

# Research Degrees

## Doctoral Student Handbook and Guidance

## Contents

Further Information:.....	11
Forms directory:.....	11
Application forms.....	11
Milestone forms.....	11
Change of circumstances.....	12
Examination and submission.....	13
Guidance Note 1: Institutional arrangements and key principles.....	15
Institutional arrangements.....	15
Research degrees: key principles.....	16
Guidance Note 2: Roles and Responsibilities and coordinating the supervisory relationship.....	18
Introduction.....	18
Roles and Responsibilities.....	18
The Doctoral Coordinator.....	19
The Supervisory Team.....	20
The Director of Studies.....	21
The Doctoral Student.....	22
Graduate School Administration.....	25
Doctoral Review Panel.....	26
Establishing the Supervisory Relationship.....	27

Guidance Note 3: Good Research Practice.....	29
Introduction.....	29
Good practice in research .....	30
Good practice in research design.....	31
Research integrity.....	31
Research involving human participants .....	31
Academic writing.....	33
Health and safety .....	33
Guidance Note 4: Admissions .....	34
Research degree admissions.....	34
General information .....	34
Entry criteria .....	35
The admissions process.....	35
The application .....	35
The interview .....	37
Deferred entry .....	38
Distance learning (including consideration of overseas students) .....	38
Composition of supervisory teams.....	39
Guidance Note 5: Registration and changes to circumstances.....	41
Enrolment, registration and induction .....	41

Enrolment and Registration.....	41
Registration periods and outcomes.....	41
Registration modes (full-time, part-time) & changing registration mode .....	43
Induction .....	43
Suspension, extension and withdrawal .....	44
Suspension of studies .....	44
Extension of studies.....	45
Withdrawal of registration .....	46
Appeals .....	47
Appeals process.....	47
Guidance note 6: Tuition fees, student funding and training and development support .....	49
Tuition fees .....	49
Payment of tuition fees .....	49
Alumni discount on fees.....	50
Writing-up fees .....	50
Major amendment fees .....	51
Student funding .....	51
Studentships/bursaries .....	51
Doctoral Loans .....	52
Alternative Guide.....	52

Guidance note 7: Annual monitoring.....	53
Introduction.....	53
General principles of Annual Monitoring.....	53
The annual monitoring process.....	54
Progress review .....	54
Independent review .....	56
Confidentiality .....	57
The Doctoral Review Panel .....	58
Appealing an Annual Monitoring outcome .....	59
Guidance Note 8: Transfer .....	60
Introduction.....	60
Review timeframe.....	60
Context of review .....	60
The transfer process.....	61
Submitting the Transfer Form (RD2T) and Associated Documents .....	61
Submitting to Turnitin .....	62
The Transfer form (RD2T) .....	62
The transfer report.....	62
The transfer panel review .....	63
The panel meeting .....	63

Transfer panel assessment criteria .....	64
Transfer panel report .....	65
Transfer panel outcomes .....	65
Guidance Note 9: Writing up .....	67
Timing .....	67
Eligibility for 'writing-up fees' .....	68
What is 'Writing-up'? .....	68
Thesis submission after the 'writing up' period has expired .....	68
Guidance Note 10: Thesis submission and examination (viva) .....	70
General introduction .....	70
Pre-Submission .....	70
Research Degree Examination Arrangements .....	71
Nomination of examiners .....	71
Internal examiners .....	72
External examiners .....	72
Submission of thesis .....	73
Submitting to Turnitin .....	73
Thesis Submission - Candidate Declaration form (RD5DEC) .....	74
Thesis format .....	74
Thesis binding .....	77

Submitting creative work .....	77
The Viva .....	77
Pre-viva .....	78
Conduct of the viva .....	79
The independent chair .....	80
THE VIVA OUTCOMES .....	80
COMPLETION .....	81
Guidance Note 11: Misconduct, appeals and complaints .....	83
Academic misconduct .....	83
Misconduct in research .....	83
Appeals procedure .....	84
Complaints .....	85
Guidance Note 12: Tier 4 Visa .....	86
Introduction.....	86
Admission.....	86
Changes to registration status .....	87
Contact details .....	87
Attendance monitoring.....	87
Visa extensions .....	88
Working during studies .....	88

Doctorate extension scheme (des) .....	89
Guidance Note 13: PhD by prior publication.....	90
Introduction.....	90
General information .....	90
PhD by prior publication eligibility .....	91
The application .....	91
Entry criteria: Prima facie stage.....	91
Registration .....	93
Tuition fees .....	93
The role of the supervisor .....	94
Doctoral Review Panel.....	94
Requirements of the degree.....	95
The form of the examination .....	95
Examination procedures .....	96
Guidance for examiners.....	96
Format of submission for examination.....	97
Final submission: binding PhDs by Prior Publication .....	97
Guidance Note 14: Bursary Awards.....	98
General Information .....	98
Marketing & advertising a competitive doctoral bursary opportunity.....	98



Application and offer .....	99
The application .....	99
Funders .....	99
Commercial / partner sponsored awards .....	99
University sponsored awards .....	100
RCUK and other research funder sponsored awards .....	100
Tuition fees .....	101
Internal bursaries.....	101
External bursaries .....	101
Tuition fees beyond the funded duration.....	101
Bursary stipends & tax .....	102
Tax status of the doctoral student stipend.....	102
Stipend payments .....	102
Changes to registration .....	103
Suspension.....	103
Change of mode .....	103
Extension .....	103
Submission.....	104
Withdrawal .....	104
Related documents, useful websites & further reading.....	105

Useful contacts..... 107

    Doctoral coordinators..... 107

    How to contact Doctoral School Coordinators ..... 107

    How to contact doctoral student administration ..... 107

    Doctoral student representatives (2020 - 2021) ..... 108

    How to contact Doctoral Student Representatives (Research Degrees Committee)  
    ..... 108

    Doctoral student services ..... 108

## Further Information:

[Bursary Awards](#)

[Useful Contacts](#)

[Forms Directory](#)

## Forms directory:

### Application forms

	Explanatory note	Form	Guidance Note
Appointment of supervisory team	To appoint the DoS and supervisors for a new student	RD1S	#4
Instruction to offer	To offer an MPhil/PhD opportunity to a prospective student	RD1ITO	#4

### Milestone forms

Stage	Explanatory note	Form	Guidance Note	Full-time	Part-time
Doctoral Student Supervision Record	To record student-supervisor meetings	Accessed via the Graduate School SOL page	#2 & #7	Min. 9 x per year	Min. 7 x per year
	Independent review of	RD2AMIR	#7		

Annual Monitoring Forms	student experience				
	Progress Review; evaluation of academic progress	Accessed via the Graduate School SOL page	#7	Annually (May Deadline)	
	Doctoral Review Panel; annual monitoring outcome	Accessed via the Graduate School SOL page	#7	Annually (June Deadline)	
Transfer	To transfer registration from MPhil to PhD	RD2T	#8	12-18 months from start date	24-36 months from start date
Application for Writing Up Status	To apply for a reduction in fees whilst writing up the thesis for submission.	RD2WU	#9 & #6	24 - 36 months from start date	60 - 84 months from start date

### Change of circumstances

Circumstance	Explanatory note	Form	Guidance Note
Change to supervisory team	To change the composition of a supervisory team	RD4S	#5
Change of Registration Mode	To apply to change registration mode (adjust to part-time, or full-time)	RD4MS	#5

Application for suspension	To request a suspension from studies	RD4SU	#5
Withdrawal	To withdraw registration of a student at Solent	RD4WD	#5
Extension	To request an extension to the maximum registration period	RD4E	#5

### Examination and submission

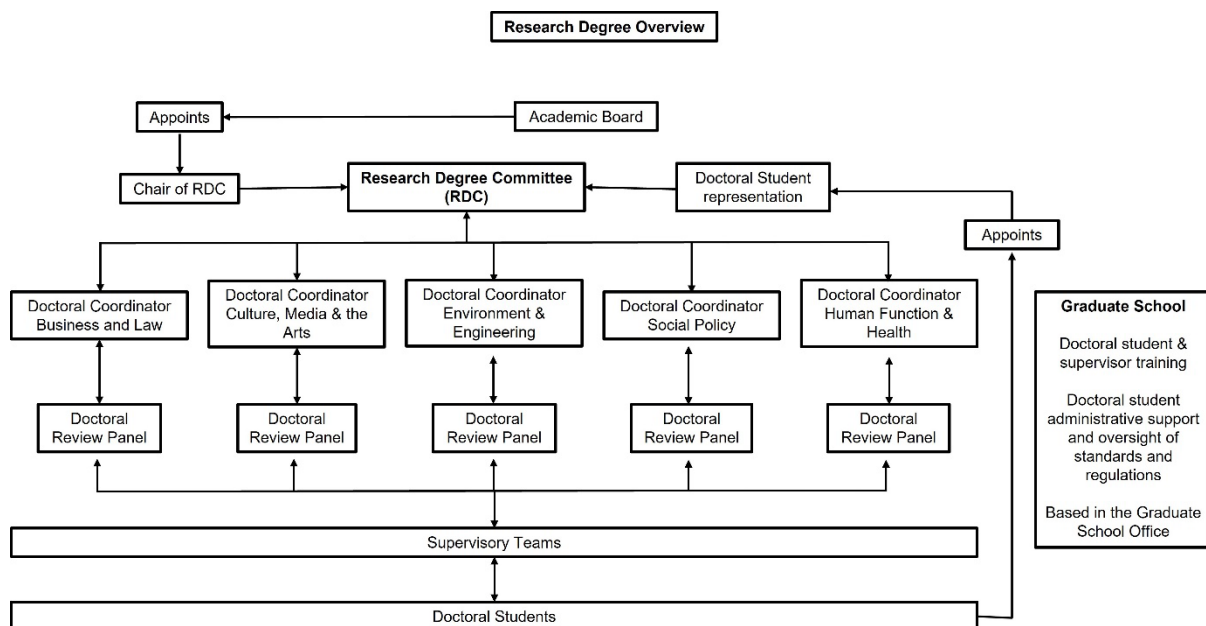
	Explanatory note	Form	Guidance Note	Full-time	Part-time
Examination arrangements	Completed by the DoS/Supervisory team to nominate examiners for the Viva	RD5E	#10	30-42 months from start date	66 - 90 months from start date
Thesis Submission	Completed by the student to accompany the thesis at the point of submission	RD5DEC	#10	36-48 months from start date	72 - 96 months from start date
Preliminary examiner report for an MPhil	Completed by each examiner supplying an independent provisional preliminary recommendation	RD5M	#10	Min. 1 week prior to Viva	
Preliminary examiner report for a PhD	Completed by each examiner supplying an independent provisional	RD5P	#10	Min. 1 week prior to Viva	

	preliminary recommendation			
Examiners decision	Decision of examiners following Viva for MPhil/PhD	RD5DEX	#10	On date of Viva
Examiners decision (PhD by Prior Publication)	Decision of examiners following Viva for PhD by prior publication only	RD5DEX-P	#10	On date of Viva
Examiners decision (Re-examination)	Decision of examiners following amends and re-viva for MPhil/PhD	RD5R-DEX	#10	On date of Re-viva
Independent Chair Report	Completed by the independent chair	RD5I	#10	On date of Viva / Re-viva

# Guidance Note 1: Institutional arrangements and key principles

## Institutional arrangements

1. The University can award the research degrees of Master of Philosophy (MPhil) and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) to registered students who successfully complete approved programmes of supervised research in accordance with the regulations of the University. These are governed by the UK Quality Code, the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications and the University Generic Level Descriptors. Solent University's Academic Board has delegated responsibility for overseeing the University's research degree provision to the Research Degrees Committee (RDC).
2. The RDC has oversight of the University's research degree regulations and associated policies and guidance, the promotion and enhancement of the quality of the doctoral student experience, and the monitoring of doctoral supervision.
3. The University's Academic Handbook, including the Regulations for Postgraduate Research Students (section 2R) are reviewed and updated annually. The regulations for the current Academic year can be found online [here](#).



## Research degrees: key principles

4. Programmes of research may be proposed in any field of study, subject to the requirement that the proposal is capable of leading to scholarly research, the University has the expertise and resources to adequately supervise the research, and appropriate examiners are able to assess it. The submission may be in the form of a final thesis or by previously published work, artefact or performance 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.
5. Following an approved programme of supervised research, an MPhil is awarded to either:
  - a. A student who, having critically investigated and evaluated an approved topic and demonstrated a comprehensive understanding of research methods appropriate to the chosen field, has presented and defended a thesis by oral examination to the satisfaction of the examiners; or
  - b. A student who, having produced published work, artefact or performance that is accompanied by a written commentary placing it critically within its academic context and demonstrated a comprehensive understanding of research methods appropriate to the chosen field, has presented that material and defended the commentary by oral examination to the satisfaction of the examiners.
6. Following an approved programme of supervised research, a PhD is awarded to either:
  - a) A student who, having critically investigated and evaluated an approved topic and demonstrated a detailed understanding of research methods appropriate to the advanced academic enquiry in their discipline, has demonstrated an independent and original contribution to knowledge through the presentation and defence of a thesis by oral examination to the satisfaction of the examiners; or
  - b) A student who, having produced published work, artefact or performance that is accompanied by a written commentary placing it critically within its academic context and demonstrated a detailed understanding of research methods appropriate to the advanced academic enquiry in their discipline, has demonstrated an independent and original contribution to knowledge through the



presentation and defence of that material by oral examination to the satisfaction of the examiners.

7. All students wishing to gain a PhD qualification will register for the MPhil/PhD, where their initial registration will be for the MPhil award. At the appropriate point in their programme of study they will formally transfer from the MPhil award registration to the PhD award registration. With the exception of the PhD by prior publication route, which is available only to employees of the University, where registration will be for the award of PhD from commencement.

# Guidance Note 2: Roles and Responsibilities and coordinating the supervisory relationship

## Introduction

1. The University has four key research areas: Environment and Engineering, Human Function and Health, Media, Culture and Arts and Social Research and Policy. Doctoral students are based in one of the Faculties or Schools and are managed through broad subject areas:
  - a. Business and Law
  - b. Environment and Engineering
  - c. Social Policy
  - d. Human Function and Health
  - e. Media, Culture and the Arts

Each area is supported by a Doctoral Coordinator and has a Doctoral Review Panel.

2. The Doctoral Coordinator is the Chair of the Doctoral Review Panel and on behalf of the University arranges key processes in recruitment and monitoring of the doctoral student experience.
3. Solent University cannot guarantee students will be able to work with any particular supervisor, or that they will have the same supervisor throughout their period of study at the University.

## Roles and Responsibilities

4. The quality of the University's research degree provision rests on the integration of student focused services and the core relationships and activities which form the doctoral student experience (also known as Postgraduate Researchers or PGR). The respective responsibilities of the key relationships in the research degree process are set out in these guidance notes.
  - a. Doctoral Coordinator
  - b. Supervisory Team
  - c. Director of Studies
  - d. Doctoral Student
  - e. Graduate School Administration
  - f. Doctoral Review Panel

## The Doctoral Coordinator

5. The Doctoral Coordinator supports the following processes within each School:
  - a. Admissions:
    - i. 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.
  - b. Supervisory arrangements:
    - i. Coordinates supervision team composition (including any external supervision arrangements, or proposed amendments to supervision teams) to meet the regulatory requirements of the University.
    - ii. Ensures that supervisors have training and support required to undertake effective supervision.
    - iii. Seeks out suitable solutions and / or replacements when a member of a supervisory team leaves or where a supervisory relationship has irretrievably broken down.
  - c. Monitoring and progression.
  
6. Chairs the Annual Monitoring review and reports to RDC
  
7. The Doctoral Coordinator is responsible for overseeing the key milestones for doctoral students within their area:
  - a. **Annual monitoring:** chairs the Doctoral Review Panel meeting(s) Facilitation and provision of oversight of the Annual Monitoring process. They record agreed outcomes of the Annual Monitoring Doctoral Review Panels, initiate appropriate action to resolve issues arising from the reviews, and report on these to Graduate School Officer.
  - b. **Transfer and final examination:** offers support and guidance as required.
  
8. The Doctoral Coordinator is expected to make a contribution to sustaining the research environment and culture at the University. They will:
  - a. Contribute to the research supervisor training and leadership events.
  - b. Ensure awareness across the University of doctoral student training and events, external speakers and research seminars.
  - c. Support and enhance the research environment for doctoral students.
  - d. Ensure that communication and interaction with students is conducted in a professional manner and in the spirit of mutual respect.

9. The Doctoral Coordinators are also members of the University' Research Degrees Committee (RDC) and report to the committee on the Doctoral student activities and development. They act as Chair of the relevant Faculty Doctoral Review Panel, coordinate the activities of the panel and report on the findings of the panel to the RDC, including feedback from the student body, analysis of progression and attainment rates and analysis of external examiner reports.

## The Supervisory Team

10. The supervision team is composed of one primary supervisor, the Director of Studies (DoS) and one or two co-supervisors. One or more advisors may be appointed to support the student on aspects of their work during their registration. Advisors have no formal supervisory role. All supervisors should be familiar with the University's regulations for research degrees (see also the University's Regulations for Postgraduate Research Students).

### 11. Supervisors will:

- a. Provide regular constructive guidance and criticism to the doctoral student on their research, methodology and written work both in meetings and through written feedback. At minimum full-time doctoral students should meet with a member of their supervisory team at least every 6 weeks (9 meetings per year) and part-time doctoral students at least every 8 weeks (7 meetings per year).
- b. Provide guidance on relevant literature and exemplars of good research practice in the relevant field.
- c. Advise the doctoral student on health and safety, risk assessment, and research integrity including consideration of ethical aspects of the research and the University's research ethics policy and processes.
- d. Encourage the doctoral student to engage 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 of Solent's Faculties and Schools and the Solent research and doctoral student communities.
- e. Contribute to doctoral students' record of all formal supervisory meetings: the actions arising from each meeting must be agreed by the supervisor and student following each meeting.
- f. Ensure that communication and interaction with their students are conducted in a professional manner and in the spirit of mutual respect.
- g. Undertake to attend the mandatory biennial Supervisor Training Sessions and regularly engage with further Supervisor Training

delivered at the University and to update themselves annually of any amendments to the regulatory framework published at the start of each academic year either via the relevant supervisor training session or by downloading the latest iteration of the regulatory statements.

- h. Support the doctoral student to prepare for key monitoring milestones and the final viva including reading and commenting on completed drafts prior to their submission, provided that they are made available by the doctoral student in reasonable time for feedback.

## The Director of Studies

12. In addition to the expectations placed on supervisors listed above, the Director of Studies (DoS) is also responsible for:

- a. Ensuring the doctoral student is aware of the facilities and resources available to them within the Schools and across the University.
- b. Engaging with the PG Certificate in Research Methods, which will entail:
  - i. Providing their doctoral student with support and guidance around the completion of the core assessment tasks embedded within the 2 modules.
  - ii. Attendance at collaborative workshops where their doctoral student is required to give a presentation on their work (1 per module).
  - iii. Marking and provision of constructive feedback of their student's core assessment tasks embedded within the 2 modules (1 x presentation and 1 x written piece of work per module).
- c. Ensuring the doctoral student is familiar with the University's policies and procedures and relevant legislation including, but not limited to, health and safety, research integrity and ethics, data protection, student academic misconduct, research misconduct and intellectual property rights.
- d. Tracking the institutional deadlines applicable to each of their doctoral students and ensuring they are prepared to meet the requirements of each deadline and monitoring point, including Annual Monitoring, Transfer and Viva. (See relevant Guidance Notes).
- e. Ensuring the doctoral student submits drafts through Turnitin and reviewing the similarity reports prior to Transfer and Viva.
- f. Ensuring the doctoral student undertakes a training and skills assessment on commencing their studies and that the student engages with internal and external training where appropriate to their programme of work.

- g. Ensuring doctoral students 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.
- h. Discussing with the doctoral student 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 Supervision Team or University services including Doctoral Student Administration.
- i. Prior to the completion of the thesis, discussing with the doctoral student and supervisory team options for internal and external examiners, and forwarding the nominations to the Doctoral Coordinator no less than six months prior to submission of the completed thesis.
- j. Ensuring the doctoral student is familiar with the conduct, regulations and expectations of the final viva examination.

## The Doctoral Student

13. As for the supervisory team and DoS, the doctoral student is also subject to obligations and responsibilities in their relationship with the University and their supervisory team.
14. All new students who register for a research degree are required to complete the Postgraduate Certificate in Research Methods during their first year of registration. This runs concurrently with their first year of doctoral study and is complementary to it. Continuation on the research degree programme will be subject to successful completion on the PG Cert in Research Methods.
15. In addition to completing the PG Cert in Research the Doctoral student will:
  - a. Attend the induction event, held at the intake point. Attendance is mandatory for all new doctoral students (please refer to Guidance note # 4 for exceptions applicable to Distance learners). Students who elect to register late must attend the next scheduled induction event. Students who elect to register after the intake date for their entry point should be aware that their maximum registration period will be calculated from the University's intake date and not from their personal start date:
    - i. Once registered, all formal communication from the University to the student will be via the university email account provided to them. If they intend to use any other personal email address, they are responsible for ensuring all emails are

reliably forwarded from their university student email account to their preferred personal email account and for notifying the Graduate School of any changes to their full contact details

- b. Be 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 student email accounts. Students who have not completed registration cannot be examined or progress their studies.
- c. Become familiar with all applicable regulations, policies and processes and working with their supervisory team to ensure they comply with the University's regulatory requirements, ethical and health and safety considerations, progression timeframes and monitoring milestones.
- d. Establish, in discussion with their supervisory team, 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 the University or out of contact for an extended period of time. When a student is ill and unable to study they must inform their supervisory team as soon as is practicable.
- e. Ensure that they are meeting their registration mode obligations for average weekly engagement with their doctoral studies:
  - i. Full-time 35 hours \*
  - ii. Part-time 17.5 hours ‡

\* A full-time student may undertake a small amount of paid work compatible with the student's full-time studies, with the expectation that the total demand on the student's time is no more than 6 hours per week (see also the University's Regulations for Postgraduate Research Students).

‡ Students registered as part-time are responsible for managing the demands of the doctoral programme alongside any employment or other commitment, such that they are able to devote an average of 17.5 hours per week to their studies. Members of the University staff who are registered for a research degree in the part-time mode may wish to discuss how they will devote an average of 17.5 hours per week to the research with their line manager, Dean of Faculty or Director of Service.

- f. Maintain with their supervisory team a complete record of all supervisory meetings, including dates, times, agenda/points of discussion and agreed actions, which must be submitted annually to the Annual Monitoring Review by the student.

- i. Note: Supervisory meeting minutes are to be recorded on the Graduate School SOL page (attach link). Students are to record minutes, and forward them to the supervisor/s present at the meeting for amendment as necessary and sign off.
  - ii. These notes are stored electronically, and will be attached to the Annual Monitoring Report for review by the Doctoral Panel.
- g. 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.
- h. 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. Also that they prepare in good time to meet all the reporting requirements of each monitoring milestone.
  - i. Annual monitoring (see Guidance note #7).
  - ii. Transfer (to PhD) (see Guidance note #8).
  - iii. Viva (see Guidance note #10).
- i. Recognize the supervisor's role is to offer constructive advice on academic content and general presentation of work. It is the student's responsibility to proof-read their own work, the supervisors are not expected to provide detailed correction of written English.
- j. 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 of Solent's research and doctoral student communities.
- k. Respect the contribution and intellectual property rights of their supervisors and other collaborative relationships in external outputs.
- l. Ensure that communication and interaction with their supervisory team is conducted in a professional manner and in the spirit of mutual respect.
- m. 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. Doctoral Students who do not wish to share sensitive information with their DoS can also seek confidential support from the University's Support Services through the Student Hub. Doctoral students may also raise general issues pertaining to resources or facilities affecting the progress of doctoral students to the Doctoral Coordinator, or through their doctoral student representative for consideration by the Research Degrees Committee.

- n. Decide when to submit their thesis for examination, taking into account the opinion of their supervisory team. The opinion of the supervisors at this stage is advisory and doctoral students should note that their agreement to submission cannot be taken as a guarantee of success.
- o. Submit their thesis for examination within the expected period of registration (3 years for full-time, 6 years for part-time), and meeting all submission requirements laid out in the regulations and guidance documents. Doctoral students submitting practice based projects must submit any relevant documentation and arrange to exhibit or perform their work at the convenience of the examiners.
- p. 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 taken into account when examiners are recommended for appointment.

## Graduate School Administration

- 16. The Graduate School is based in Research, Innovation & Enterprise (RIE) and liaises with Doctoral Coordinators, Supervisory Teams, Doctoral Students and the University's Professional Services, including Student Registry, the Income office and the Student Experience team, to provide procedural support at all stages of the doctoral student journey.
- 17. The Graduate School will:
  - a. Provide advice on the University regulations for doctoral research students.
  - b. Process doctoral student applications, facilitate admissions and registration in liaison with the Doctoral Coordinators, University Admissions team and Student Registry.
  - c. Process forms relating to:
    - i. Instruction to Offer (RD1ITO) (see Guidance note #4).

- ii. Supervision team approval (RD1S) (see Guidance note #4).
  - iii. Change of registration mode (RD4MS) (see Guidance note #5).
  - iv. Change of supervisory teams (RD4S) (see Guidance note #5).
  - v. Transfer registration to writing up status (RD2WU) (see Guidance note #5 & #9).
  - vi. Suspend studies (RD4SU) (see Guidance note #5).
  - vii. Exceptionally extend studies beyond the maximum registration period (RD4E), (see Guidance note #5); or
  - viii. Withdraw a student from their registration (RD4WD) (see Guidance note #5.).
  - ix. Request for training & development allowance (RD3TD) (see Guidance note #6).
- d. Process the forms and procedural elements of the doctoral student milestones.
- i. Annual Monitoring (Graduate School SOL page) (see Guidance note #7).
  - ii. Transfer (RD2T) (see Guidance note #8).
  - iii. Viva (RD5E, RD5DEC, RD5M/RD5P, RD5I, RD5DEX/RD5R-DEX, RD5DEX-P) (see Guidance note #10).
- e. Maintain up-to-date student records and produce statistical and monitoring data to inform Doctoral Review Panels and the Research Degrees Committee in liaison with the Doctoral Coordinators.
- f. Support the Doctoral Coordinators to make arrangements for Annual Monitoring reviews, Transfer and Viva information.
- g. Coordinate the Doctoral Student induction events, and support dissemination of information about training and development opportunities to doctoral students.
- h. Ensure that communication and interaction with students, supervisory teams and doctoral coordinators is conducted in a professional manner and in the spirit of mutual respect.

## Doctoral Review Panel

19. The five Doctoral Review Panels are comprised of subject experts and senior academics with supervisory experience. Doctoral Review panels are chaired by the Doctoral Coordinator. Formal panel meetings are held in June.
20. Further meetings as a group or in sub-groups, either in person or virtually, will be arranged to consider student applications and outcomes of monitoring exercises. Members may be asked to contribute, where appropriate to panels for Transfer or Viva examinations in the role of internal examiner or independent chair where they have relevant experience and have undertaken the appropriate training. The Doctoral

Coordinator may elect to co-opt other academics with relevant experience to contribute to the panels and student reviews as appropriate.

21. The Doctoral Review Panels will meet, either in person or virtually, in good time prior to the Research Degrees Committee (RDC) to consider, at appropriate points in the annual cycle, student data, student feedback, analysis of progression and attainment rates and external examiner reports to identify issues relating to doctoral student provision and experience for reporting to the RDC.

## Establishing the Supervisory Relationship

22. It is recommended that doctoral students meet with their supervisory team 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 doctoral student meeting record that can be referred to and reviewed over the period of registration. (Accessed on the Graduate School SOL page)

Items to consider may include:

- a. **Definition of roles within the team:** Who is responsible for what and when?
- b. **Student meeting record:** Establish that the student will maintain and update the student meeting record, obtain sign off by all those party to the meeting, and circulate to the whole team.
- c. **Principles for supervisory meetings should include:**
  - i. **Frequency of meetings:** Has a meeting schedule been agreed that is achievable by both student and supervisors, and does it meet the minimum frequency requirements of the University regulations?
  - ii. **Time of meetings:** Doctoral studies are an independent programme of study and it is expected that a doctoral student will proactively request supervisory meetings and engage with their supervisory team's requests for meetings. Arrange meetings at mutually convenient times and with consideration for sufficient time for the provision of supervisory feedback on students' previously submitted work
- d. **Setting the tone:** Has a mutual expectation been established for supervisory meetings to be conducted in a spirit of supportive and constructive criticism by supervisors and measured and reflective response by students.
- e. **Remaining in contact:** How will you stay in touch between meetings?

- f. **Losing contact:** It is the responsibility of a student to ensure that they make every and ongoing efforts to maintain contact with their supervisors. Students who remain out of contact with the University for more than 60 days may be subject to withdrawal of their registration under the regulations for postgraduate students.

# Guidance Note 3: Good Research Practice

## Introduction

1. This guidance note is closely based on the UK Research Integrity Office (UKRIO) Code of Practice for Researchers.
2. The University promotes and encourages the highest standards in research, including research data management, research ethics and academic good conduct.
3. Researchers at the University, including doctoral students and supervisory teams, are responsible for observing the following principles:
  - a. **Quality:** striving for quality both in their conduct of research and in the publications they produce.
  - b. **Honesty:** in relation to their own research and that of others.
  - c. **Ensuring accuracy of data and results, acknowledging the contribution of the work of others, and neither engaging in nor concealing academic misconduct.**
  - d. **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.
  - e. **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.
  - f. **Accountability:** recognising researchers' ultimate accountability to the general 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.
  - g. **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.
  - h. **Training & development:** ensuring 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.

## Good practice in research

4. Doctoral students will recognise their responsibility to conduct research of the highest ethical standards and to inform themselves of the University's policies and procedures relating to good research practice. Links to many relevant policies and procedures can be found in section 16 of this Handbook.
5. 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.
6. Doctoral students should ensure their training and skills meet the requirements of their research and keep their skills up-to-date as required.
7. Doctoral students 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).
8. Doctoral students 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.
9. Doctoral students 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 the University's policies and procedures, putting in place safeguards or declarations when appropriate, or halting the research pending approval to continue, in order to avoid poor practice or potential misconduct.
10. Doctoral students 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.

## Good practice in research design

11. The doctoral student and their supervisors should be satisfied that:

- a. 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.
- b. 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.
- c. A research data management plan is in place addressing how data will be gathered, analysed, stored and managed including;
  - i. secure storage of sensitive data
  - ii. confidentiality and anonymization of personal data meeting [GDPR requirements](#)
  - iii. planned management of requirements for open research data (see the [Concordat on Open Research Data Management](#))
  - iv. Planned retention and deletion in accordance with relevant policies and funder agreements
- a. Where the design of the project has received ethical, regulatory or other approval, doctoral students 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.

## Research integrity

### Research involving human participants

12. 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.

Doctoral students must also submit their research project for approval by the relevant Solent University School ethics review panel and abide by the conditions of the approval they receive. Doctoral students should also be conversant with any external ethical approval processes with which they should also comply (see also 15 below).

- a. Research with vulnerable participants, such as the very old, children or those with mental illness or other relevant categories (see the

University's ethics policy and procedure) must be subject to a Solent University ethics panel review.

- b. Doctoral students 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 the University's HRA Sponsor (Dean of the Faculty of Sport, Health & Social Sciences).
- c. The dignity, rights, safety and well-being of participants must be paramount in the design and rationale for the research.
- d. 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 registered as Solent doctoral students 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 student and DoS, and submitted to the Doctoral Coordinator for review prior to commencing the fieldwork.
- e. Doctoral students 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.
- f. It is the student's responsibility throughout their registration to ensure that no research or fieldwork is undertaken for which ethical approval has not been obtained. Students who breach this principle will be subject to the University's Academic Misconduct Policy (please refer to sections 11 and 16 of this Handbook).



## Academic writing

13. The University 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 research integrity at this level of study, and this is reflected in the investigation of any reported case of academic misconduct by a doctoral research student.
14. Students should give reference to any work quoted, mentioned, or otherwise referred to, in their writing using the Harvard system (i.e. author, date: page number) with a full list of references in alphabetical order at the end, or other commensurable referencing system agreed in advance with their supervisory team. Information and guidance on using referencing systems can be obtained from Library using the Research LibGuides (<https://libguides.solent.ac.uk/researchers>).
15. Doctoral students submitting written work for supervisory review or for formal programme milestones (Annual Monitoring, Transfer, Thesis submission) should meet the expected standard of referencing, and should be aware that any work submitted may be subject to the Academic Misconduct policies of the University (see also Guidance note #11).

## Health and safety

16. 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.
17. Doctoral students 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, doctoral students must abide by the outcome of the appropriate reviewing body.
18. Doctoral students 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 advised by the review panel.

## Guidance Note 4: Admissions

### Research degree admissions

#### General information

1. Decisions to admit a doctoral student to study for a research degree (MPhil or PhD) are taken in accordance with the University's Regulations for Postgraduate Research Students.
2. Only applications which are complete by the published annual application deadline will be considered for registration at the next entry point. Annually there is one entry date (). Applications which are incomplete at the application deadline may be considered for the next available entry point once they are completed.
3. Applicants may request to defer for 12 months, but must do this in the knowledge that the University may not be in a position to offer a place to study at a later stage, or may amend the previously proposed supervision arrangements.
4. A key part of the application review process is to determine whether the University 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.
5. The application review process includes consideration of the fit of the proposed doctoral research with the University's strategic priorities. Lack of fit is an acceptable reason for rejecting an application, however eligible the applicant is for other reasons.
6. The University does not accept applications to present a thesis in a language other than English.
7. A thesis will normally be made publicly available upon successful completion. Where an applicant, their collaborative establishment or their sponsor wishes the research and thesis to remain confidential for a period after completion of the work, they must write to the Chair/Deputy Chair of the Research Degrees Committee (RDC) for approval before enrolment. In cases where the need for confidentiality emerges at a subsequent stage, a special application must be made to the Chair/Chair of the RDC. The period

approved will not normally exceed two years. (see the University's Regulations for Postgraduate Research Students)

## Entry criteria

8. Applicants should normally hold a first or second class honours degree from a UK University or recognized equivalent, and/or a master's degree from a UK University or recognized equivalent. Applicants not meeting this requirement may be exceptionally considered on the merits of other qualifications, publications and/or professional training and experience and the nature and scope of the programme of work proposed.
9. Very exceptionally applicants may be considered for entry with advanced standing if they have achieved the equivalent of the Transfer (or 'upgrade') milestone at another University, or they are able to adequately demonstrate to the Doctoral review panel that they have considerable research experience, including peer reviewed publications or public exhibitions/performances within the remit of the proposed project. Applications requesting consideration of advanced standing will be considered on a case by case basis and may be subject to alternative conditions of entry. Applicants who wish to be considered for advanced standing should indicate this in the Personal Statement of their MPhil/PhD application and must be prepared to provide documentation supporting the case for advanced standing on request.
10. Applicants must satisfy the Doctoral Review Panel that they have sufficient command of English to satisfactorily complete the programme of work and successfully prepare and defend a thesis in English. Applicants whose first language is not English should provide evidence of successfully completing a first degree from a UK University or a degree that has been taught and assessed in English or by holding an IELTS (International English Language Testing System) overall score of 6.5, with minimum sub-scores of 6.0 in all component sections, or an overall TOEFL IBT (Test of English as a Foreign Language; Internet Based Test) score of 94-95, with a minimum sub-score of 22 all component sections.

## The admissions process

### The application

11. Applications are made online and are subject to the following processes:

- a. Applications are first reviewed by the University's Admissions Office.
- b. An online application is only considered complete when all documentation listed as part of the application requirements are received. Only completed applications are forwarded by the Admissions Office to the Graduate School Officer.
- c. All internal communication regarding a completed application is directed through the Graduate School Officer. All formal outcome communications will be sent to applicants by the University's Admissions Office.
- d. The Graduate School processes completed applications in liaison with the Doctoral Coordinators. Applications are reviewed by each Doctoral Coordinator and members of the Doctoral Review Panel with relevant experience. Initial responses to applications will be sent by the University Admissions Office within 6-8 weeks of receipt of the completed application.
- e. The Graduate School will notify the University Admissions Office to formally communicate the outcome of 'decline' or 'invite to interview' following the Doctoral Review Panel review.
- f. A formal decision after interview of 'decline' or 'offer of a place' will only be confirmed once written instruction, signed by the Doctoral Coordinator, or their nominee, is received by the University Admissions Office.

12. Applicants must provide all of the following:

- a. Completed online application form.
- b. A CV.
- c. Personal statement clearly detailing their experience and why they are suitable for this opportunity (no more than 1,000 words).
- d. Research proposal document (2,000 - 4,000 words) detailing:
  - i. Their project title and key research question(s).
  - ii. An overview of the context into which their research will fit, including:
    - The aims and objectives of your proposed research.
    - An overview of current literature that supports the proposed project.
    - How it adds to, develops (or challenges) previous work by researchers in the field.
    - Why the research is important to the subject area.
    - How they think the research will make an original contribution to knowledge.
  - iii. An outline of how the research will be achieved within the normal duration of a PhD.

- iv. Consideration of their research methods, what research method(s) they propose to use, and their rationale for why these are appropriate to the project.
  - v. Any consideration or discussion they have had with any prospective supervisors at Solent for the project.
  - vi. Consideration of the sources, resources and / or facilities required to successfully complete the research. If the project will require access to external organisations or specialist facilities, the proposal should include details of how they intend to secure access to these for the required duration.
  - vii. An indicative bibliography demonstrating their critical grasp of current literature in the field and how they plan to contribute to it.
- e. Evidence of relevant qualifications (see Entry criteria) (transcripts/certificates - scanned copies can be submitted, but if accepted onto the research degree they will be required to present the original documents at registration).
  - f. Two references (at least one of which must be an academic reference).
  - g. Evidence of English language proficiency (see Entry criteria).
  - h. The photograph ID page of their passport.
  - i. A confirmation of funding letter from their sponsor or an employer guarantee form (if their fees are sponsored).

\* Applicants applying for an advertised PhD studentship may not be required to submit a research proposal, they should check the information in the advert before applying.

13. International students may also be required to provide evidence of income and in some cases to pay a deposit at the offer stage in order to be granted a visa for entry under Home Office Policy.

14. The University encourages the provision of constructive feedback to unsuccessful candidates and applicants may appeal against the decision in accordance with the University Admissions Policy.

### The interview

15. Before an offer of a place is made, applicants are normally interviewed by the Doctoral Coordinator and/or the potential Director of Studies (DoS) (or nominee). The interviewers will seek to establish the following points:

- a. The applicant has suitable educational, research and/or relevant occupational experience.

- b. The applicant has identified appropriate financial support to fund and resource the proposed programme of research.
  - c. Any gaps in skills needed to undertake the proposed programme of research.
  - d. The applicant's understanding of the research degree process and their motivation to undertake the proposed programme of research.
  - e. The proposed research will yield a viable research project within the designated time limit for the programme of study and the applicant has the necessary time and capacity to carry out the proposed programme of study (see Registration periods below).
  - f. There is a satisfactory match to the research expertise, capacity and facilities available at the University.
16. In some circumstances, a telephone, or other remote interview mechanism may be arranged (including, but not limited to, for example, for international/distance applicants, when access to the University campus is restricted or limited).
17. If successful at interview, applicants will receive a formal offer of a place from the Admissions Team confirming the mode of study (full-time/part-time), applicable fee and funding arrangements, the registration level (MPhil, MPhil/PhD), supervision arrangements, start date, any conditions attached to the offer (where applicable).
18. The University must receive confirmation of acceptance of the offer from the applicant within 6 weeks of notification to the applicant. In the event no acceptance is received the offer will be withdrawn and the proposed supervision team may be assigned elsewhere.
19. Once the candidate has accepted a place, the Graduate School Officer will forward further details on when and how to register and of student induction.

### Deferred entry

20. Once accepted applicants may defer for up to 12 months, but must do this in the knowledge that the University may not be in a position to offer a place to study at a later stage, or may amend the previously proposed supervision arrangements

### Distance learning (including consideration of overseas students)

21. Applicants may on an exceptional basis be permitted to study for an MPhil or PhD if they are preparing to work outside the region or outside the UK. This can only occur if clear arrangements are agreed prior to the commencement

of the project between the student, their supervisory team and the Doctoral Coordinator, and have been authorised by the Chair/Deputy Chair of the RDC, to ensure that their access to supervision and resources will be commensurate with the experience of a locally based UK resident student. Such provision will include (but not be limited to) email, video-conferencing and e-library access.

22. A distance learning agreement does not imply that the student will never be required to attend in person, for instance at student induction and key monitoring or examination points, and as such this study mode may be subject to visa restrictions and not be available to all international applicants.

## Composition of supervisory teams

23. The regulations governing the constitution and approval of supervisory teams are laid out in the University's Regulations for Postgraduate Research Students (see also Guidance note #2: The Supervisory Team).
24. Supervisory teams will be comprised of two to three supervisors, one of whom will be the designated DoS. Supervisors will hold a PhD or be an experienced and active researcher with a track record of public output and/or previous doctoral completions. The supervisory team will include broad disciplinary experience and relevant, recent subject specific expertise.
25. Supervisory teams should have experience of at least one successful supervision to completion at the UK doctoral level or equivalent international qualification. Staff new to supervision are required to undertake the University's PhD supervision training prior to, or within 6 months of, starting to supervise and thereafter biennially. All supervisors are required to be active in terms of their continuing professional development and to regularly refresh their supervisory and regulatory training.
26. Normally all supervisors will be members of the University's staff. Exceptionally, where there is a strong rationale for doing so, appointment of an external supervisor may be made, for instance where a supervisor leaves the University at a point where the student is near to completion and/or it would disadvantage the student, a supervisor may be asked to continue as an external supervisor.
27. In addition to the supervisory team, an advisor or advisors may be proposed to contribute some specialised knowledge or a link with an external

organisation, either for a part or the whole of the student's registration as deemed appropriate.

28. Approval of a supervision team is granted by the Chair/Deputy Chair of RDC.



## Guidance Note 5: Registration and changes to circumstances

### Enrolment, registration and induction

#### Enrolment and Registration

1. New doctoral students must pre-register online at the beginning of their candidature when they will be given a university log-in and password.
2. New doctoral students must finalise their registration by enrolling with the Admissions Team in person on the date of induction by attending the Student Hub at the pre-appointed time. The Admission team member at the Student Hub will verify identification documents, original qualification certificates/transcripts, issue campus cards and notify funders of completed enrolment where applicable (see Induction below).
3. Returning doctoral students must register online 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. Students' registration in each academic session can only be completed when they have paid the appropriate fee (see also 'Payment of tuition fees' below and the University's Fees and Payment Regulations below).
4. Students 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 student. They will not be eligible for supervision and may not use the University's resources or facilities. Students who have been withdrawn through failure to register may appeal using the Appeals process laid out in the University's Regulations for Doctoral Research Students (see above and in section 16 'Related Documents').

#### Registration periods and outcomes

5. The registration periods during which a doctoral student will normally submit their thesis for final examination are as follows:

<b>MPhil</b>	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Standard</b>	<b>Maximum</b>
Full-time	18 months	24 months	36 months

Part-time	36 months	48 months	72 months
<b>MPhil/PhD</b>	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Standard</b>	<b>Maximum</b>
Full-time	24 months	36 months	48 months
Part-time	48 months	72 months	96 months
<b>PhD by prior publication (University staff only)</b>	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Standard</b>	<b>Maximum</b>
Part-time	6 months	12 months	18 months

6. A student's registration is deemed to run from the formal enrolment and induction date of their intake. Students 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.
7. The maximum registration period for an MPhil award is 36 months (full-time), 72 months (part-time). The maximum registration period for a PhD award is 48 months (full-time), 96 months (part-time). The maximum registration period for a PhD by prior publication award is 18 months (part-time).
8. All students are expected to complete their programme of study, including any 'writing-up' within the 'standard' registration period. Exceptionally students who have made unusually rapid progress may apply to the Chair/Deputy Chair of RDC for permission to submit a thesis in advance of the minimum period. 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 'Writing up fees' below).
9. Students registered for the MPhil or MPhil/PhD, with the exception of those registered for PhD by Prior Publication, may submit an application to transfer their registration to PhD. Students should apply to transfer their registration to PhD between 12-18 months (full-time) or 24-36 months (part-time) from initial enrolment. Students whose application to transfer does not meet approval may be granted a period to in which resubmit their transfer application (see Guidance note #8: Transfer). Students 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.
10. Where a student wishes to amend their registration from MPhil/PhD to MPhil prior to Transfer they must address the request in writing to the Chair of RDC.
11. Where a student has requested an amendment of registration from MPhil/PhD to MPhil, or they have received a Transfer viva outcome of

‘write-up for MPhil’ this will result in reduction of the registration period remaining to them.

12. Very exceptionally a student 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 RDC and are considered on a case by case basis in respect of any adjustment to the remaining registration period.

## Registration modes (full-time, part-time) & changing registration mode

13. Doctoral students may be registered for full-time or part-time study modes.
14. A doctoral student may change mode at any point during their studies by completing parts A and B of the Change of Registration Mode form (RD4MS) and forwarding it to the Graduate School Officer for processing. If approved by the Chair/Deputy Chair of RDC, a new set of deadlines relating to remaining milestones, the expected thesis submission date and the maximum registration period will be advised to the student and their supervisory team.
15. Where a student 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 student at the date of the transfer of mode being granted. Where a student 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 student at the date of the transfer of mode being granted.

e.g. FT 4 months remaining to end of maximum registration = PT 8 months

PT 8 months remaining to end of maximum registration = FT 4 months

## Induction

16. All new doctoral students are required to attend a mandatory induction session which takes place on the same date that the Admissions Team conduct the doctoral student enrolment which completes a new doctoral student’s registration (see point 2 above).
17. The induction session introduces doctoral students to the resources and services they can access at Solent. Information about registration,

enrolment, and the induction schedule will be sent to all incoming doctoral students in advance by the Graduate School Officer.

18. Induction also provides doctoral students with an opportunity to meet new and existing members of the doctoral student community.

## Suspension, extension and withdrawal

### Suspension of studies

19. Doctoral students are normally expected to pursue their research on a continuous basis for the duration of their programme of study. Where the student 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.
20. The maximum registration period provides scope for unanticipated delays due to periods of ill-health, restricted access to planned resources or data or other circumstances. Periods of suspension will not result in additional time being added to the end of the student's maximum registration period. (For extensions beyond the maximum registration period see Extension of studies below)
21. Doctoral students 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 may also wish to meet their Doctoral Coordinator.
22. Students wishing to suspend their studies must ensure parts A and B of the Application for Suspension form (RD4SU) are completed and forwarded to the Graduate School Officer for processing and submission to the Chair/Deputy Chair of RDC for final approval. Doctoral students will receive notification of the outcome of their application from the Graduate School Officer. Applicants should note that approval is not guaranteed and all applications will be assessed individually on the basis of the grounds and evidence provided.
23. Appropriate medical evidence may be submitted to support requests for suspension on the grounds of ill-health.
24. Where a student is ill and unable to study, they must inform their DoS or a member of the supervisory team as soon as practicable. Where a student is absent due to ill health for a period of 6 weeks or more, the supervisory

team is required to inform the Graduate School Officer in order that the University can suspend their studies and where relevant inform UKVI.

25. Applications to suspend studies on the following grounds are ineligible for consideration:
- a. Pressure of work.
  - b. Students in fee arrears (students wishing to apply for suspension on financial grounds should ensure they do so in good time before their next fee payment is due).
  - c. Retrospective applications will not normally be granted.
26. Doctoral students with outstanding fees who wish to suspend should contact the University Income Team for guidance ([income.team@solent.ac.uk](mailto:income.team@solent.ac.uk)).
27. It is recommended that students who are considering suspending their studies and have concerns about the impact suspending might have on their visas seek guidance from the University's International Support team. The University will inform the UKVI of all suspended international students holding a Tier 4 visa. For further information please contact the International Support team ([internationalsupport@solent.ac.uk](mailto:internationalsupport@solent.ac.uk)), and the visa Compliance team ([pbi@solent.ac.uk](mailto:pbi@solent.ac.uk)).

### Extension of studies

28. Doctoral students should review their programme of work in relation to their remaining permitted registration period regularly with their supervision team. They should take advantage of Annual Monitoring and the Transfer milestone (see Guidance notes #7 and #8) 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 in paragraph 5 above), while the maximum registration period provides scope for unanticipated delays due to periods of ill-health, restricted access to planned resources or data or other circumstances. An application for extension beyond this period will therefore be considered only on an exceptional basis and it is advisable for students to discuss any issues that may require an application for extension with the supervisory team and/or the Doctoral Coordinator.
29. Where exceptionally, due to circumstances beyond a student's control, a doctoral student 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.

30. An application may be submitted for an extension period of normally not more than 6 months, and exceptionally to a maximum of 12 months. Doctoral students should ensure parts A, B, C and D of the Application to Extend Research Degree Registration form (RD4E) are completed before forwarding to the Graduate School Officer for processing and submission to the Chair/Deputy Chair of RDC for approval. 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.
31. Applications for extension to the maximum registration period on basis of pressure of work are ineligible for consideration; e.g. students who have taken up a full-time job before they have submitted their thesis, however demanding the job.
32. Students 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.
33. Students 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.
34. It is recommended that students who are considering applying to extend their studies and have concerns about the impact an extension might have on their visas seek guidance from the University's International Support team ([internationalssupport@solent.ac.uk](mailto:internationalssupport@solent.ac.uk)) and visa Compliance team ([pbi@solent.ac.uk](mailto:pbi@solent.ac.uk)).

### Withdrawal of registration

35. A doctoral student's registration may be withdrawn at any of the review points (see Guidance notes #7 and #8) 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 the University's Academic Misconduct Procedure (see Academic Handbook, 4L).
36. A student may also be withdrawn from registration where they have:

- a. Failed to engage with their supervisory team and not responded to formal correspondence from the University for a period of 60 days; or
- b. Failed to complete the registration or re-registration process at the start of each academic session until submission of the thesis has taken place; or
- c. Failed to pay such fees as published by the University and failed subsequently to clear any debts following being informed by the Finance Service of the intention to impose sanctions (see Fee and Payment Regulations).

37. A student may elect to withdraw their registration at any time.

38. To complete a withdrawal from registration, the Application to Withdraw from Research Degree form (RD4WD) must be completed and returned to the Graduate School Officer for processing or by the Graduate School Officer following consultation with the student's supervisory team, Doctoral Coordinator and / or other relevant professional services where they are in receipt of the student's notification of intent to withdraw. If the student has disengaged as per paragraphs 35 and 36 the form will be completed by the Graduate School Officer.

39. The University will inform the UKVI of all withdrawn international students holding a Tier 4 visa. For further information contact the International Support team ([internationalsupport@solent.ac.uk](mailto:internationalsupport@solent.ac.uk)) and visa Compliance team ([pbi@solent.ac.uk](mailto:pbi@solent.ac.uk)).

## Appeals

### Appeals process

40. A doctoral student may make a formal appeal to request reconsideration of decisions related to their progress, that is:

- a. A decision to withdraw a student through lack of academic progress and/or failure to engage;
- b. A decision to suspend a student due to ill-health; or
- c. The outcome of a review or examination (including Transfer).

41. Appeals can only be lodged by the doctoral student (with limited exceptions for third parties) and can only be made using the process and on eligible grounds as outlined in the Regulations for Postgraduate Research Students.

42. If a student is dissatisfied about any other aspect of their experience, including withdrawal on the basis of non-payment of fees, they should use the Complaint Procedure (Academic Handbook, 4N).



# Guidance note 6: Tuition fees, student funding and training and development support

## Tuition fees

### Payment of tuition fees

1. New students must pay such fees as determined by the University before they can enrol, and subsequently all students must pay the annual fee before they attempt to re-register at the start of each year of study. Students wishing to pay their fee on a payment plan must contact the income team to discuss how they might pay for fees by instalment well in advance of their registration due date ([income.team@solent.ac.uk](mailto:income.team@solent.ac.uk)).

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

2. Non-payment or incomplete payment of the fee may result in a student being withdrawn. Students who have been withdrawn through non-payment of fees may appeal (see Fee and Payment Regulations).
3. Students should be aware that the fees, once published, will be set for that year of entry, but are subject to increase year on year in line with Research Councils UK (RCUK) indicative fee level. Any change will be applied to both new and continuing students. The fees for the current academic period can be found on the Research degree webpages [here](#). Please also refer to the Fee and Payment Regulations for Overseas students [here](#), and the Fee and Payment Regulations for Home and EU students [here](#) (see also the University's Regulations for Postgraduate Research Students).
4. Students who have submitted their thesis for final examination remain registered at the University. If students 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. Students 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.
5. Following the viva, if a student receives an outcome of 'major amendment' or 'revision for MPhil' (PhD candidates only are eligible for the latter outcome) they will be subject to an amendment fee (see below) for the period of amendment specified in their viva outcome.

## Alumni discount on fees

1. Solent Alumni may be eligible for a discount in their fees if returning to complete Doctoral studies at Solent. Students who received a first class degree (1:1), or a master's degree with distinction may receive a 50% reduction on fees, and students who received a second class degree (2:1 or 2:2), or a master's degree with merit may receive a 20% discount on fees.

## Writing-up fees

1. Full-time doctoral students who are 'writing-up' their research, prior to submission of their thesis for examination, may apply to pay a reduced 'writing-up' annual fee for a maximum of one registration year. Part-time doctoral students may pay a 'writing-up' fee for a maximum of two registration years. Both full-time and part-time doctoral students 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 student and cannot exceed the maximum registration period of the degree for which they are registered.
2. Full-time students will not be eligible to apply for the 'writing-up' fee until they have completed a minimum of 12 months of registration and must have successfully completed their Transfer (see Guidance Note #8: Transfer). Part-time students will not be eligible to apply for the 'writing-up' fee until they have completed a minimum of 36 months of registration and must have successfully completed their Transfer. Applicants who have not successfully completed their Transfer will not be approved.
3. Applications for MPhil 'writing up' status before 12 months (24 months part-time) will not be approved.
4. If a doctoral student 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 above.
5. Students can elect to apply for the 'writing up' fee before the start of any academic session after completing the minimum eligibility criteria (outlined in paragraph 8). Before they do so they must consult their supervision team for approval.

6. Other opportunities to review progress towards this status may occur at the Annual Monitoring point or Transfer panels (see Guidance note #7: Annual Monitoring, Guidance note #8: Transfer). A panel may recommend that the 'writing-up fee' should be applied for before the start of the student's next academic session, or give consideration to at which future academic session it might be appropriate for the student to make an application.
7. 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 (RD2WU) and forwarding it to the Graduate School Officer for processing.
8. Doctoral students should ensure forms to apply for writing-up fee status are submitted to the Graduate School Officer, at least two months prior to the annual re-registration point. Doctoral students will be advised once their application has been processed.

### Major amendment fees

1. Following the viva examination, students 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 candidates only, 6 months), will continue receive full access to supervisory support and University resources and facilities. This period is subject to a reduced annual fee applied as appropriate to their examination outcome (see also the University's Regulations for Postgraduate Research Students and the Fees and Payment Regulations).

## Student funding

### Studentships/bursaries

1. The University may from time to time advertise funded Doctoral degree studentships/bursaries. These may be fully funded (fees, maintenance stipend, training allowance) or part funded (e.g. fees only). Stipends are normally aligned to the RCUK minimum stipend levels and will generally be disbursed on a quarterly basis to students.
2. Studentships/bursaries will normally be advertised through 'Findaphd.com', on the University's Research Degree website '[Applying for a Research Degree](#)'. Studentships may also be advertised through other media as applicable.

## Doctoral Loans

1. Students may be eligible for a Doctoral Loan. More information about the Doctoral Loan and conditions of eligibility is available [here](#). Applications for Doctoral Loans should be made by students to Student Finance England.
2. The total amount of the loan will be allocated evenly across each registration year up to the expected end date of the research degree. The loan is not means tested and may be put towards any costs relating to the doctoral study (e.g. fees, living expenses, etc.).

## Alternative Guide

1. The University subscribes to the [Alternative Guide to Postgraduate Funding](#). The Guide has a wide range of information on alternative sources of funding, especially charities, which can make awards (fees, maintenance, research costs, conference attendance, etc.) across any subject or nationality.
2. The Alternative Guide contains a database of funding opportunities, comprehensive guidance, and numerous tools to help students prepare a grant application.
3. Solent University has purchased a licence to the Guide, so it is free for all students and staff with a University log in to use.
4. The Alternative Guide database is extensive and does include funding for which international students registered at Solent may be eligible.

# Guidance note 7: Annual monitoring

## Introduction

1. In addition to the research degree milestones of transfer and viva, the University formally monitors the experience and academic progress of research students once a year in May/June. This is referred to as Annual Monitoring and involves a Progress Review and optional Independent Review.
2. The Progress Review entails students submitting an academic progress report and an optional Independent Review, which entails students attending a meeting with an academic independent of their programme of study who will also submit a report. Both reports will be considered by the relevant Doctoral Review Panel.
3. Students and Directors of studies must complete the monitoring progress report documentation. Failing to do so may jeopardise the students continued registration.

## General principles of Annual Monitoring

4. Monitoring in this way ensures that all students are receiving timely and constructive feedback about their academic progress and that they are able to access all appropriate support available to them. The University seeks to ensure through this monitoring that the whole student experience is reviewed at regular intervals without placing an undue burden upon candidates.
5. The Progress Review is mandatory (with the exception of withdrawn or suspended students, or students post-submission of their final thesis). A student 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 student can be withdrawn.
6. Other than as detailed in point 2 above, there are no exceptions to the requirement for sections A, B and provision of the required number of supervisory records to be completed by the student, and completion of Section C by the DoS.

## The annual monitoring process

7. The submission of Annual Monitoring progress reviews involves:
  - a. This progress review covers the previous 12 month period.
  - b. The doctoral student is required to complete the online annual monitoring form (accessible on the Graduate School SOL page) - Parts A and B.
  - c. The doctoral student is additionally provided with the option of engaging in an Independent Review. This will be coordinated by the Doctoral Coordinator, and subsequent documentation provided to the Doctoral Panel for review.
  - d. Once the doctoral student has completed their sections (A and B) of the report, it is forwarded to the Director of Studies (DoS) to complete section C.
  - e. Upon completion of all sections of the report by both the doctoral student and DoS, the report must be submitted to the Graduate School Officer for dissemination to the respective Faculty or School Doctoral Coordinators.
  - f. Annual monitoring reports are reviewed by the respective Faculty or School Doctoral Panel. Outcomes of this review and all agreed actions are then communicated to the doctoral student and DoS by the Graduate School Officer.

## Progress review

8. The Progress Review is a formal review of students' academic progress for the annual cycle (a reflection on progress for the previous 12 months, or since first registration for first year students). The aim of the review is to confirm whether the student is actively engaging with their programme of study, training and supervisory provision.
9. The Progress Review form is in 3 sections and is available on the Graduate School SOL page. Notification to complete this documentation will be sent by the Graduate School Officer to doctoral students in February/March each year.
10. Sections A and B must be completed by the student and forwarded in good time to their DoS who is then responsible for completing Section C and submitting this to Graduate School by the published deadline in May.
  - a. Section A is a record of the student's details.

- b. Section B consists of 4 parts:
    - i. Questions relating to research good practice, training and development over the previous 12 months (or since first registration for new students).
    - ii. Activity Summary, which is designed to assist in determining how much the student has achieved to date and ascertain whether the work remaining on the project is in line with the proposed timelines
    - iii. Questions relating to experience of supervisory support
    - iv. Questions relating to overall experience
    - v. Doctoral student signoff
11. In addition to the above report, students are required to keep records of meetings with their supervisory team. The student will complete all supervisory records accessed via the Graduate School SOL page, which need to be approved and signed off by member/s of the supervisory team present at the meetings. The meeting record includes:
- a. Dates
  - b. Supervisors present at each meeting
  - c. Points of discussion
  - d. Actions agreed as outcomes of each meeting
12. Section C, addresses supervisory input, feedback about the student completed sections (A and B) and review of the student's engagement, specifically:
- a. Agreement /disagreement with what has been reported within Sections A and B (student content).
  - b. DoS's overall feedback about the student's progress.
  - c. Good research practice (i.e. research ethics and health & safety considerations). Each year a student should work with their supervision 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, students can simply answer 'Yes' or 'No' to the questions as appropriate. (see Guidance note #3 and the Research Integrity Guidance page for information on making a research ethics application).
  - d. 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.

13. Section C must be completed by a member of the supervisory team (normally the Director of Studies) and returned by the supervisor with Sections A and B to [research.degree@solent.ac.uk](mailto:research.degree@solent.ac.uk). Section C addresses the student's overall academic quality and performance, review of any actions or changes to the health & safety arrangements with the student, and any changes or issues in respect of the ethical aspects of the project, and makes a recommendation to the Doctoral Review Panel assessors regarding the academic progress of the student.
14. Both Sections A, B and C must be submitted by the deadline given on the form. Failure to meet the deadline will mean the student will be automatically placed on probation as the Doctoral Review Panel 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 student's registration and ability to continue their studies.
15. The relevant Doctoral Review Panel will indicate a formal decision regarding the student's continued registration on the award. The panel may decide any of the following:
  - a. The student has demonstrated satisfactory engagement and academic progress.
  - b. Technical probation pending submission of missing or incomplete Annual Monitoring documentation (within 3 months).
  - c. Where evidence is such that the Doctoral Review Panel are not satisfied that a probationary period is warranted they can recommend withdrawal of registration (or where appropriate require the student to re-register for MPhil write-up).
16. The Doctoral Review Panel may elect to select both ii and iii as outcomes from the review. In this case the 3 month probation periods will run concurrently.

### Independent review

17. The Independent Review is a one-to-one meeting with an academic member of staff who is an experienced researcher and is independent of the student's supervisory team. This review focuses on the student'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 student personally or academically which the University can address through its



various services. Issues arising from the independent reviews may be escalated to the Doctoral Coordinator.

18. The Doctoral Coordinator will arrange the one-to-one meetings. Normally the nominated independent reviewer will make the meeting arrangements
19. This will normally take place between March - May with sufficient advance notice to reserve this time within respective diaries.
20. At the meeting, the independent reviewer and student will jointly complete the Independent Review Questionnaire form (RD2AMIR). This should include any additional concerns highlighted and discussed in the meeting
21. The form must be returned to [research.degree@solent.ac.uk](mailto:research.degree@solent.ac.uk) before the May deadline and will be forwarded to the relevant Doctoral Coordinator to follow up any individual actions.
22. Independent Review forms will also be reviewed by the Doctoral Review Panel who will consider these in the context of both the individual student'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 Research Degrees Committee.

### Confidentiality

23. Students 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 Doctoral Review Panel.
24. Normally the Doctoral Coordinator will review all Independent Review forms to address any individual actions. In cases where an action is warranted, but the student has requested confidentiality which includes the relevant Doctoral Coordinator, the Independent Reviewer may elect for the action to be forwarded to an alternative Doctoral Coordinator to mitigate the student's desire for confidentiality. This should be discussed between the student and independent reviewer and the student's preference clearly indicated

## The Doctoral Review Panel

25. The Doctoral Coordinator will convene the Doctoral Review Panel, or sub-panels representative of the Doctoral Review Panel with relevant expertise, to consider the Independent Review and Progress Review forms in June each year.
26. Any documentation submitted after the May deadline will not be considered in June and will be subject to review when the Doctoral Coordinator is able to reconvene the Doctoral Review Panel, or a sub-panel, such that a review may take place.
27. Each student must satisfy the Annual Monitoring Doctoral Review Panel in the following:
  - a. Their Progress Review provides evidence of satisfactory progress during the preceding 12 months (or in the case of first year students, since their first registration) and that they have provided an appropriate plan for the forthcoming 12 months.
28. Students 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 Doctoral Coordinator will arrange for these to be reviewed. The reviewers will consider whether the student has satisfied the criteria of the probation and may continue with their studies. Failure to submit required work can result in withdrawal of the student's registration.
29. At an appropriate phase of the programme of study, the panel may consider a student'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 (see Guidance note #9 for details).
30. If there is no improvement in the student's performance after a period of probation and serious concerns remain about their progress and/or there is a significant probability that the student will not be able to submit a thesis within the permitted registration period, a recommendation to withdraw the student's registration should be made to the Chair/Deputy Chair of the Research Degrees Committee. Where appropriate the student may be required to re-register for the MPhil award in lieu of withdrawal from their studies.

## Appealing an Annual Monitoring outcome

31. A student who believes they have eligible grounds to appeal their Annual Monitoring outcome may make a formal appeal to the University Secretary under the appeals process in the Regulations for Postgraduate Research Students (see Related Documents).

# Guidance Note 8: Transfer

## Introduction

### Review timeframe

1. Students 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).
2. Students who have registered for the PhD by Prior Publication route will not be required to Transfer. Students who have registered for an MPhil only can elect to apply to transfer to PhD in the same timeframe as those students registered on the MPhil/PhD.
3. In the event of an unsatisfactory Transfer submission, the full-time candidate may be given a 3 month period (6 month part-time) in which to amend the report in the light of feedback from the Doctoral Transfer Panel. If the transfer document(s) remain unsatisfactory, the Doctoral Transfer Panel will either recommend the student remain registered for an MPhil (which may result in a reduction to their registration period (see Guidance note #5), or that the student be withdrawn from their studies.
4. Failure to submit an application within 18 months of the commencement of full-time study, or part-time equivalent (36 months), may result in a recommendation that the student remain registered for an MPhil or that the registration be withdrawn.
5. A candidate 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 Research Degrees Committee for their registration to revert to MPhil (see Guidance note #5).

### Context of review

6. 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 students 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.

7. Supervisors' guidance and advice should be sought by students in a timely manner regarding appropriate timing and preparation for the transfer. Students should agree a schedule of meetings with their supervision team to discuss transfer, and factor into their preparation sufficient time to for their supervision team to read and comment on the draft(s), for the candidates themselves to think about the comments and respond before the deadline for submission, and allow time to obtain the necessary signatures to support their application.

## The transfer process

### Submitting the Transfer Form (RD2T) and Associated Documents

8. In support of the transfer application, the candidate shall be required to submit evidence in the form of:
  - a. a full transfer report, plus other material subject to the nature of their research;
  - b. a Turnitin similarity report; and
  - c. the completed Transfer form (RD2T).
9. They will also be required to attend a viva voce at which they must successfully demonstrate the work has the potential to meet the learning outcomes for the doctoral award.
10. The student must submit their transfer report to Turnitin, complete the Transfer form, and then forward all the above documentation to their supervisory team for their Director of Studies 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 supervision 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.
11. When all the above actions have been completed, all documentation should be forwarded by the Director of Studies to [research.degree@solent.ac.uk](mailto:research.degree@solent.ac.uk) and to the Doctoral Coordinator. The Graduate School Officer will then convene a Transfer Panel (*see below*).
12. If any part of the documentation is incomplete when it is submitted to The Graduate School Officer (i.e. with information missing or incorrect, or missing signatures or attachments; e.g. the Turnitin report) it will be sent back to the student for revision.

## Submitting to Turnitin

13. The Turnitin tool is accessed by logging into the Solent Online Learning (SOL) Graduate School site. Select the Milestones & Monitoring tab and use the Turnitin submission tool.
14. Candidate should allow up to 24 hours for the Turnitin similarity report to generate.
15. Students must download the similarity report and forward it to their Director of Studies or co-supervisor for review.
16. Any enquiries about using the Turnitin tool should be sent to [LT.help@solent.ac.uk](mailto:LT.help@solent.ac.uk) (023 8201 3340).

## The Transfer form (RD2T)

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

## The transfer report

20. While the specific requirements may vary from discipline to discipline, a typical thesis based study should require a full transfer report of circa 10,000 - 20,000 words; whereas a practice-based project would normally require an artefact plus supporting document contextualising the artefact within the framework of a PhD.
21. A full transfer report would normally take the form of a coherent document in the style of a thesis that includes the following chapters:
  - a. An introduction that sets out the contextual rationale to the work, and an appropriate set of aims and objectives.
  - b. A critical literature review that provides a comprehensive contextualisation of the research and demonstrates that by satisfying the aims of the project, an appropriate original contribution to knowledge will be achieved.
  - c. A research methodology that demonstrates how the methods selected will achieve the desired aims and objectives and fully justifies the approach taken.

- d. A presentation and consideration of any findings to date, demonstrating how the final results of the project will satisfy the requirements of the research in addressing the project's aims; the purpose of the chapter is not to attempt to answer the research question but to demonstrate that the research question can be answered.
  - e. An outline of the subsequent steps necessary to complete the research, including a timetable of completion of the thesis from the date of initial registration; and a chapter-by-chapter outline of the final thesis.
22. Students should give reference to any work mentioned, or referred to, in their proposed plan of work using the Harvard system or other agreed referencing system appropriate to their field, with the list of references in alphabetical order at the end. For information regarding referencing systems see the University Library Guide.
23. Failure to observe referencing conventions is considered a very serious breach of research integrity at this level of study and this is reflected in the investigation of any reported case of academic misconduct by a doctoral research student.

## The transfer panel review

### The panel meeting

24. It is the Graduate School Officers' responsibility to complete the following actions:
- a. Arrange a transfer viva voce examination, appointing an independent chair and contacting the two assessors provided by the supervisory team. The assessors will not be members of the candidate's supervision team and will normally be internal to the University. An external assessor may be appointed, if approved by the relevant Doctoral Coordinator. The Graduate School Officer will appoint the independent chair
  - b. Ensure the report by the Transfer Panel assessors (Part E of the Transfer form, is complete, has all relevant signatures.
  - c. When a final transfer outcome, including any amendments, have been reviewed and agreed by the panel, the completed Transfer form is forwarded to the Chair/Deputy Chair of RDC for approval.
25. At the Transfer Panel the student will normally open with a short presentation, which will be followed by questions and answers, and informal discussion.

26. The student may request one of their supervisory team members to be present at the panel meeting as an observer, but the supervisor will not take part in the discussion. A student must confirm in writing to the Graduate School Officer if they are requesting to have a supervisor present. Doctoral Student Administration will issue the invitation to the named supervisor.
27. The Transfer Panel should give the student informal, verbal feedback at the end of the review meeting. Written notification of the outcome will be forwarded to the student following submission of the completed Transfer form to the Graduate School Officer by the Doctoral Coordinator (or chair of the panel).

### Transfer panel assessment criteria

28. In reviewing the transfer documents and the student's viva voce performance, the Transfer Panel must be convinced of the following:
  - a. That the Panel have received sufficiently detailed material to ascertain:
    - i. 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*)?
    - ii. What methods have been used, how they have been deployed and the rationale for their use?
    - iii. What findings have emerged or are expected to emerge?
    - iv. 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)?
  - b. That the style and presentation of the transfer report represents the qualities of PhD level work:
    - i. Can the candidate write clearly and in a manner appropriate for an advanced piece of academic writing?
    - ii. Are concepts, theories and relevant methodological issues confidently and accurately handled?
    - iii. Is data presented in ways that comply with academic conventions, and does the candidate understand how to interpret these data and know their limitations?
    - iv. Can the candidate distinguish clearly between explanations, interpretation and speculation in the discussion of findings and the inferences to be drawn from them?



## Transfer panel report

29. The Transfer Panel will complete a report in section E of the Transfer form, which the independent chair will submit to the Doctoral Coordinator (copying in the Graduate School Officer(research.degree@solent.ac.uk). The report will:
- a. Assess the candidate's transfer outcome against the above criteria;
  - b. 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;
  - c. Provide an explicit recommendation for one of the four possible outcomes (listed in Transfer Panel outcomes below); and
  - d. 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 amendment and resubmission also nominates the Panel member(s) who will review the resubmitted documents, or state if the Transfer Panel should be reconvened on resubmission;
  - e. In cases where the recommendation is for approval, the Transfer Panel may give consideration to stating whether the candidate is likely to be in a position to make an application for 'writing-up' status at the next annual registration point for their award.

## Transfer panel outcomes

30. The Transfer panel can decide one of the following outcomes:
- a) Transfer to PhD is approved.
  - b) The Transfer report is subject to amendment and resubmission within 3 months (full-time) or 6 months (part-time) to the satisfaction of the Doctoral Transfer Review Panel.
  - c) Registration to remain as MPhil (NB: this will result in an amended final submission deadline).
  - d) Registration withdrawn.
31. Students will receive formal notification of the outcome in writing as soon as possible after the transfer after the above processes have been completed.
32. In the event that the student requires further guidance on the panel outcome, they should contact the Doctoral Coordinator in the first instance
33. Students can also seek informal feedback from their Doctoral Coordinator and / or from the supervisor they invited to be present where appropriate.

34. If the student has submitted revisions for outcome b), and the panel reviewer(s) conclude that the transfer report remains unsatisfactory, they will normally recommend to the Chair/Deputy Chair of RDC that the student's registration be retained at MPhil or, that the registration be withdrawn.
35. A student who believes they have eligible grounds to appeal their Transfer outcome may make a formal appeal to the University Secretary under the appeals process in the Regulations for Postgraduate Research Students (see Related Documents).

## Guidance Note 9: Writing up

### Timing

When is it time to start 'writing up'?

1. 'Writing-up' normally follows the phase of research where the bulk of the data collection / experimental work and analysis has been undertaken. Substantial drafts of sections of the thesis will normally already be in place.
2. 'Writing-up' will be completed in one year or less by full-time students and in two years or less by part-time students.
3. Students 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 student) of standard registration when they are, or expect shortly to be, in the position described at point 1 above.
4. As outlined in Guidance Notes #7 and #8, the Annual Monitoring or Transfer Panels may be appropriate points to consider when to transition to 'writing-up fee' status depending on the progress of the student to that point. A panel may make a recommendation that the student 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.
5. The doctoral student and their supervisory team will discuss the decision, as supervisory approval of the application for 'writing up fee' status is required. The student's supervision team must review the student's progress after Transfer is successfully completed prior to each annual re-registration point and when appropriate approve the student's application for 'writing-up fee' status.
6. Students wishing to make an application for 'writing-up fee' status should consult with their supervision 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 (see Guidance note #6). An application for 'writing up fee' status should be submitted to the Graduate School Officer at least 2 months before the annual registration date.

7. For further information on the duration and processes of applying for 'writing-up fee' status see Guidance note #6.

## Eligibility for 'writing-up fees'

8. All students must have completed Transfer before they are eligible to apply for 'writing-up' status. Full-time students who have successfully transferred may apply after a minimum of 12 months registration. Part-time students who have successfully transferred may apply after a minimum of 36 months registration (see also Guidance note #6).

## What is 'Writing-up'?

9. 'Writing-up' generally applies to the writing, refining and editing of final drafts preparatory to submitting the completed thesis for assessment. Preparation for submitting the thesis is an important phase of the programme of study and there are a number of key steps to the preparation that should be factored in to a timetable for completion between the student and the supervisory team to ensure everything progresses smoothly at this stage.
10. In addition, sufficient time in advance of the submission of the final thesis should be allowed for the following:
  - a. Nomination of examiners (see Guidance note #10);
  - b. Comments and feedback from the supervision team on the whole draft thesis;
  - c. Proof-reading the final thesis for typographical, grammatical and formatting errors;
  - d. Agreement on the final title of the thesis; and
  - e. If required arrange for copies of the thesis to be printed and set in temporary bindings for submission to the Graduate School (see Guidance note #10).

## Thesis submission after the 'writing up' period has expired

11. If a student 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 (see Guidance note #6).

12. Students 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.

# Guidance Note 10: Thesis submission and examination (viva)

## General introduction

1. The submission of a thesis for examination is at the sole discretion of the student, subject to satisfying the conditions of eligibility required by the regulations for postgraduate research students.
2. While a student would be unwise to submit the thesis for examination against the advice of their supervisors, it is their right to do so. Equally, students should not assume that a supervisor's agreement to the submission of a thesis guarantees the award of the degree.
3. A student must ensure that the thesis is submitted to the Graduate School Officer ([research.degree@solent.ac.uk](mailto:research.degree@solent.ac.uk)) before the expiry of their registration period. Students with exceptional circumstances must complete an application to extend this period prior to the expiry of their registration period (see Guidance note #5).

## Pre-Submission

4. A student submitting their thesis for examination is referred to as a 'candidate'.
5. The writing, preparing and submitting of the thesis within the permitted registration period is the candidate's responsibility.
6. The thesis must be the candidate'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 Harvard referencing system or an agreed system appropriate to their discipline.
7. All successful theses are kept in the University Library. In preparation for the final version of the thesis, candidates might find it useful to look at other theses to guide them in achieving the required standard.
8. Exceptionally, a student 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.

## Research Degree Examination Arrangements

9. The predicted date of submission must be stated on the Research Degree Examination Arrangements form (RD5E) submitted six months in advance of thesis submission. This date cannot exceed the maximum registration period. Students should notify the Graduate School Officer as soon as possible if their expected submission date will be subject to change.
10. At least six months before a student expects to have completed their thesis for submission for examination they should discuss with their supervision team their predicted thesis submission date and who might be appropriate to invite to act as external examiner(s).
11. The supervision team are responsible for completing the Research Degree Examination Arrangements form (RD5E). This is the formal notification of the date on which the candidate intends to submit the thesis for examination to Graduate School Officer and includes the nomination of examiners and the independent chair.

## Nomination of examiners

12. 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 candidate's viva can take place within reasonable time of the thesis submission.
13. The Director of Studies/supervisory team must complete the Research Degree Examination Arrangements form (RD5E) 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. This must be submitted to the Graduate School Officer for approval by the Chair/Deputy Chair of RDC.
14. The examination cannot be arranged until approval has been given for the nominated examiners. In special circumstances, the relevant Doctoral Review Panel may recommend examiners.
15. A student will take no part in the arrangement of the oral examination (viva) and must have no contact relating to the examination with the internal or external examiner(s) between the appointment of the examiner and the oral examination. If a student contacts an examiner between their

appointment and before the viva this will be treated as academic misconduct.

16. Once a thesis has been submitted, members of a supervisory team will have no direct contact with examiners. Requests for contact for any reason must be made only through the Graduate School.
17. A student will be examined by at least two, and normally not more than three, examiners, of whom at least one will be an external examiner. Where a student is also a member of University staff, the examiners must all be external.
18. The examination team as a whole should have substantial experience of successful supervision and examination of research degree students.
19. A research degree student registered at Solent or another University cannot act as an examiner.

## Internal examiners

20. Internal examiners will have experience of the general area of the student's work and will not be a member of the student's supervisory team.
21. Where an internal member of an examination panel has recently left the University after a student's viva, and the student has been given major amendments with resubmission, the examiners continuation in the role may be in the interests of the student and they may be invited to continue.
22. The internal examiner may have acted previously as a Transfer Panel or Doctoral Review Panel member in relation to the student.

## External examiners

23. External examiners will have experience of the specialist area of the student's thesis and demonstrate a consistent and extensive record of relevant publications. Normally the external examining team should have completed a minimum of two examinations. The external examiner(s) must be independent of the University and not have acted previously as the student's supervisor or advisor, and have no other conflict of interest involving the research student.
24. Former members of staff of the University should not be approved as external examiners until at least three years after the termination of their employment with the University.



25. A nomination for an examiner who has been in formal collaboration, or who has authored a research paper, with a member of the supervisory team within three years prior to the examination, would not normally be regarded as independent.
26. The Chair/Deputy Chair RDC should ensure that the same external examiner is not approved so frequently that their familiarity with the University might prejudice objective judgement.

## Submission of thesis

27. Submission must include the following actions:
  - a. The thesis must be submitted electronically to the online submission tool Turnitin and the report must be included as part of the submission.
  - b. The thesis must be presented electronically and if required in two hard copies, with the format and temporary binding following the University's guidance (see below), to the Graduate School Officer and the Doctoral Coordinator.
  - c. The submission must be accompanied by the University's Thesis Submission- Candidate Declaration form (RD5DEC).
28. Enquiries about the format, binding or number of copies should be made to the Graduate School Officer in good time.

## Submitting to Turnitin

29. The Turnitin tool is accessed by logging into the Solent Online Learning (SOL) Graduate School site. Select the Milestones & Monitoring tab and use the Turnitin submission link.
30. Students should allow up to 24 hours for the Turnitin similarity report to generate.
31. Students must download the similarity report and include it with their submission to the Graduate School Officer.
32. Any enquiries about using the Turnitin tool should be sent to [LT.help@solent.ac.uk](mailto:LT.help@solent.ac.uk) (023 8201 3340).

## Thesis Submission - Candidate Declaration form (RD5DEC)

33. Candidates must complete parts A to I of the Thesis Submission - Candidate Declaration form. This includes:
- a. Identification of any aspects of the thesis which have previously been published; or
  - b. Where published work has been jointly authored with others, which parts of the work(s) are the student's responsibility; or
  - c. Any aspects of the thesis which have already been submitted for a degree or comparable award; and
  - d. A declaration of research integrity.

## Thesis format

34. All the following requirements must be adhered to in the format of the thesis.
35. The thesis must be presented in English.
36. The thesis must be presented in a permanent and legible form either in typescript or print. The size of character used in the main text, including displayed matter and notes, shall not be less than 2.0mm for capitals and 1.5mm for X-height (that is, the height of a lower-case x)
37. The printed version must be single sided. The margin at the left-hand binding edge of the page must be no less than 40mm; other margins must not be less than 15mm.
38. Double or one-and-a-half spacing must be used in the typescript except for indented quotations or footnotes, where single spacing may be used.
39. Pages must be numbered consecutively through the main text, including photographs and/or diagrams included as whole pages.
40. The thesis must normally be in A4 format; permission may be granted for submission in another format where it is clear that the contents of the thesis may be better expressed in that format; a candidate using a format larger than A4 should note that the production of microfiche copies and full-size enlargement may not be feasible.
41. The title page must give the following information:

- a. The full title of the thesis;
- b. The full name of the author;
- c. That the degree is awarded by Solent University;
- d. The award for which the thesis is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of Solent University;
- e. The collaborating establishments (if any); and
- f. The month and year of submission.

42. A specimen title page is provided below:

<p style="text-align: center;">The origins of the Farmers' Co-operative in Wessex</p> <p style="text-align: center;">John Smith</p> <p style="text-align: center;">A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements</p> <p style="text-align: center;">of Solent University for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>If appropriate:</b> This research programme was carried out in collaboration with the Borchester Farmer's Club</p> <p style="text-align: center;">October 2013</p>
---

43. 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.

44. The abstract should also be copied electronically to [research.degree@solent.ac.uk](mailto:research.degree@solent.ac.uk) when the electronic version of the thesis is submitted.

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

- a. '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'.

- b. Note: If there are other owners of the IP they must also be named here.
46. The finished thesis must include a statement of the candidate's objectives and must acknowledge published or other sources of material consulted (including an appropriate bibliography) and any assistance received.
47. When a candidate's research is part of a collaborative group project, the thesis must indicate clearly the candidate's individual contribution and the extent of the collaboration.
48. The candidate 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.
49. The length of the thesis should not normally exceed the following:
- |          |              |
|----------|--------------|
| a. PhD   | 80,000 words |
| b. MPhil | 40,000 words |
50. Where the submission includes material in other than textual form, the written thesis should normally be within the range:
- |          |                       |
|----------|-----------------------|
| a. PhD   | 30,000 - 40,000 words |
| b. MPhil | 15,000 - 20,000 words |
51. Examiners will have regard to the candidate's fulfilment of the University's assessment criteria, where a thesis is submitted significantly under the maximums cited above.
52. For clarification the thesis word count includes:
- a. Quotations
  - b. Tables
  - c. Figures
  - d. Footnotes / endnotes
53. The thesis word count excludes:
- a. Appendices (if the content is appropriate to an appendix and not a continuation / extension to part or all of the thesis).
  - b. Bibliography / reference list.

- c. Abstract.
- d. Acknowledgement / dedication.
- e. The table of contents.

## Thesis binding

54. If required the thesis should be submitted in a temporary binding which is sufficiently secure to ensure that pages cannot be added or removed. A thesis submitted in a temporarily bound form should be in its final form in all respects save the binding.
55. Following successful examination the final thesis must be presented in a permanent electronic format before the degree may be awarded. In such cases, the student 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.

## Submitting creative work

56. Where the student's own creative work forms, as a point of origin or reference, a significant part of the intellectual enquiry, the presentation and submission of the thesis may be partly in other than written form. Creative work may be undertaken for instance in fine art, design, engineering and technology, architecture, creative writing, musical composition, film, dance or performance (this is not intended as an exhaustive list).
57. The final submission should be accompanied by some permanent record, such as video, photographic record, musical score or diagrammatic representation and, where practicable, should be included within the thesis.
58. The final submission should include a copy of the edited text(s) or collection of artefact(s), appropriate textual and explanatory annotations, and a substantial introduction and critical commentary which sets the text in the relevant theoretical, historical, critical or design context. The thesis itself must conform to the usual scholarly requirements and be of an appropriate length (see above).

## The Viva

59. The viva voce is the formal defence of a candidate's research before a panel of examiners following the formal submission of the thesis for examination.

60. 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).
61. Normally the viva 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.
62. A student will normally be examined orally on their thesis and on the field of study in which their research lies.
63. The oral examination will normally be held in the UK. In special cases, the Chair/Deputy Chair of RDC may give approval for the examination to take place abroad or via Skype.

## Pre-viva

64. As soon as submission of the final thesis is completed, the Graduate School Officer will undertake to make arrangements for the viva and establish the availability of the previously approved examiners and independent chair.
65. The Graduate School Officer will notify the student, supervisory team, independent chair and examiners of the date and location of the viva.
66. The Graduate School Officer will send a copy of the thesis and the University's regulations to each examiner, together with the Preliminary Examiner Report on a Thesis form (RD5P) and any appropriate guidance.
67. Each examiner must read and examine the thesis and submit the Preliminary Examiner Report to the Graduate School Officer at least five working days before the viva is held.
68. 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 oral examination.
69. 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 student or any member of the supervisory team should do so only via the Graduate School Officer.

70. Once all Preliminary Examiner Reports (RD5P) have been received by the Graduate School Officer, they will be circulated to the other examiners before the viva takes place.
71. A viva may be postponed if all Preliminary Examiner Reports have not been submitted to the Graduate School Officer in good time before a viva is due to take place. In these circumstances a new date must be arranged as soon as possible.
72. If an examiner has to withdraw from a viva they should notify the Graduate School Officer as soon as possible in order that nomination of a new examiner can take place. The candidate should be kept informed of any changes to examination panels or to the date of the viva.
73. A candidate can request that one member of the supervisory team be present at the viva as an observer, but they may not take part. The candidate must give written authorisation to the Graduate School Officer before an invitation will be issued to the named supervisor. It is entirely the student's choice whether to invite a supervisor to be present.

## Conduct of the viva

74. Where a student is ill and cannot attend the viva, they must notify the University, providing documentary evidence, and the University will reschedule the examination.
75. Where for reasons of disability or comparable valid cause the Chair/Deputy Chair of RDC is satisfied that a student would be under serious disadvantage if required to undergo an oral examination, an alternative form of examination may be approved. Such approval must not be given because a student's knowledge of English is inadequate.
76. 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/Deputy Chair of RDC will consider the matter, if necessary in consultation with the examiners and take appropriate action.
77. The viva will be conducted by the examiners and will be chaired by an independent staff member of the University.
78. Recording of the viva will not normally be permitted.
79. Examiners may elect to indicate informally their decision on the result of the examination to the candidate, but they must make it clear that the

formal notification of the outcome will be communicated by the Graduate School Officer following processing of the relevant Examiner Decision form (RD5DEX, RD5DEX-P, RD5R-DEX).

## The independent chair

80. The role of the independent chair is to ensure that the examination is conducted with due regard to fair play and in compliance with the University's regulations for postgraduate research students.
81. The independent chair will act:
- a. As a source of experience and guidance to the examiners about the conduct of the examination;
  - b. To ensure the examiner reports relating to minor or major amendments and provisions relating to re-submission are completed and signed by all relevant parties; and
  - c. To complete a report on the viva, and ensure all completed forms and reports are submitted to the Graduate School Officer after the viva.

## THE VIVA OUTCOMES

82. Where the examiners agree, they will complete and 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 Chair of RDC to be satisfied that the outcome chosen is correct.
83. Where the examiners do not agree, separate reports and recommendations should be submitted.
84. Following completion of the examination the examiners may decide that:
- a. The candidate be awarded the degree.
  - b. The candidate be awarded the degree subject to minor amendments being made to the thesis within 3 months to the satisfaction of the examiners.
  - c. The candidate be awarded the degree subject to major amendments being made to the thesis within 6 months to the satisfaction of the examiner.



- d. The candidate be awarded the degree subject to major amendments being made within 12 months to the thesis to the satisfaction of the examiners, without an oral examination.
  - e. The candidate be awarded the degree subject to major amendments being made within 12 months to the thesis to the satisfaction of the examiners, with an oral examination.
  - f. In the case of a PhD examination, the candidate be awarded the degree of MPhil subject to the presentation of the thesis within 6 months amended to the satisfaction of the examiner.
  - g. The candidate not be awarded the degree and not be permitted to be re-examined.
85. Where the agreed recommendation of the examiners is b, c, d, e, or f they must provide clear detail on the Examiner Decision form (RD5DEX, RD5DEX-P or RD5R-DEX as appropriate to the award being examined) on any requirements for amendments. The candidate will be required to respond on these points. The required amendments will be forwarded to the candidate and supervisory team by the Graduate School Officer along with the formal confirmation of the outcome of the viva.
86. Examiners should note that additional requirements can be introduced subsequent to the examination, but examiners may elect to jointly provide clarification and additional feedback on the required amendments, normally within 5 working days of the viva.
87. Where the examiners' decision is not unanimous, a sub-committee of RDC may be convened to confirm the outcome in line with the options below:
- a. Accept a majority decision (if the majority recommendation includes at least one external examiner);
  - b. Accept the recommendation of the external examiner; or
  - c. Require the appointment of an additional external examiner.
88. Further information relating to examination outcomes, further definition of the available outcomes, posthumous award and re-examination can be found in the regulations for postgraduate research students.

## COMPLETION

89. 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.
90. Conferment of the award is conditional on receipt by the Graduate School Officer of all of the following:

- a. A PDF version of the thesis for deposit in the University Library's institutional repository;
  - b. A completed and signed British Library registration form, permitting full participation in the UK thesis service; and
  - c. A signed draft certificate, including the wording of the thesis title, agreed by the candidate and the Chair of the RDC.
91. Following the award of the degree, the Library, on behalf of the Graduate School Officer must:
- a. 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; and
  - b. Lodge the PDF version of the thesis in the electronic institutional repository.
92. Where a candidate has previously had an application approved for the thesis to remain confidential for a period after completion of the work (see Guidance note #4), the thesis will immediately on completion of the programme of research, be retained by the University on restricted access and for a time not exceeding the approved period, only be made available to those who were directly involved in the project.

# Guidance Note 11: Misconduct, appeals and complaints

## Academic misconduct

1. Solent University is committed to helping and supporting students understand the expectations associated with academic writing and provides advice, guidance and self-help material, so that students can fully understand what is considered unacceptable behaviour. Doctoral students are expected, with the support provided by the University, to make themselves fully aware of what constitutes good academic conduct and consequently what academic misconduct entails.
2. In order to protect the standard and integrity of its awards, the University will identify any incidence that meets the definition of academic misconduct and will bring this to the attention of the student. The University would consider any incidence of academic misconduct at the level of a postgraduate research degree as very serious. Where proven, the University will impose an academic penalty under the Student Academic Misconduct Procedure (see Academic Handbook Section 4L).

## Misconduct in research

3. As stated above, there is an expectation at this level of study that doctoral students 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 the University to any case of academic misconduct by a doctoral research student which is upheld after investigation.
4. The University defines research misconduct to include, but not be limited to:
  - a. Plagiarism.
  - b. Collusion or concealment of research misconduct by others.
  - c. Falsification, fabrication, corruption or distortion (including misrepresentation of data and/or results and/or interest and/or involvement).
  - d. Replication.
  - e. Failure to obtain, adhere to, or breach of ethical approval.

5. Research misconduct can be further defined as:
  - a. Failure to follow accepted procedures or to exercise due care in carrying out research in relation to research subjects.
  - b. Improper handling and safeguarding of privileged or personal information collected during the research.
  - c. Unauthorised use of information which was acquired confidentially.
  - d. Deviation from good research practice where this may result in harm to humans, animals or the environment.
  - e. Publication of data or results known to be or believed to be misleading .
  - f. Misquotation or misrepresentation of other authors.
  - g. Inappropriate attribution of authorship.
  - h. Fraud or other misuse of research funds or research equipment.
  - i. Attempting, planning or conspiring to be involved in research misconduct.
  - j. Inciting others to be involved in research misconduct.
6. Doctoral students who fail to obtain all relevant permissions to conduct their research will be considered in breach of the University's ethical approval procedure.
7. Doctoral students who suspect misconduct should report it through the appropriate Dean or Director (<https://www.solent.ac.uk/research-innovation-enterprise/researcher-support/research-integrity>)
8. Doctoral students should recognise that good practice in research includes reporting concerns about the conduct of research and should co-operate with any investigation of misconduct in research when requested.

## Appeals procedure

9. The appeals policy and procedure governing doctoral students are held within the University's Regulations for Postgraduate Research Students (Academic Handbook, 2R).
10. A doctoral student may make a formal appeal to the Complaints and Appeals Manager to have the following academic decisions reconsidered under this policy:
  - a. A decision to withdraw a student through lack of academic progress and / or failure to engage.
  - b. A decision to suspend a student due to ill-health.
  - c. The outcomes of an assessment, including viva examination, transfer panel and annual monitoring review.

11. An appeal must be lodged by the student within 20 working days of the date of the formal communication confirming withdrawal, suspension or notification of an examination decision. Appeals cannot normally be lodged by a third party acting on behalf of the student.

## Complaints

12. Where a student is dissatisfied with their learning experience or with the services provided by the University they may follow the University Complaints Policy and Procedure (see Academic Handbook, section 2N and 4N).

# Guidance Note 12: Tier 4 Visa

## Introduction

1. All students seeking advice relating to visa and immigration should contact the International Support Team in the first instance by either contacting [internationalsupport@solent.ac.uk](mailto:internationalsupport@solent.ac.uk) or visiting the Student Hub, located in the Andrews Building.
2. Support from the University for a visa application does not guarantee the approval of a visa application from the Home Office.
3. The University, as a Tier 4 Sponsor has certain responsibilities and rules which it is required to follow by the Home Office. The University's [UKVI Tier 4 Compliance Handbook](#) sets out how the University meets its duties in respect of Sponsor License and specific University Policy relating to Tier 4 sponsored students.

## Admission

4. Upon acceptance of an offer to study, students requiring a Tier 4 student visa to study in the UK are asked to pay a deposit of £3,000 before the Admissions and Enrolment Team can raise a CAS number (Confirmation of Acceptance to Study). A CAS is confirmation the University is supporting a student's visa application and a mandatory requirement for Tier 4 visa applications.
5. Copies of all original documentation are required before raising a CAS; the original documents will need to be verified at registration. Once all documentation has been received raising a CAS number can take up to three working days.
6. Students must meet with University Admissions and Enrolment Team at the start of their course to complete their registration. Failure to do so will result in Tier 4 sponsorship being withdrawn and the visa cancelled.
7. Students may register and commence their studies with the University whilst their Tier 4 visa application is pending with the Home Office (if the visa application was made in the UK and prior to their previous visa expiring). However, they must show evidence that they have a current application

- with the Home Office and sign the 'Tier 4 visa disclaimer form' when they enrol.
8. If a student's visa application is later refused by the Home Office, their registration at the University is terminated immediately.

## Changes to registration status

9. The University informs the Home Office of all suspended or withdrawn international students holding a Tier 4 visa. Students with an illness exceeding a consistent six week period would be required to suspend their registration. For further information on Home Office Tier 4 Policy, students are advised to visit Solent University's International Team, [internationalsupport@solent.ac.uk](mailto:internationalsupport@solent.ac.uk) for further information.

## Contact details

10. The University is required to hold up to date contact details for Tier 4 visa students. If a student's contact details change (address, phone number, email), they need to log into the [portal to update](#).

## Attendance monitoring

11. The University is required to monitor the attendance of Tier 4 visa-sponsored students. In alignment with this requirement students and supervisors are expected to meet on a regular basis (usually every six weeks) and are required to keep a written record of all their supervisory meetings. Students and supervisors must be able to show such records to Doctoral Student Administration on request and at each Annual Monitoring point.
12. A student who fails to attend meet with their supervisor regular or who fails to engage with their studies will be referred to UKVI Compliance for action, which could include withdrawal from their course of study.
13. Supervisors who are concerned by a student's lack of engagement with their research should contact Doctoral Student Administration immediately.
14. Students are permitted leave during University closure periods (Christmas) and Bank Holidays, (not summer). In addition to University closure periods, Postgraduate Research students are permitted to take a further 35 days annual leave and should contact Doctoral Student Administration for more information

## Visa extensions

15. Students who need to apply to extend their student visa should seek advice from the International Support Team at the earliest possible opportunity. Students are strongly advised to apply for their Tier 4 student visa through the University's 'check and send' service, available through the International Support Team.
16. A student may need to apply to extend their visa to complete their course, for example once the outcome of their viva examination is known. Please note, the University is only able to continue/extend Tier 4 sponsorship if a student's continued participation is required on the course e.g., the student is required to maintain contact with their supervisor (as per guidance note 11).
17. The University calculates end of registration dates on CAS applications by the thesis submission date plus three months to take into account time for the viva examination.
18. If a course of study requires an ATAS certificate and a student needs to make a new Tier 4 visa application they must make a new ATAS application and clearance must be granted before a new CAS can be issued. Students will also need to make a new ATAS application if they change their area of research or switch to one of the courses that requires ATAS. Please see the [ATAS portal page](#) for more information.
19. If student 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 Graduate School Officer to seek advice immediately with regards to the implications this will have on their visa.
  - a. Students awarded an MPhil are not permitted to extend their Tier 4 visa.
  - b. Students failing without the right to resubmit are not permitted to extend their tier 4 student visa.

## Working during studies

20. Most Tier 4 students 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, research students are only outside of term time when periods of leave, as per note 15 have been granted.



21. Tier 4 visa students 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.

## Doctorate extension scheme (des)

22. The Doctorate Extension Scheme (DES) is designed to allow students who have almost finished their PhD to apply for an additional 12 months of Tier 4 (General) immigration permission, enabling them to look for employment, set up a business or start work in the UK.
23. Please note, students have a short window to apply for a DES visa and the timing of the application is important. Students who are interested in the scheme should contact the International Support Team at least two-months prior to your viva examination to arrange a meeting to start preparing documents and discuss the timing of their visa application.
24. For more information and eligibility students should contact the International Support Team or view the [University Portal](#).

# Guidance Note 13: PhD by prior publication

## Introduction

1. This guidance provides potential applicants, students, 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 University's Regulations for Postgraduate Research Students.
2. The University does not award PhDs by Publication.
3. The PhD by Prior Publication allow people 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.
4. 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. 'Traditional' PhD students undertake training in research methodology and research practice as part of their programme of study, while the PhD by Prior Publication student will have undertaken this training and academic development prior to coming to Solent or have developed these skills alongside their professional role at Solent 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.

## General information

5. 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.
6. Applicants may defer entry once accepted to the next entry point. Applicants may defer for up to 12 months, but must do this in the

knowledge that the University may not be in a position to offer a place to study at a later stage, or may amend the previously proposed supervision arrangements.

7. A key part of the application review process is to determine whether the University 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.
8. The University does not accept applications that present any part of a thesis by Prior Publication in a language other than English

## PhD by prior publication eligibility

### The application

9. Applications are made online using the same process as that for the 'traditional' PhD except as outlined below (see Guidance note #4) and the Research Degrees Admissions [webpage](#)).
10. 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 as outlined in Guidance note #10 and which must be in the public domain prior to registration on the award.
11. Examples of materials acceptable for publication submission include but are not limited to:
  - a. Referred articles in journals
  - b. Monographs
  - c. Chapters in books
  - d. Chapters in conference proceedings with an ISSN
  - e. Books
12. 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.

### Entry criteria: Prima facie stage

13. The award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy by Prior Publication shall be open to applicants who are members of Solent University 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.
14. The body of research outputs must:
  - a. 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.
  - b. Be at least equal to the length of a standard PhD thesis (see Guidance note #10).
  - c. 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.
15. 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 the University 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 the University to provide appropriate supervision and resources.
16. The prima facie evaluation will be undertaken by the Doctoral Coordinator 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:
  - a. That there is a prima facie case for admission to the degree of PhD by Prior Publication.
  - b. 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.
  - c. That there is no prima facie case for admission to the degree of PhD by Prior Publication.
17. By recommending that there is a prima facie case for admission, the panel are confirming that there is evidence that the applicant:
  - a. Meets the entry criteria.

- b. 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.
  - c. Is likely to meet the required standard for a PhD.
  - d. Includes evidence of a unifying theme across the publications.
  - e. Includes evidence of originality.
  - f. Includes evidence of research skills equivalent to those expected of a 'traditional' PhD student in the relevant discipline.
  - g. Has proposed a suitable PhD title.
  - h. That there is a suitable supervisor available.
18. In the event of any issues arising regarding the eligibility, the proposal should be referred initially to the Doctoral Review Panel.
19. Following the prima facie and interview element of the admission process the Doctoral Coordinator will make arrangements to confirm the supervisory provision.

## Registration

20. Applicants accepting an offer to submit for a PhD by Prior Publication must follow the registration and induction process outlined in Guidance note #4.
21. Students 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 outlined in Guidance note #8.
22. 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 (see Regulations for Postgraduate Research Degree Students).
23. No less than two months' notice of intention to submit for examination should be given. The student 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 (RD5E) (see Guidance note #10).

## Tuition fees

24. The PhD by Prior Publication shall be subject to the University's reduced annual 'writing-up' fee. Staff seeking the fee from their Faculty or School must undertake to obtain authorisation from the Dean of the relevant

Faculty or School and submit the completed form to the income team prior to attempting to register.

25. 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.

## The role of the supervisor

### Doctoral Review Panel

26. The nominated Director of Studies (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 student. 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.

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

28. The DoS will:

- a. Guide the student in the final selection of publications for inclusion in the submission;
- b. Support and advise on the development of the framing document / introductory section;
- c. Guide the student in relation to the coherence of the body of work to be submitted;
- d. Advise the student in relation to any research training requirement, for example sessions available through the Researcher Development Programme on preparing for the viva;
- e. Make arrangements for the examination, including nomination of examination panel, in discussion with the student; and
- f. Support the student through the examination process and any required amendments following examination.

## Requirements of the degree

### The form of the examination

#### 29. The award consists of two parts:

- a. A substantial body of published work (published texts or outputs):
  - i. 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.
  - ii. Such publications may include academic journal articles, chapters, monographs, scholarly editions of a text, published reports, creative works in relevant areas, or other artefacts.
  - iii. Where the student 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).
  - iv. Publications included in the submission for the PhD by Prior Publication should not have been used in the submission for another degree.
  - v. 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.
- b. 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:
  - i. 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.
  - ii. Stress the coherence of the publications, linking them to the methodology adopted.
  - iii. 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.
  - iv. Include a section relating to the candidates 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.
  - v. In cases where the works are jointly authored by the candidate and other persons (see above), this section should also describe the roles played by these authors, and contain

- percentage estimates of the student's input into each jointly authored work.
- vi. 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.

## Examination procedures

30. The regulations and procedures governing the examination of PhD theses also apply to the PhD by Prior Publication (see Guidance note #10), except that the examiners' decisions are limited to the following:
- a. That the candidate be awarded the degree;
  - b. That the candidate 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
  - c. That the material submitted in the portfolio falls short of the requirements, and the candidate not be awarded the degree and not be permitted to be re-examined.

## Guidance for examiners

31. These guidelines should be read in conjunction with the Regulations for Postgraduate Research Students.
32. The examiners' main tasks may be interpreted as to:
- a. Evaluate the intellectual merit of the candidates cited published works.
  - b. Establish if a satisfactory case is made for coherence between publications.
  - c. Assess the contribution to knowledge represented by the publications and made apparent in any critical appraisal in the framing document
  - d. Evaluate the rigour with which the candidate has contextualised and analysed their publications in any critical appraisal in the framing document.
  - e. Evaluate the appropriateness of the methods employed in the research and the correctness of their application.
  - f. Assess the candidate's contribution to the various phases of the research embodied in any multi-authored works.
  - g. Establish the candidate's 'ownership' of the published work and appreciation of the state of [historical and current] knowledge within the candidate's research area.



- h. Assess the candidate's research skills in terms of their potential as a continuing, independent researcher.
33. 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 oral examination should be used as an opportunity to question the candidate on how conclusions were reached.

### Format of submission for examination

34. The thesis should be presented for examination in the standard format outlined in Guidance note #10 .

### Final submission: binding PhDs by Prior Publication

35. The agreed final version of the research work should be presented according to the standard University guidelines described in Guidance note #10.

# Guidance Note 14: Bursary Awards

## General Information

1. This Guidance Note has been produced to provide guidance on the procedures for setting up a bursary award for doctoral research students. Questions about bursaries for doctoral students should be directed in the first instance to [research.admissions@solent.ac.uk](mailto:research.admissions@solent.ac.uk) (applicants) or [research.degree@solent.ac.uk](mailto:research.degree@solent.ac.uk) (registered students).
2. A bursary award for doctoral research students normally includes payment of annual tuition fees, an annual stipend (maintenance grant) and an annual development & training allowance, usually for a standard period of registration for a PhD (3.5 years full-time, 6 years part-time) subject to satisfactory progress and continued registration as specified in the [Postgraduate Research Student Regulations](#).
3. Awards are typically only made for full-time study. Part-time sponsored bursaries may occasionally become available.
4. The bursary stipend each year will normally be aligned to the recommendation of the Research Councils (RCUK). The current RCUK stipend levels and indicative fees are available at <https://www.ukri.org/skills/funding-for-research-training/>.

## Marketing & advertising a competitive doctoral bursary opportunity

5. All advertisements for a competitive bursary should be forwarded to the Graduate School for placing on findaphd.com. The Graduate School is able to assist with drafting, and also to arrange for advertisement of doctoral bursary opportunities on the Solent website. All adverts should be clear as to the extent of the support available (tuition fees, stipend, etc) and where any restrictions on applicants may apply (ie. Home/EU applicants only). All adverts should carry a named contact for informal enquiries and links to the University's 'How to apply' webpage for formal applications.

## Application and offer

### The application

6. All applicants should use the Applying for a Research Degree [webpage](#) to apply for any advertised PhD opportunity (see Guidance note #4). Applications are subject to the University's Regulations for Postgraduate Research Students. Shortlisted applicants must attend an interview (arrangements may be made for interviews to be conducted remotely).
7. The formal offer letter to study as a doctoral student will be sent by the University's Student Admissions team and the applicant will need to follow instructions on confirming their acceptance of the place and completing pre-enrolment tasks.
8. On acceptance the student will also complete a Student Bursary Agreement form with the University (RD1BF-S (full-time) / RD1BP-S (part-time)).

### Funders

9. Funders will enter into an agreement with the University by completing a Sponsor Bursary Agreement form with the University (RD1BF (full-time) / RD1BP (part-time)).
10. The University enrolls doctoral students in October. Sponsor Bursary Agreements will typically be completed before the application deadline. For entry sponsorship agreements should be in place by June the same year. Where a bursary will be competitively advertised the sponsor agreement should typically be in place at least 3 months before the relevant application deadline.
11. Payments of annual bursary awards must be received by the University in advance of the relevant intake date in order for the student to be able to register.

### Commercial / partner sponsored awards

12. Commercial / partner sponsored students will have their fees, stipend (maintenance grant) and training & development allowance paid to the University by the sponsor. The University's stipend is aligned to the [RCUK](#) minimum levels. Typically industry / business sponsored awards will be

available to Home/EU applicants only. Further guidance on international recruitment is available from the Solent University International Office.

13. For further details about establishing a commercial / partner sponsored research student bursary please contact the Graduate School at either [research.degree@solent.ac.uk](mailto:research.degree@solent.ac.uk) in relation to individual sponsorship agreements which are not part of a wider funded project or [research.support@solent.ac.uk](mailto:research.support@solent.ac.uk) if the bursary will form part of a funded project.

## University sponsored awards

14. Where Faculties, Schools or Services have allocated provision for a doctoral studentship to be funded, if an overseas student is appointed, the Faculty or School will be responsible for ensuring the extra fees involved as overseas fees will be paid from appropriate sources if the student has overseas status, unless clearly stated otherwise through the advertisement, application and interview process.
15. When costing a university bursary award, Faculties, Schools or Services should ensure that, where applicable, the stipend (maintenance grant) is calculated at the correct (RCUK) rate, plus fees, (to include provision for the annual increment to both) and a sum of money for consumables, running costs and training & development allowance appropriate to the opportunity being advertised is included.
16. For further details about establishing a university research student bursary please contact the Graduate School at either [research.degree@solent.ac.uk](mailto:research.degree@solent.ac.uk) in relation to individual sponsorship agreements which are not part of a wider funded project or [research.support@solent.ac.uk](mailto:research.support@solent.ac.uk) if the bursary will form part of a wider funded project.

## RCUK and other research funder sponsored awards

17. RCUK / other research funder sponsored students will have their fees, stipend (maintenance grant) and training & development allowance paid to the University by the sponsor. The University's stipend is aligned to the [RCUK](#) minimum levels. Typically RCUK / other research funder sponsored awards will be available to Home/EU applicants only. Further guidance on international recruitment is available from the Solent University International Office.

## Tuition fees

### Internal bursaries

18. In order that the doctoral student is not invoiced for the tuition fees, the School will need to complete the University Finance Office sponsorship form to confirm that they are supporting the student's fees in each period of registration/academic year and send the form to the Income Team, copied to [research.admissions@solent.ac.uk](mailto:research.admissions@solent.ac.uk). For more information on the forms and processing of internal payment of fees see the [Tuition Fees](#) pages of the university website.

### External bursaries

19. In order that the doctoral student is not invoiced for the tuition fees the completed and signed Sponsor Bursary Agreement Form should be submitted to the Income Team for each period of registration /academic year. For more information contact [research.admissions@solent.ac.uk](mailto:research.admissions@solent.ac.uk).

### Tuition fees beyond the funded duration

20. Where a student exceeds the duration of the funded period in the Bursary Agreement form the responsibility for the tuition fees shall become the responsibility of the student, excepting where separate arrangements have been agreed with the funder, until either the student submits their thesis for examination or the maximum registration period for the award is reached, whichever is sooner.

21. Where on submission of the thesis for examination the examiners require amendments to the thesis, the fees attached to the outcome will be the responsibility of the student, excepting where separate arrangements have been agreed with the funder.

22. Where a funder agrees to extend responsibility for tuition fees and / or stipend beyond the provisions of the Sponsor Bursary Agreement, the University shall be advised in writing of the extension and the conditions applied to it in a 'continuation of payment' agreement and any associated monies should be received by the University in advance of the period of additional registration.

## Bursary stipends & tax

### Tax status of the doctoral student stipend

23. Providing that the bursary stipend payment (either full-time or part-time) is exclusively for the duties being performed in relation to the course and not in any way linked to that of employment with the University, then it can be classed as a student maintenance grant and paid without tax and National Insurance (NI). Any additional duties undertaken by the student outside the scope of the programme of study, such as any assistance to teaching included as a condition of the bursary award, would need to be paid separately under a contract of employment via payroll.

### Stipend payments

24. The following procedure for payment of the stipend must be implemented once a candidate has been selected:

- a. On selection of an applicant for a bursary they will need to complete a form with their payment details and submit it to the Graduate School, Andrews Building, East Park Terrace ([research.admissions@solent.ac.uk](mailto:research.admissions@solent.ac.uk)).
- b. In addition, two copies of the Student Bursary Agreement must be signed by the Student, Dean of Faculty or School and Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research and Knowledge Exchange. One copy will be held by the student and the other retained in the Graduate School.

25. Only when the completed form and agreement have been received by the Graduate School will authorisation be given for a quarterly payment schedule to be set up by the Purchase Ledger system using the Ad-Hoc/Miscellaneous Payments, New Account Application form. Quarterly payments are made on the first working day of each quarter, in advance. The latest day in any month for arranging payment is usually two weeks prior to the payment date; although there may be exceptions due to Bank Holidays and University closure periods. Please contact the Graduate School with any queries. New applications made after the closing date will normally have to wait until the end of the subsequent month, but the candidate will then receive the whole quarterly payment including any outstanding monies from the start of the bursary.

26. Doctoral students in receipt of a stipend will not receive a payslip.

## Changes to registration

27. Any changes to registration (mode of study, i.e. full or part-time, suspension, extension or withdrawal) must be approved by the Chair of RDC (see Guidance Note #5) and where appropriate the tuition fee and stipend payments and remaining duration of the award will be adjusted accordingly for the remaining study period.

## Suspension

28. In the event that a doctoral student in receipt of a bursary has to suspend their studies, then notification should be made immediately to the Graduate School. Depending on the period of interruption to their studies it may be possible to halt further payment until the student returns to study. When completing the 'Application for Suspension of Studies for Research Degree' (RD4SU) form (available at [www.solent.ac.uk/research-innovation-enterprise/research-degrees/guidance-for-doctoral-research](http://www.solent.ac.uk/research-innovation-enterprise/research-degrees/guidance-for-doctoral-research)). Students in receipt of a bursary, please contact the Graduate School ([research.degree@solent.ac.uk](mailto:research.degree@solent.ac.uk)) to discuss the potential period of suspension and any effect on the bursary payments.

## Change of mode

29. Bursary awards are typically only made to full-time doctoral students, however, due to a doctoral student's circumstances it may be necessary during their studies for them to change registration mode to part-time. Approval is sought via the 'Application for Change of Mode of Study for Research Degree' (RD4MS) form (available at [www.solent.ac.uk/research-innovation-enterprise/research-degrees/guidance-for-doctoral-research](http://www.solent.ac.uk/research-innovation-enterprise/research-degrees/guidance-for-doctoral-research)) Students in receipt of a bursary, please contact the Graduate School ([research.degree@solent.ac.uk](mailto:research.degree@solent.ac.uk)) to discuss how this will affect bursary payments.

## Extension

30. If a student does not submit their thesis for examination within the University's regulatory maximum registration period they may wish to make an Application for Extension to Period of Registration for Research Degree (RD4E) (available at [www.solent.ac.uk/research-innovation-enterprise/research-degrees/guidance-for-doctoral-research](http://www.solent.ac.uk/research-innovation-enterprise/research-degrees/guidance-for-doctoral-research)). Students in this situation will normally already have ceased receiving bursary funding.

31. If, exceptionally, a Funder makes a separate agreement to undertake continuation of payment beyond the agreed duration, this should be communicated by the Funder to the Graduate School in a 'continuation of payment' agreement, ([research.degree@solent.ac.uk](mailto:research.degree@solent.ac.uk)). The student should be advised how this will affect bursary payments.

### Submission

32. Where on submission of the thesis for final examination (viva) the examiners require amendments to be made to the thesis, the fees attached to the outcome will be the responsibility of the student.

33. If, exceptionally, a Funder makes a separate agreement to undertake payment of fees and / or bursary during post viva amendments this should be communicated by the Funder to the Graduate School and the student should be advised how this will affect bursary payments.

### Withdrawal

34. A student withdrawing from the programme of research (following the withdrawal procedure as laid out in the Regulations for Postgraduate Research Students and the online Guidance for Research Degree Students) or ceasing to be a registered student of the University for reasons other than the above (e.g. failure to re-register, exclusion following Withdrawal of Services, as a result of failure at Annual Monitoring, Transfer Review or interim examination) will no longer be entitled to stipend payments and may be liable to repay any amounts of stipend which were overpaid.



## Related documents, useful websites & further reading

General Information for Doctoral Students:

<https://www.solent.ac.uk/research-innovation-enterprise/research-degrees>

Academic Handbook, section 2R: [Regulations for Postgraduate Research Students](#)

UK Research Integrity Office: [www.ukrio.org](http://www.ukrio.org)

UK Research Integrity Office: Good practice checklist for researchers:

<http://ukrio.org/wp-content/uploads/UKRIO-Recommended-Checklist-for-Researchers.pdf>

Intellectual Property Office: <http://www.ipo.gov.uk/>

Solent University: [Intellectual Property Rights policy](#)

University Library: <https://libguides.solent.ac.uk/researchers>

Solent Researchers library guide on Reference Management:  
<https://libguides.solent.ac.uk/c.php?g=657980&p=4665038>

International support at Solent University:  
<https://www.solent.ac.uk/international/international-students>

Academic Handbook 2S: [University ethics policy](#)

Academic Handbook 2L: [Student Academic Misconduct Policy](#)

Procedure 4L: [Student Academic Misconduct Procedure](#)

Doctoral student tuition fees and funding:

<https://www.solent.ac.uk/research-innovation-enterprise/research-degrees/fees-and-funding>

Tuition fees and funding: <https://www.solent.ac.uk/finance/tuition-fees>

Fee and payment regulations: Home, EU, EEA and Island students:

<http://portal.solent.ac.uk/documents/academic-services/compliance/2019-20-fees-regulations-for-home-eu-and-island-students-compliance-5.12.17.pdf>

Fee and payment regulations: Overseas students

<http://portal.solent.ac.uk/documents/academic-services/compliance/2019-20-fees-regulations-for-overseas-students-compliance-5.12.17.pdf>

Research Degree (RD) forms available on line:

<https://www.solent.ac.uk/research-innovation-enterprise/research-degrees/guidance-for-doctoral-research>

How to apply: <https://www.solent.ac.uk/research/research-degrees/how-to-apply>

Findaphd.com - Doctoral Loans:

<https://www.findaphd.com/funding/guides/uk-phd-loans-scheme.aspx>

## Useful contacts

Doctoral coordinators

How to contact Doctoral School Coordinators

**Business & Law**

Dr Whysni Basuki, [Whysnianti.basuki@solent.ac.uk](mailto:Whysnianti.basuki@solent.ac.uk)

**Media, Culture and the Arts**

Dr Donna Peberdy, [donna.peberdy@solent.ac.uk](mailto:donna.peberdy@solent.ac.uk)

**Environment and Engineering**

Dr Laurie Wright, [laurie.wright@solent.ac.uk](mailto:laurie.wright@solent.ac.uk)

**Social Policy**

Dr Karen Burnell, [karen.burnell@solent.ac.uk](mailto:karen.burnell@solent.ac.uk)

**Human Function and Health**

Dr Shelley Duncan, [shelley.duncan@solent.ac.uk](mailto:shelley.duncan@solent.ac.uk)

**Graduate School, [research.degree@solent.ac.uk](mailto:research.degree@solent.ac.uk)**

How to contact doctoral student administration

research.admissions@solent.ac.uk: Applicants should direct all enquiries and correspondence here until they have completed enrolment.

research.degree@solent.ac.uk: Registered students should direct all enquiries and correspondence here after completing enrolment.

## Doctoral student representatives (2020 - 2021)

### How to contact Doctoral Student Representatives (Research Degrees Committee)

Zia Ullah, [zia.ullah@solent.ac.uk](mailto:zia.ullah@solent.ac.uk)

Sergio Morales-Heredia: [sergio.morales-heredia@solent.ac.uk](mailto:sergio.morales-heredia@solent.ac.uk)

## Doctoral student services

### How to contact Doctoral Student Services

Student Hub: [student.hub@solent.ac.uk](mailto:student.hub@solent.ac.uk)

International Student Advice: [internationalsupport@solent.ac.uk](mailto:internationalsupport@solent.ac.uk)

Access Solent: [access@solent.ac.uk](mailto:access@solent.ac.uk)

Solent Futures: [solent.futures@solent.ac.uk](mailto:solent.futures@solent.ac.uk)

Library: <https://libguides.solent.ac.uk/chat>

Wellbeing: [wellbeing@solent.ac.uk](mailto:wellbeing@solent.ac.uk)

Counselling: [counselling.assessment@solent.ac.uk](mailto:counselling.assessment@solent.ac.uk)

ICT Service Desk: [ict.servicedesk@solent.ac.uk](mailto:ict.servicedesk@solent.ac.uk)

Learning Technologies Help Desk: [LT.help@solent.ac.uk](mailto:LT.help@solent.ac.uk)