of the following ways: flush left with an additional line space between paragraphs, e.g., in one and a half line spacing, three-line spaces between paragraphs (to be used if paragraphs are numbered) indented 5 mm to 10 mm with no additional space between paragraphs; opening paragraphs and those that follow headings are not indented.
Quotations	If the quote is less than a line, it may be included in the body of the text in double quotation marks. Longer quotations should be indented, single-spaced and appear in double quotation marks.
Numbering	<p>The pages of the thesis should be numbered in a single sequence beginning with the title page, which should be counted but not numbered, and including pages that carry tables, illustrations, appendices, etc.</p> <p>Chapters should be numbered from the start to the finish of the thesis, continuing across volumes if necessary.</p> <p>Appendices should be numbered in a separate sequence from that used for chapters.</p> <p>Additional material, e.g., frames of a film, should be numbered in a manner appropriate.</p>
Figures	Illustrations should be numbered consecutively in a single sequence, generally without distinguishing between different kinds

Section	Details
	of illustration, e.g., maps, drawings and graphs. Images should be checked carefully for copyright compliance using the Library and Learning Service's guidance.
Tables	<p>If there are relatively few tables, each should appear as near as possible to the first reference to it in the text. If there are frequent references to tables, or if there are many tables, they may be collected at the end of the text, possibly as an appendix.</p> <p>Each table should, if possible, appear complete on one page but should not be spaced out to fill the available space nor reduced to fit a small space. They should normally be in the same orientation as the main text. If a table is too wide for the page, the row and column information could be transposed, or a large table presented as several smaller ones. The presentation of a series of tables should be consistent.</p> <p>Each table should have a number and title, which should appear above the table e.g., "Table 4. Influence of legislation on treatment for low back pain."</p> <p>The order of rows and columns should be selected to clarify the content and should have a label or heading. Row labels should be repeated on the right of the table if that is helpful. Numeric tables may include summary values, e.g., in the bottom row for columns or right-hand for rows.</p> <p>The character size used in tables should be large enough to allow the table to be reproduced without risk to legibility. Tables consisting largely of numerals sometimes require a larger character size than the main text.</p>
Mathematical symbols	PGRs should check in advance the software they are using can produce any special symbols.
Collaboration	Where a PGR's research programme is part of a collaborative group project, the thesis must indicate clearly the PGRs individual contribution and the extent of the collaboration.

11.6.1. Title page

The title page must give the following information:

- full title of the thesis
- full name of the author
- that the degree is awarded by Solent University
- award for which the thesis is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of Solent University
- that the PGR was enrolled for study at HSU
- collaborating establishments (if any)
- month and year of submission.

11.6.2. Abstract

An abstract of approximately 300 words must be included in the thesis and should provide a synopsis of the thesis stating the nature and scope of the work undertaken and the contribution

made to the knowledge of the subject treated. The abstract should also be copied electronically to HSU Registry when the electronic version of the thesis is submitted.

11.6.3. Copyright statement

The thesis must include a copyright statement, immediately following the title page in the following form:

- 'This work is the intellectual property of [the author]. You may copy up to 5% of this work for private study, or personal, non-commercial research. Any re-use of the information contained within this document should be fully referenced, quoting the author, title, university degree level and pagination. Queries or requests for any other use, or if a more substantial copy is required, should be directed to the owner(s) of the Intellectual Property Rights'.
- If there are other owners of the IP they must also be named here.

11.6.4. Acknowledgements

The finished thesis must include a statement of the PGR's objectives and must acknowledge published or other sources of material consulted (including an appropriate bibliography) and any assistance received. When a PGR's research is part of a collaborative group project, the thesis must indicate clearly the PGR's individual contribution and the extent of the collaboration. The PGR is free to publish material in advance of the thesis, but reference must be made in the thesis to any such work. Copies of the published material should be included with the thesis.

11.6.5. Word Count

The length of the thesis should not normally exceed the following:

Degree Programme	Word Count
Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)	80,000 words
Master of Philosophy (MPhil)	40,000 words
Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) with additional non-textual material *	40,000 words + material
Master of Philosophy (MPhil) with additional non-textual material *	20,000 words + material

* Where the submission includes material in other than textual form

Where the submission is for a PhD by Prior Publication the portfolio of works must be broadly comparable in quantity to that of a PhD thesis above and must include a framing document / introductory section that explains the unifying themes that run through the research and places the works in the context of existing work in the field and the PGR's research career. The framing document / introductory section should be approximately 10,000 words in length.

Examiners will have regard to the PGR's fulfilment of Solent University's assessment criteria, where a thesis is submitted significantly under the maximums cited above.

For clarification the thesis word count includes:

- quotations
- tables
- figures
- footnotes / endnotes

The thesis word count excludes:

- appendices (if the content is appropriate to an appendix and not a continuation / extension to part or all the thesis)
- bibliography / reference list
- abstract
- acknowledgement / dedication
- table of contents

11.7 Viva Voce Examination

There are two stages to the examination of MPhil and PhD theses. Firstly, a preliminary assessment of the thesis by the examiners. Secondly its defence in an oral examination (*viva voce* examination) before a panel of examiners following the formal submission of the thesis for examination.

Normally the *viva voce* examination will take place 2 or 3 months after the thesis is submitted, making allowance for the examiners to have sufficient time to read and carefully consider the merits of the research. A PGR will normally be examined orally on their thesis and on the field of study in which their research lies.

The *viva voce* examination will normally be held in the UK. In special cases, the Chair of HSU RDSC may give approval for the examination to take place abroad or via remote meeting technology.

11.7.1 Before the viva voce examination

As soon as submission of the final thesis is completed, HSU Registry will make arrangements for the *viva voce* examination and establish the availability of the previously approved examiners and independent chair. HSU Registry will notify the PGR, supervisory team, independent chair and examiners of the date and location of the *viva voce* examination.

HSU Registry will send a copy of the thesis and the relevant regulations to each examiner, together with the Preliminary Examiner Report on a Thesis form and any appropriate guidance. Each examiner must read and examine the thesis and submit the Preliminary Examiner Report to HSU Registry at least five working days before the *viva voce* examination is held.

In completing the Preliminary Examiner Report, each examiner should consider whether the thesis provisionally satisfies the requirements of the degree and where possible make an appropriate provisional recommendation subject to the outcome of the *viva voce* Examination. The Preliminary Examiner Report forms are to be completed independently and without formal or informal consultation between examiners, whether external or internal. An examiner having received the thesis and wishing to contact another examiner, the PGR or any member of the supervisory team should do so only via HSU Registry.

Once all Preliminary Examiner Reports have been received by HSU Registry, they will be circulated to the other examiners before the *viva voce* examination takes place.

If an examiner has to withdraw from a *viva voce* examination, they should notify HSU Registry as soon as possible in order that nomination of a new examiner can take place. The PGR should be kept informed of any changes to examination panels or to the date of the *viva voce* examination.

PGR will be asked whether they wish for a member of their supervisory team to be present at the *viva voce* examination. If present, the supervisor will be there as an observer; however, they are not permitted to take part. It is entirely the PGR's choice whether to invite a supervisor to be present.

11.7.2. Conduct of the viva voce examination

Where a PGR is ill and cannot attend the viva, they must notify HSU, providing documentary evidence, and HSU will reschedule the examination.

Where for reasons of disability or comparable valid cause the Chair of HSU RDSC is satisfied that a PGR would be under serious disadvantage if required to undergo a *viva voce* examination, an alternative form of examination may be recommended to Solent University for approval. Such approval must not be given because a PGR's knowledge of English is inadequate.

Where evidence of academic misconduct in the preparation of the thesis or other irregularities in the conduct of the examination come to light subsequent to the recommendation of the examiners, the Chair of HSU RDSC will consider the matter, if necessary, in consultation with the examiners and relevant colleagues at Solent University and take appropriate action.

The *viva voce* examination will be conducted by the examiners and will be chaired by an independent staff member of HSU or Solent University.

Recording of the *viva voce* examination will not normally be permitted.

Examiners may elect to indicate informally their decision on the result of the examination to the PGR, but they must make it clear that the formal notification of the outcome will be communicated by HSU Registry following processing of the relevant Examiner Decision form and approval by Solent University.

11.7.3. Independent chair

The role of the independent chair is to ensure that the *viva voce examination* is conducted with due regard to fair play and in compliance with the regulations for PGRs. The role of the independent chair is set out in the Regulations.

11.8 Viva Voce Examination Outcomes

11.8.1. Outcomes of the examination for PhD

Following the *viva voce* examination, the independent chair should require the examiners to complete the *viva voce* examination report forms and, where appropriate, that feedback is provided to the PGR. When the examiners have made their decision, they may elect to communicate it to the PGR immediately following the examination.

The chair will also oversee the completion of reports relating to minor or major revisions and will liaise with the externals about the action to be taken in response to any resubmission required of the PGR.

Where the examiners agree, the chair will submit a joint report on the appropriate form including the decision relating to the award of the degree. The preliminary reports and joint recommendation of the examiners should together provide sufficiently detailed comments on the scope and quality of the work to enable the HSU RDSC and the Chair of Solent University RDC to be satisfied that the outcome chosen is correct. Where the examiners do not agree, separate reports and recommendations should be submitted.

Following the completion of the examination for PhD the examiners may decide one of the following outcomes:

- the PGR be awarded the degree
- the PGR be awarded the degree subject to minor amendments being made to the thesis within 3 months to the satisfaction of the examiners
- the PGR be awarded the degree subject to major amendments being made to the thesis within 6 months to the satisfaction of the examiners
- the PGR be re-examined subject to major amendments being made within 12 months to the thesis to the satisfaction of the examiners, without a *viva voce* examination
- the PGR be re-examined subject to major amendments being made within 12 months to the thesis to the satisfaction of the examiners, with a *viva voce* examination
- in the case of a PhD examination, the PGR be awarded the degree of MPhil subject to the presentation of an MPhil thesis within 6 months revised to the satisfaction of the examiners
- the PGR not be awarded the degree and not be permitted to be re-examined.

In cases where the PGR does not achieve the assessment criteria for the award of PhD outright, the normal expectation is that the examiners will make one of the recommendations set out above, each of which allows the PGR a further opportunity to satisfy the assessment criteria within a fixed deadline. Re-submitted theses received outside the period stipulated will not be eligible for assessment for an award.

Minor Amendments within 3 months should be used where there are minor typographical and/or minor editorial amendments are needed and a re-examination is not required. Following the *viva voce* examination, these amendments will be stipulated by the examiner(s), on the guidance form, which will be sent to the PGR after the viva. These amendments must be completed by the PGR within three months from the day the list of amendments is sent. The amended thesis should be verified by one of the examiner(s) as stipulated on the recommendation form.

Major amendments within 6 months should be used where the requirements of the degree have been largely met, except that a major revision is needed to an aspect of the thesis. Following the *viva voce* examination, these amendments must be completed by the PGR within six months from the day the list of amendments is sent. The amended thesis should be verified by one of the examiner(s) as stipulated on the recommendation form.

Major amendments within 12 months should be used where, although the requirements of the degree have been partly met, the thesis contains major deficiencies, but the examiners believe with further work a satisfactory outcome can be achieved. Following the viva the PGR will receive a written statement of the amendments required, signed by each examiner. The PGR must complete the amendments within twelve months from the date the written statement was sent.

The amended thesis should be verified by one or more of the external examiner(s) as stipulated on the recommendation form without the need for a further *viva voce* examination.

Major amendments within 12 months with a further *viva voce* examination should be used where, although the requirements of the degree have been partly met, the viva and/or the thesis contains major deficiencies, but the examiners believe with further work a satisfactory outcome can be achieved. Following the viva, the PGR will receive a written statement of the amendments required, signed by each examiner. The PGR must complete the amendments within 12 months from the date the written statement was sent. The amended thesis should be subject to a further *viva voce* examination.

Awarding of an MPhil degree should be used where the examiners identify major deficiencies with the thesis and do not consider that with further work a satisfactory outcome can be achieved, but that the PGR should be given the opportunity to demonstrate that they can meet the criteria for an MPhil award. The revised MPhil thesis should be submitted within 6 months and should be verified by one or more of the external examiner(s) as stipulated on the recommendation form without further *viva voce* examination.

Degree not awarded should be used where the examiners believe that the deficiencies of the thesis are such that an award cannot be made. Where it is confirmed that the degree should not be awarded and that no re-examination should be permitted, the examiners should prepare an agreed statement of the deficiencies of the thesis and the reason for their recommendation, which should be forwarded to the PGRs.

Examiners may indicate informally their decision on the result of the examination to the PGRs.

11.8.2. Outcomes of the examination for MPhil

Following the completion of the examination for MPhil the examiners may decide one of the following outcomes:

- the PGR be awarded the degree
- the PGR be awarded the degree subject to minor amendments being made to the thesis within 3 months to the satisfaction of the examiners
- the PGR not be awarded the degree and not be permitted to be re-examined.

In cases where the PGR does not achieve the assessment criteria for the award of MPhil, the normal expectation is that the examiners will recommend *b above*, which allows the PGR a further opportunity to satisfy the assessment criteria within a fixed deadline. Re-submitted theses received outside the period stipulated will not be eligible for assessment for an award.

Minor Amendments within 3 months should be used where the requirements of the degree have been met, except that minor typographical and/or minor editorial amendments are needed and a re-examination is not required. Following the viva, these amendments will be stipulated by the examiner(s), on the guidance form, which will be sent to the PGR after the viva. These amendments must be completed by the PGR within three months from the day the list of amendments is sent. The amended thesis should be verified by one of the examiner(s) as stipulated on the recommendation form.

Degree not awarded: the PGR will be informed that no further submission of this portfolio will be accepted for consideration of the award of MPhil.

11.8.3. Outcomes of the examination for PhD by Prior Publication

Following the completion of the examination the examiners may decide one of the following outcomes:

- the PGR be awarded the degree
- the PGR be awarded the degree subject to amendments to being made to the framing document / introductory section within 3 months to the satisfaction of the examiners
- the material submitted in the portfolio falls short of the requirements, and the PGR not be awarded the degree and not be permitted to be re-examined.

Where the degree is awarded subject to amendments, the PGR must be provided with written guidelines on the additional material required and/or corrections to be made to the framing document / introductory section.

Where the degree is not awarded, the PGR will be informed that no further submission of this portfolio will be accepted for consideration of the award of PhD.

11.9 Re-Examination

One re-examination will be permitted, subject to the following:

- the original *viva voce* examination outcome was that "the PGR be re-examined subject to major amendments being made within 12 months to the thesis to the satisfaction of the examiners, with or without a *viva voce* examination
- the PGR has been provided with written guidance on the deficiencies of the first submission
- the form and nature of the re-examination has been agreed by the Chair/Deputy Chair of RDC. Where there is good cause a variation of the form of re-examination may be approved.

Where there is compelling evidence, HSU RDSC may exceptionally approve an extension of this period. Any such extensions must be reported to the Chair/Deputy Chair of Solent University RDC.

The HSU RDSC, in discussion with the Chair/Deputy Chair of Solent University RDC may require that an additional external examiner to be appointed for the re-examination.

Each examiner should read and examine the thesis and submit, on the appropriate form, an independent preliminary report before any viva or alternative form of examination is held. In completing the preliminary report, each examiner should consider whether the thesis provisionally satisfies the requirements of the degree and where possible make an appropriate provisional recommendation subject to the outcome of any oral examination.

Following the re-examination of the thesis, either including or excluding a viva or other examination as agreed by HSU RDSC and approved by the Chair/Deputy Chair of Solent University RDC the examiners may, where they agree, communicate it to the PGR. They must submit a joint report and decision on the appropriate form relating to the award of the degree. The preliminary reports and joint recommendation of the examiners should together provide sufficiently detailed comments on the scope and quality of the work to enable HSU RDSC and the Chair/Deputy Chair of Solent University RDC to be satisfied that the outcome chosen is correct.

Where the examiners do not agree, separate reports and recommendations should be submitted.

11.9.1. Re-examination outcomes

Following the completion of the re-examination the examiners may recommend one of the following outcomes:

- the PGR is awarded the degree
- the PGR is awarded the degree subject to minor amendments being made to the thesis within 2 months;
- the PGR be awarded the degree of MPhil subject to the presentation of the thesis within 6 months amended to the satisfaction of the examiners
- the PGR is not awarded the degree and is not permitted to be re-examined.

The PGR cannot be awarded the degree subject to major amendment after re-examination.

In cases where the PGR does not achieve the assessment criteria for the award of PhD, the normal expectation is that the examiners will recommend either that further minor amendments should be made or that the PGR is awarded an MPhil, subject to satisfactory amendments. Both of these outcomes allow the PGR a further opportunity to satisfy the assessment criteria within a fixed deadline. Re-submitted theses received outside the period stipulated will not be eligible for assessment for an award.

Where the examiners are satisfied that the PGR has in general reached the standard required for the degree, but consider that minor typographical and/or minor editorial amendments are needed they may recommend that the degree be awarded subject to the PGR amending the thesis to the satisfaction of one or more of the examiner(s). In this case they should indicate to the PGR in writing what amendments and corrections are required. These amendments must be completed by the PGR within two months from the day the list of amendments is sent. The amended thesis should be verified by one of the examiner(s) as stipulated on the recommendation form.

Where the examiners identify major deficiencies with the thesis at re-examination the PGR cannot be re-examined subject to further major amendments, but the examiners may consider it appropriate for the PGR to be given the opportunity to demonstrate that they can meet the criteria for an MPhil award. The revised MPhil thesis should be submitted within 6 months and should be verified by one or more of the external examiner(s) as stipulated on the recommendation form without further *viva voce* examination.

Where the examiners believe that the deficiencies of the thesis are such that an award cannot be made and the sub-committee confirms that the degree should not be awarded, the examiners should prepare an agreed statement of the deficiencies of the thesis and the reason for their recommendation, which should be forwarded to the PGR by HSU Registry.

Where the examiners' recommendations are not unanimous, the sub-committee of HSU RDSC will:

- accept a majority recommendation (provided that the majority recommendation includes at least one external examiner)
- accept the recommendation of the external examiner
- require the appointment of an additional external examiner.

Where an additional external examiner is appointed, they should prepare an independent preliminary report on the basis of the thesis and, if considered necessary, may conduct a further viva examination within 2 months of the original re-examination. That examiner should not be informed of the recommendations of the other examiners. On receipt of the report from the additional examiner, the sub-committee will determine the outcome and submit to HSU RDSC. The HSU RDSC sub-committee will make a recommendation to the Chair/Deputy Chair of Solent University RDC.

11.9.2. Illness during a transfer, examination or re-examination

Where a PGR is ill during their transfer, *viva voce* examination or re-examination they must notify HSU, providing documentary evidence, and the university will reschedule the examination. HSU Registry will keep Solent University informed in such.

11.10 Completion of Research Degree

Following successful examination, the final thesis must be presented in a permanent electronic format before the degree may be awarded. In such cases, the PGR must confirm that the contents of the electronic thesis are identical with the version submitted for examination, except where amendments have been made to meet the requirements of the examiners.

Completion is the term used to describe a successful thesis following submission, examination and any amendments which have been made to the satisfaction of the examiners and following formal approval of the outcome by Solent University. The degree is awarded by Solent University.

Conferment of the award is conditional on receipt by the Solent University Graduate School Officer of the following:

- completed and signed British Library registration form, permitting full participation in the UK thesis service; and
- signed draft certificate, including the wording of the thesis title, agreed by the PGR and the Chair of the RDC.

Following the award of the degree, the Solent University Library, on behalf of the Graduate School Officer will:

- send a copy of the title page, abstract and a list of contents to the British Library in accordance with the arrangements for participation in the UK thesis service
- upload the PDF version of the thesis to Pure, Solent University's repository. Library and Learning Services at HSU will arrange for a copy to be uploaded to the HSU's repository.

Where a PGR has previously had an application approved for the thesis to remain confidential for a period after completion of the work, the thesis will be embargoed on the Solent and HSU repositories for the approved period and will only be made available to those who were directly involved in the project.

11.11 Confidentiality

A thesis is made publicly available upon successful completion. However, where a PGR, their collaborative establishment or their funder/funding body wishes the research and thesis to remain confidential for a period after completion of work, an application for consideration by the HSU RDSC shall be made at the time of admission. In cases where the need for confidentiality emerges at a subsequent stage, a special application for the thesis to remain confidential after

submission should be made to HSU RDSC. The period approved will not normally exceed two years from the date of the viva examination. Any such approvals must be reported to the Chair/Deputy Chair of Solent University RDC.

11.12 Monitoring of Examination and Award of Research Degrees

The HSU RDSC will consider the reports and decision(s) of the examiners in respect of the PGR, and on the basis of the examiners' decisions will recommend the outcome to the Chair/Deputy Chair of Solent University RDC for consideration/approval.

Where the examiners' recommendations for vivas and / or re-examinations are not unanimous, the Chair of HSU Research Degree, will appoint a sub-committee to consider the outcome in line with the options below:

- accept a majority recommendation (if the majority recommendation includes at least one external examiner)
- accept the recommendation of the external examiner
- require the appointment of an additional external examiner.

Recommendations will be made through the HSU Research Degree sub-committee to the Chair/Deputy Chair of Solent University RDC for approval.

Where an additional external examiner is appointed, they should prepare an independent preliminary report on the basis of the thesis and, if considered necessary, may conduct a further *vice voce* examination within 2 months of appointment, which will be considered as part of the first examination.

The additional examiner should not be informed of the recommendations of the other examiners. On receipt of the report from the additional examiner, the HSU RDSC should make a decision and submit a recommendation to the Chair/Deputy Chair of Solent University RDC.

The HSU RDSC on behalf of Solent University RDC must ensure that all examinations are conducted, and the recommendations of the examiners are presented, wholly in accordance with the relevant regulations. In any instance where HSU RDSC on behalf of Solent University is made aware of a failure to comply with all the procedures of the examination process Solent University RDC must be informed; RDC may declare the examination null and void and require the appointment of new examiners.

11.13 Posthumous Awards

An award may be conferred posthumously where a PGR was close to completing their course of study. The HSU RDSC will consider each case on an individual basis and make a recommendation to Solent University RDC.

11.14 Aegrotat Awards

An Aegrotat award of MPhil or PhD may be conferred where a PGR was close to achieving an award but due to illness or other valid reason, as recommended by the HSU RDSC and approved by Solent University RDC, is unlikely to be able to complete their studies within the maximum registration period.

12 MISCONDUCT, APPEALS AND COMPLAINTS

12.1 General Principles

HSU and Solent University are committed to helping and supporting PGRs to understand the expectations associated with academic writing and provides advice, guidance and self-help material, so that PGRs can fully understand what is considered unacceptable behaviour. PGRs are expected, with the support provided by HSU, to make themselves fully aware of what constitutes good academic conduct and consequently what academic misconduct entails.

In order to protect the standard and integrity of its awards, HSU will identify any incidence that meets the definition of academic misconduct and will bring this to the attention of the PGR. HSU would consider any incidence of academic misconduct at the level of a postgraduate research degree as very serious. Where proven, HSU will impose an academic penalty under HSU's Academic Governance and Integrity Policy, Research Misconduct Policy and Procedures, and Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure available on the [HSU website](#).

As stated above, there is an expectation at this level of study that PGRs should know what constitutes misconduct in research. Failure to observe referencing conventions and other aspects of good research practice is considered a very serious breach of research integrity at this level of study. This is reflected in the penalties applied by HSU to any case of academic misconduct by a PGR which is upheld after investigation. PGRs should refer to HSU's Research Misconduct Policy and Procedures, and Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure available on the [HSU website](#), which includes a non-exhaustive list of behaviours or actions that may constitute academic misconduct activities (including misconduct in research).

PGRs who fail to obtain all relevant permissions to conduct their research will be considered in breach of HSU's ethical approval procedure. PGRs who suspect misconduct should report it through studentgovernance@aecc.ac.uk. PGRs should recognise that good practice in research/good academic practice includes reporting concerns about the conduct of research and should co-operate with any investigation of misconduct in research when requested.

The decision of the Academic Misconduct Panel is considered to be one of academic judgement against which PGRs may not appeal. However, appeals may be lodged on the grounds set out in the HSU policy. PGRs who wish to appeal on these grounds must submit their appeal to Solent University, by contacting the Complaints and Appeals Manager at Solent University.

12.2 Appeals Procedure

An appeal can only be lodged by the PGR and cannot be made by a third party, unless at the time the appeal is lodged the PGR has evidence that they are suffering from such physical or mental incapacity so as to prevent the PGR acting for themselves. A judgement in this matter will be taken by the HSU Academic Registrar based on the available evidence.

A PGR may make a formal appeal to have the following academic decisions reconsidered under this policy:

- a decision to withdraw a PGR through lack of academic progress and / or failure to engage
- a decision to suspend a PGR due to ill-health
- the outcomes of an assessment, including viva voce examination, Transfer Panel and annual monitoring review.

PGRs should refer to the Academic Appeals Policy and Procedures (postgraduate research degree students) available on the HSU VLE. At the Review stage, PGRs may make an appeal to Solent University.

12.3 PGR Complaints

Where a PGR is dissatisfied with their learning experience or with the services provided by HSU they should use the HSU Student Complaint Policy published on the [HSU website](#).

If on completion of Stage 2 of the policy, a PGR believes that their complaint has not been handled properly or fairly, they may submit a request for a review to Solent University (This will be a Stage 2 complaint under Solent University's [Student Complaints Policy](#)).

The grounds under which a PGR may request a review are:

- procedural irregularity in the conduct of the complaint procedures
- new evidence is available which was not available at the time of the investigation during Stage Two
- that the decision and outcome of the Stage Two complaint were unreasonable in the light of the evidence provided.

Dissatisfaction with the outcome of the complaint investigation shall not in itself constitute an acceptable reason for review.

If a PGR is dissatisfied about other aspects of their experience, including withdrawal for non-payment of fees, they should use the complaint procedure. Disagreement with the academic judgement of supervisors, examiners, DRP, HSU RDSC or Solent University RDC does not itself constitute grounds for appeal.

Given the existence of procedures for complaints available to PGRs during their study, together with the monitoring arrangements for PGRs, alleged inadequacy of supervisory or other arrangements during the period of study will not constitute grounds for appeal against an academic judgement.

12.4 Review Stage

PGRs may request a review of the decision of the HSU Academic Appeals Board where they are dissatisfied and one of the following applies:

- the procedures followed at HSU did not follow appropriate arrangements and that this influenced or may have influenced the decision in some way
- the outcome was unreasonable, in the circumstances
- new material evidence has become available which the PGR was unable, for valid reasons, to provide earlier in the process. PGRs wishing to present additional evidence, must also demonstrate that it was not previously available, and explain why.

PGRs wishing to request a review may submit a second stage appeal to the Solent University Complaints and Appeals Manager within 10 working days asking for the decision and/ or process to be reviewed by the Chair of Solent University RDC (or their nominee in their absence) and a member of RDC not previously involved with the PGR.

The Chair of RDC and RDC member will review the evidence and may interview the PGR and/or member of staff and examiners, and will determine if the process followed was fair, transparent and robust and the outcome and recommendations appropriate. The PGR's DoS and the HSU Academic Registrar will be informed of the Chair and RDC member's decision within 20 days of Solent University Policy, Governance & Information receiving the appeal.

Where the Chair and RDC member uphold the original outcome and recommendations Solent University will issue a completion of procedures letter, which includes the details of how to appeal to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator.

Where the Chair and RDC member do not uphold the original outcome and recommendations, they will determine the appropriate action(s), taking into account the PGR's desired outcomes, and in discussions with relevant colleagues at HSU. If the PGR does not accept the proposed actions Solent University will issue a completion of procedures letter.

In all cases, HSU will be informed of the outcome.

13 INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

13.1 Immigration and Right to Study

As a Student Sponsor Licence holder, HSU can offer immigration sponsorship under the Student route to PGR students who meet our academic entry requirements and the UK immigration requirements associated with the Student route. As part of our obligations to the Home Office we are also required to ensure that all students have the right to study in the UK for the duration of their course and will ask any student who is not a UK national to provide evidence of valid immigration permission allowing study before they can enrol on their course. Information about immigration requirements before and during your course can be found on our Immigration webpages: <https://www.hsu.ac.uk/study/apply/how-to-apply/international-applicants/visa-immigration/>

Students seeking advice relating to their immigration status can contact the HSU UKVI Compliance Manager (studentvisas@aecc.ac.uk). An agreement to offer immigration sponsorship from HSU for a Student visa does not guarantee the approval of a Student visa application from the Home Office. HSU, as a Sponsor of international PGRs, has certain responsibilities and rules which it is required to follow by the Home Office.

13.2 Admission

Upon acceptance of an offer to study, PGRs requiring immigration sponsorship to study in the UK are asked to pay a deposit of £1,000 before the Admissions Team can raise a CAS number (Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies). A CAS is confirmation that HSU is supporting a PGR's Student visa application and a mandatory requirement for Student visa applications.

Copies of all original documentation are required before raising a CAS; the original documents will need to be verified at enrolment. Once all documentation, and any other information requested by the UKVI Compliance Manager, has been received the process to issue a CAS can take up to five working days at peak times. PGRs must meet with the HSU UKVI Compliance Manager or nominee at the start of their course to complete their enrolment (studentvisas@aecc.ac.uk). Failure to do so can result in immigration sponsorship being withdrawn and the Student visa cancelled.

In some circumstances, PGRs may register and commence their studies with HSU whilst their Student visa application is pending with the Home Office (if the Student visa application was made in the UK and prior to their previous visa expiring). However, they must contact the UKVI Compliance Manager in advance of enrolment, show evidence that they have a current application with the Home Office, and understand the risk of beginning a course before receiving a visa application outcome. If a PGR's Student visa application is later refused by the Home Office a full copy of the refusal notification should be sent to studentvisas@aecc.ac.uk so that the UKVI Compliance Manager can advise on next steps, including the possibility that registration at HSU is terminated immediately.

13.3 Attendance monitoring

HSU is required to monitor the attendance of PGRs with immigration sponsorship in line with our requirements to the UKVI as a Student sponsor, as set out in HSU's Academic Engagement Policy and Immigration Sponsorship for Students Policy and Procedure, both available on [the HSU website](#). This policy is in place to ensure that HSU is compliant with its duties as a Student Sponsor, including providing accurate information to the Home Office.

In alignment with this requirement the following are defined as contact points:

- enrolment for new PGRs and annual registration
- completion of the Postgraduate Certificate in Research Methods component of PhD (which includes in-person sessions)
- in-person supervisor meetings in line with the guidance given earlier in this handbook
- submission deadlines
- attendance at transfer *viva voce* examination.

PGRs and supervisors are required to keep a written record of all their supervisory meetings and must be able to show such records to Registry or the HSU UKVI Compliance Manager on request and at each Annual Monitoring point.

Should a PGR fail to attend meetings with their supervisor or to engage with their studies and fail to demonstrate a substantial and immediate increased level of engagement, measured through the above-mentioned contact points, immigration sponsorship may be withdrawn and the Student visa will be cut short by the Home Office.

Outside HSU closure periods, PGRs should discuss any leave requirements with their supervisory team.

13.4 Immigration information and resources

The HSU website contains a great deal of useful information for international students both [before](#) and [during](#) your studies.

If you can't find the information you are looking for you can also contact the HSU UKVI Compliance Manager using studentvisas@aecc.ac.uk and they will try to assist. The HSU UKVI Compliance Manager can offer meetings by appointment via MS Teams or in-person at our Bournemouth or London campus where these are needed.

13.5 Student visa extensions

PGRs who need to apply to extend their Student visa should seek advice from the HSU UKVI Compliance Manager at the earliest possible opportunity (studentvisas@aecc.ac.uk).

A PGR may need to apply to extend their visa to complete their course, for example once the outcome of their *viva voce* examination is known. Please note, HSU is only able to continue / extend Sponsorship if a PGR's continued participation within the UK is required on the course e.g., the PGR is required to maintain in-person contact with their supervisor or use facilities and materials that aren't available in their home country.

HSU calculates end of registration dates on CAS applications by the thesis submission date plus three months to take into account time for the *viva voce* examination.

If PGR foresee a problem in submitting their thesis within the maximum registration period for their mode of study, in addition to seeking advice from their supervisory team, they should contact the HSU UKVI Compliance Manager, to seek advice immediately with regards to the implications this will have on their Student visa. It should be noted:

- PGRs awarded an MPhil are not permitted to extend their Student visa

- PGRs failing without the right to resubmit are not permitted to extend their Student visa.

13.6 Working During Studies

Most Sponsored PGRs have immigration permission which allows them to work during their studies. However, the hours and type of work can do are restricted, e.g., maximum 20 hours per week during term time, as specified on the BRP card. Please note, PGRs are only outside of term time when periods of leave have been agreed with them by their supervisors.

Sponsored PGRs are not permitted to be self-employed or engaged in Business Activity, which includes, setting up a business, being employed for a company in which you hold shares of 10% or more or holding a statutory role, such as a director.

For more information and eligibility PGRs should contact the HSU UKVI Compliance Manager (studentvisas@aecc.ac.uk).

14 PHD BY PRIOR PUBLICATION

14.1 General principles of PhD by Prior Publication

This section provides potential applicants, PGRs, and staff involved with the application and programme of study with details of the arrangements for the award of PhD by Prior Publication and should be read in conjunction with the Regulations for PGRs. The PhD by Prior Publication allows staff who have not followed the traditional academic route towards a PhD to obtain academic recognition for having undertaken and produced original research and developed their research skills and subject knowledge to a doctoral level. This may include people entering higher education in mid-career, especially in practice-based disciplines.

The PhD by Prior Publication differs from the 'traditional' PhD in that it is based upon research already undertaken before registration for the degree that has led to a number of coherent publications or a body of publicly available non-textual/creative outputs. The HSUCC only awards PhD by Prior Publication, not where the publications are submitted concurrently with the PhD degree registration.

'Traditional' PhD students undertake training in research methodology and research practice as part of their programme of study, while the PhD by Prior Publication PGR will have undertaken this training and academic development prior to coming to HSU or have developed these skills alongside their professional role at HSU and have demonstrated these through their research publications / outputs. The research skills obtained are therefore recognised and evaluated in retrospect and would be expected to be at the level equivalent of a 'traditional' PhD route at the 'writing-up' stage at the point of admission to the PhD by Prior Publication.

Only applications which are complete by the published annual application deadline will be considered for registration at the next entry date. Annually there is one entry date in October. Applications which are incomplete at the application deadline may be considered for the next available entry point once they are completed. Applicants may defer entry once accepted to the next entry point, for up to 12 months but must do this in the knowledge that HSU may not be in a position to offer a place to study at a later stage or may amend the previously proposed supervision arrangements. A key part of the application review process is to determine whether HSU is able to offer appropriate supervisory expertise. The non-availability of expert supervision is an acceptable reason for rejecting an application, however eligible the applicant is in other respects.

HSU does not accept applications that present any part of a thesis by Prior Publication in a language other than English.

14.2 PhD by Prior Publication Eligibility

14.2.1 The application

Applications are made using the same process as that for the 'traditional' PhD except as outlined below.

The applicant should, following their application, submit for consideration at the *prima facie* stage, no less than four and no more than six substantial published works (published texts or outputs) published within the past five years, which, taken together comprise in quantity and quality the greater part of the word length of a PhD and which must be in the public domain prior to registration on the award.

Examples of materials acceptable for publication submission include but are not limited to:

- refereed articles in journals
- monographs
- chapters in books
- chapters in conference proceedings with an ISSN
- books.

The degree will be awarded on the basis of the materials and submitted publications as described below and defined and formally recognised by the appropriate subject and disciplinary area.

14.2.2. Entry criteria: prima facie stage

The award of the degree of PhD by Prior Publication shall be open to applicants who are members of HSU staff who have completed their probationary period of employment and who can demonstrate a record of publication or other public outputs of research of appropriate quantity and quality and who do not already hold a doctoral degree in the same or cognate discipline or area of research.

The body of research outputs must:

- demonstrate a quantity, quality and level of research equivalent to that of a 'traditional' PhD student who has reached the beginning of the 'writing-up' stage
- be at least equal to the length of a standard PhD thesis
- provide evidence of the acquisition and utilisation of research skills equivalent to those of a 'traditional' PhD student who has reached the beginning of the 'writing-up' stage.

Prior to registering for a PhD by Prior Publication, applicants will be required to undergo a preliminary evaluation. This initial *prima facie* stage accompanies the interview element of admission, with the objective of enabling HSU to make a preliminary judgement as to the quality and coherence of the publications that form the basis of the application, the likelihood of a submission which will meet the criteria for an award, and the ability of the relevant research area within HSU to provide appropriate supervision and resources.

The *prima facie* evaluation will be undertaken by the DC or a nominated representative and a senior academic from a field relevant to the proposal. The evaluation may result in one of the following recommendations:

- that there is a *prima facie* case for admission to the degree of PhD by Prior Publication
- that there is no *prima facie* case for admission to the degree of PhD by Prior Publication at this stage, but the applicant should consider making a new application after further publication or revisions have been made
- that there is no *prima facie* case for admission to the degree of PhD by Prior Publication.

By recommending that there is a *prima facie* case for admission, the panel are confirming that there is evidence that the applicant:

- meets the entry criteria
- has a substantial body of work and skills that can be considered to be the equivalent of a 'traditional' PhD at the beginning of the 'writing-up' stage
- is likely to meet the required standard for a PhD
- includes evidence of a unifying theme across the publications

- includes evidence of originality
- includes evidence of research skills equivalent to those expected of a 'traditional' PhD student in the relevant discipline
- has proposed a suitable PhD title
- that there is a suitable supervisor available.

In the event of any issues arising regarding the eligibility, the proposal should be referred initially to the DRP. Following the *prima facie* and interview element of the admission process the DC will make arrangements to confirm the supervisory provision. Applications for registration for a PhD by Prior Publication must be approved by the Chair/Deputy Chair of Solent RDC.

14.2.3. Registration

Applicants accepting an offer to submit for a PhD by Prior Publication must follow the registration and induction process. PGRs registered for the PhD by Prior Publication will not be required to undertake the Transfer milestone of the 'traditional' PhD but will be expected to engage in the Annual Monitoring processes.

Registration for PhD by Prior Publication will be on a part-time basis only and will be subject to a minimum registration period of 6 months with an expected submission for examination within 12 months of registration. No less than two months' notice of intention to submit for examination should be given. The PGR and supervisor must agree an intended submission date and the supervisor should submit this information along with the nomination of examiners on the Research Degree Examination Arrangements form.

14.2.4. Tuition fees

The PhD by Prior Publication shall be subject to HSU's reduced annual 'writing-up' fee. Staff seeking the fee from their School must obtain authorisation from the Head of School prior to registration.

Candidates for the PhD by Prior Publication who do not submit within the 12 months registration period will be liable for the full annual part-time fee during any period of approved extension.

14.3 The Role of the Supervisor

The nominated DoS will act in a similar role to that of a supervisor of a 'traditional' PhD project, but with more emphasis on being a mentor to the PGR. There will normally be no co-supervisors. They will act as a source of support and guidance during the preparation of the research material for examination and for administration of the annual monitoring, examination and other internal processes.

The DoS will be a permanent member of staff with experience of supervising at least one PGR to successful completion, or part of a supervisory team that includes a member of a staff with a completion at doctoral level.

The DoS will:

- guide the PGR in the final selection of publications for inclusion in the submission
- support and advise on the development of the framing document/ introductory section
- guide the PGR in relation to the coherence of the body of work to be submitted
- advise the PGR in relation to any research training requirement,

- make arrangements for the examination, including nomination of examiners, in discussion with the PGR
- support the PGR through the examination process and any required amendments following examination.

14.4 Requirements of the Degree

14.4.1. The form of the examination

The submission consists of two parts:

- A substantial body of published work (published texts or outputs)
 - The number of publications will depend on the disciplinary area and type of publication but will typically be no less than four and no more than six publications
 - Such publications may include academic journal articles, chapters, monographs, scholarly editions of a text, published reports, creative works in relevant areas, or other artefacts
 - Where the PGR is not the first author in co-authored publications and there is no published statement as to the contribution of each author, the extent of their contribution must be certified by the co-author(s)
 - Publications included in the submission for the PhD by Prior Publication should not have been used in the submission for another degree
 - Publications should demonstrate that the quality, extent and level of research undertaken is at least equivalent to that expected of a 'traditional' PhD student who has reached the end of the 'writing-up' stage.
- A framing document / introductory section demonstrating that the published works contain unifying themes and comprise a coherent body of academic work that meets the requirements of the award of PhD. This component should:
 - Set the published works in the context of existing literature and evaluate the contribution that the research makes to the advancement of the chosen subject or professional area
 - Stress the coherence of the publications, linking them to the methodology adopted
 - Demonstrate the acquisition and utilisation of appropriate research skills equivalent to those of a 'traditional' PhD student who has reached the end of the 'writing-up' stage
 - Include a section relating to the PGR's methodology. This is particularly relevant if detail regarding methodology is not included in the publications. The PhD is about rigour of research process as well as originality of the outcomes
 - In cases where the works are jointly authored by the PGR and other persons (see above), this section should also describe the roles played by these authors, and contain percentage estimates of the PGR's input into each jointly authored work
 - Be approximately 10,000 words in length, exceptionally where the complexity or volume of work requires further analysis, a higher word count may be submitted up to a maximum of 20,000 words.

14.5 Examination Procedures

The regulations and procedures governing the examination of PhD theses also apply to the PhD by Prior Publication, except that the examiners' decisions are limited to the following:

- that the PGR be awarded the degree
- that the PGR be awarded the degree subject to amendments being made to the framing document / introductory section within 3 months to the satisfaction of the examiners or

- that the material submitted in the portfolio falls short of the requirements, and the PGR not be awarded the degree and not be permitted to be re-examined.

14.5.1. Guidance for examiners

The examiners' main tasks may be interpreted as to:

- evaluate the intellectual merit of the PGR's cited published works
- establish if a satisfactory case is made for coherence between publications
- assess the contribution to knowledge represented by the publications and made apparent in any critical appraisal in the framing document
- evaluate the rigour with which the PGR has contextualised and analysed their publications in any critical appraisal in the framing document
- evaluate the appropriateness of the methods employed in the research and the correctness of their application
- assess the PGR's contribution to the various phases of the research embodied in any multi-authored works
- establish the PGRs 'ownership' of the published work and appreciation of the state of [historical and 'current'] knowledge within the PGR's research area
- assess the PGR's research skills in terms of their potential as a continuing, independent researcher.

The examiners should note that, due to constraints imposed by publishers, published work may contain less detail than a 'traditional' thesis. There may be instances where the evidence available to the examiner about the quality of the work and the raw data on which important conclusions are based is minimal or even absent. Whilst, to some extent, this should have been addressed in the framing document / introductory section, the *viva voce* examination should be used as an opportunity to question the PGR on how conclusions were reached.

14.5.2. Format of submission for examination

The thesis should be presented for examination in the standard PhD format.

14.5.3. Final submission: binding PhDs by Prior Publication

The agreed final version of the research work should be presented according to the standard PhD guidelines.

15 APPENDIX

15.1 Appendix 1: Example of Specimen Title Page for thesis

<p>The origins of the Farmers' Co-operative in Wessex</p> <p>John Smith</p> <p>A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of Solent University for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy</p> <p>while enrolled under a validated partnership with HSU</p> <p>If appropriate: This research programme was carried out in collaboration with the Borchester Farmer's Club</p>

15.2 Appendix 2: Acronyms and abbreviations used in this Handbook

DC	Doctoral Coordinator
DES	Doctoral Extension Scheme
DoS	Director of Studies
DRP	Doctoral Review Panel
HRA	Health Research Authority
HSU	Health Sciences University
IELTS	International English Language Testing System
MPhil	Master of Philosophy
PGR(s)	Postgraduate Research Student(s)
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
RDC	Research Degrees Committee (Solent)
RDSC	Research Degrees Sub-Committee (HSU)
UK	United Kingdom
UKRIO	UK Research Integrity Office
UKVI	UK Visas and Immigration
VLE	Virtual learning environment

Acknowledgements

This *Postgraduate Research Student Handbook and Guidance* has been written taking account of HSU and Solent University rules and regulations, the *QAA Quality Code* and best practice disseminated through UKCGE, Vitae and other Higher Education Providers.