University of Sheffield | Research, Partnerships & Innovation

Code Of Practice For Research Degree Programmes 2025 – 26

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Foreword

I would like to extend a very warm welcome to those who have just joined the University. I am delighted that you have joined our academic community; I hope that you have a great time here in our wonderful, hilly city. I'd also like to welcome back those who have studied with us before.

Postgraduate research students are central to the life of the University. We are sure that your time at the University of Sheffield will be both fruitful and enjoyable. We hope that you will encounter the thrill of doing original research and that the skills and experience you develop here will serve you well throughout your career.

This Code of Practice is the key reference document for policies, regulations and good practice relating to research degree programmes. It sets out the University's expectations of research students, as well as the responsibilities of the University. The primary academic relationship you will have will be with your supervisory team, and it is important that you develop and maintain this. You will find a wide range of facilities to support the academic, social and welfare aspects of your period of study at the University.

Although the primary focus of your time as a postgraduate research student will be your research project, it is essential that you also engage with the wider training and development opportunities that are available to you, under the aegis of the Doctoral Development Programme, as this will equip you with the necessary skills and aptitudes to support you throughout your research degree and after you graduate, as a high level professional in whatever career you choose to pursue. Do not forget that whilst your own research will need concentration and focus, it will also be important for you to broaden your horizons by taking the opportunity to learn about the fascinating research, teaching and knowledge exchange being done by colleagues in your school, your faculty, and the wider university. You should also look out for a range of specific schemes we provide to further support our PGRs and enable them to get involved in the work of the University. We have recently developed a new contract and guidance for our PGRs who are GTAs.

Every research student has their own needs, and the University seeks to meet these by providing a supportive academic and pastoral environment. It is important that you pay attention to your own wellbeing and seek support when necessary.

I hope that this Code of Practice will be a useful source of advice and guidance throughout your time as a research student at Sheffield.

Good luck with your research and enjoy your graduate experience with us!

Professor John Flint
Deputy Vice-President (Research)

Supporting the PGR community

The postgraduate researcher (PGR) community is supported at all levels of the University. Overall leadership for, and development of, PGR policy rests with the University Postgraduate Research Committee (UPGRC), which in turn reports to the Senate Research & Innovation Committee. The UPGRC has strategic oversight of the role of PGRs in the University, and of the link to research strategy, and is responsible for policy and good practice around recruitment and provision.

Our schools and faculties provide student-facing support and ensure that the student experience is high quality, with appropriate practice, training, and standards.

PGRs can access support at different times from their supervisory team, from a personal tutor or adviser, from the school PGR Lead and from professional services staff in their academic school or centre.

Wellbeing and accessing disability support

Accessing university support

At the University of Sheffield, we are committed to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of our student communities and to providing meaningful activities to support you to manage your own wellbeing. We offer a range of practical and emotional support, which is available to you at any stage of your university journey, if you need it.

As well as talking to your supervisory team, e.g. supervisor or personal tutor, you can access health and wellbeing support, including exploring your own wellbeing, with your faculty-based Wellbeing Advisors.

Some doctoral researchers are unsure whether it is appropriate for them to access the services managed by Student Support Services; please be assured that all support is intended for PGR students, as well as those on undergraduate or postgraduate taught programmes.

If you don't need to make use of our dedicated support services right now, the University provides other services and resources to help you stay well and in control of your degree.

We have a specific Researcher Wellbeing programme, which offers wellbeing sessions, online resources and social activities throughout the year. You can keep up with researcher wellbeing activities via our researcher development newsletters, and by following us on Bluesky and Instagram – @reswellsheff

We also have a number of peer-support networks, including for disabled and ill researchers, PGR parents and researchers engaged in emotionally demanding research. If you think one or more of these might be helpful to you, please take a look at the networks webpage.

Accessing support if you have a disability

If you have a disability the University can support you via its Disability and Dyslexia Support Service (DDSS). A Disability Advisor will work with you to develop a Learning Support Plan that is specifically tailored to your needs during your research journey.

We also understand that it can be daunting starting somewhere new, so we offer group mentoring opportunities to PGRs with a disability, or those who suspect they may have one, to share experiences, and access peer support.

Find more details on our disability support webpage

Ways to manage your own wellbeing

In addition to the wide range of support available to you through the University, there are things you can do yourself to support your wellbeing.

Transitioning from a taught academic course or other employment to independent, self-directed research can be challenging; you might find it difficult to manage your time or to know what an appropriate "pace" is. Your supervisory team will be able to help you get to grips with managing your degree, so please do discuss it with them.

It is likely that your research degree will enable you to work more flexibly than your previous job or studies. This means that you might not always work typical office hours, depending on what best suits you and the requirements of your research. No matter how you choose to organise your work, finding and maintaining a healthy work-life balance is crucial. It can be easy to fall into an unhealthy pattern of overlong days, so keep an eye on the hours that you are working. Remember, too, that you are entitled to take annual leave, so please do so! Taking proper breaks not only helps you to manage your wellbeing, but can also have a positive impact on your work.

You might have moved cities or countries to undertake your degree. This, combined with the sometimes solitary nature of postgraduate research, can lead to you feeling lonely or isolated. Please remember that you're not alone! Some of your fellow researchers may be feeling the same way as you. It is likely that you'll have the opportunity to participate in school seminar series and other regular events such as PGR journal clubs - getting involved in these can help you to get to know people outside of your immediate research project and to feel more connected to your academic community.

The Wellbeing Service Blog is a great way to stay informed, feel connected and be inspired about the benefits of positive wellbeing. Choose from articles, useful resources, good reads, and apps to help you to stay well and supported throughout your university experience.

Other resources

There are lots of ways that the University can help you and that you can help yourself, but there are also some excellent external sources of support that might be of use to you during your degree. These include:

The Wellbeing Thesis website, funded by the Office for Students and Research England, which provides an excellent range of resources to support you as you begin and progress through your postgraduate research

Student Minds, a national charity supporting the mental health of students. This website has lots of useful information and resources to help you manage your mental wellbeing, and advice about supporting friends and loved ones.

NHS Live Well, for general tips, advice, and resources to help you to look after your physical and mental health. Samaritans offer a listening service over phone or email to talk to someone in confidence.

If you feel that you are in need of more urgent support the Sheffield Mental Health Guide can point you in the right direction.

We know that doctoral research can be fascinating, rewarding, exhilarating, exhausting and stressful - sometimes all at the same time. We want to support you throughout the whole of your degree and are committed to providing the services and resources to do just that. If you need help, please do reach out, if you possibly can.

Values and Research Culture

The University of Sheffield is an organisation guided by strong values. We are ambitious and strive for excellence in all we do. We believe in the value of working collegially and champion an inclusive and diverse community. We have a strong sense of social responsibility, and we aim to ensure that our activities are sustainable. We are open and transparent about the decisions we make.

The University of Sheffield sets itself high standards for its research culture. As a research-intensive university, we strive to support robust, reliable, ethical, and reproducible research. We are fully committed to the ongoing development of a culture that supports and nurtures research integrity in accordance with the Concordat to Support Research Integrity and our commitment to open research is reflected in our membership of the UK Reproducibility Network and led by our Research Practice Lead. We have also used Research England funding to support a number of projects aimed at enhancing the experience and outcomes of our PGRs (see Enhancing Research Culture projects).

The University of Sheffield is committed, through our One University approach, to building a diverse community of researchers from a broad range of backgrounds, demographics, and cultures, and creating an inclusive, supportive, and collaborative environment in which they can succeed and flourish. We are proud of the external recognition we have received for our work on gender equality (Silver Athena SWAN award) and LGBT+ inclusion (Stonewall Top 100 employer) but are not complacent and recognise that we have much more to do to become a truly diverse and inclusive institution. We continue to take action to improve race equality through our Race Equality Strategy and Action Plan and our membership of the Yorkshire Consortium for Equity in Doctoral Education. We are striving to improve the experience of disabled students and staff through our Disability Equality Strategy and Action Plan.

The University of Sheffield is committed to putting the development and wellbeing of our researchers at the heart of our vision for world-leading, impactful research. We fully support the principles of the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers and hold a European Commission HR Excellence in Research Award.

We strive to create a positive environment that supports and encourages the wellbeing of our research students, whilst also empowering individuals to be responsible for their own wellbeing. We have a comprehensive range of services available to support students' wellbeing, see section 'Wellbeing'.

We believe it is important to be clear about expectations and have developed a statement setting out the joint expectations of PGRs and supervisors. We are committed to establishing a research culture that: enables students to plan their thesis submission within the tuition fee-paying period; is supportive of individual needs; encourages a healthy work-life balance and facilitates the wellbeing of students and supervisors. To help achieve this, we have established a transparent and realistic set of core competencies for all PGR students and offer a Doctoral Development Programme that provides the training required to meet these expectations.

The University of Sheffield is committed to promoting the highest standards of behaviour and has codes of conduct for both staff and students. Bullying, harassment and sexual misconduct in any form is unacceptable and there are mechanisms in place for reporting and investigating incidents. A high quality and trusting professional relationship with their supervisory team is the bedrock of a PGR student's ability to carry out high quality research and is a crucial element to ensuring their mental wellbeing. We have clearly articulated the responsibilities of students, supervisors, and schools, see section 'Supervision'. All academic supervisors are required to undertake ongoing supervisory training, based on their experience.

The University of Sheffield has high expectations for the quality of its provision for PGR students and has correspondingly high expectations of its PGR students. PGR students are a vibrant, core part of our research community and integral to our research excellence. We are committed to ensuring that our PGR students feel valued, supported, have a strong sense of belonging, and also a prominent voice in developing our good practice through mechanisms including PGR representatives and our PGR Voice survey.

Within this Code of Practice, further information is available on the University's expectations of its PGR students and their rights and responsibilities. Students should ensure that they have read and understood the information in the following sections in particular:

- Research – including good academic practice; ethical approval; rights and responsibilities
- Supervision – including responsibilities of the student, supervisor, and school
- Thesis and examination – including how to prepare and submit a thesis and examination procedures

Statement of Expectations for Postgraduate Researchers and Supervisors

The University recognises the huge contribution that PGRs make to the institution, and places them at the heart of its vision to deliver life-enhancing research, innovation, and education. This recognition is demonstrated in the eight commitments made to PGRs in order to facilitate them to achieve their potential and to create an ambitious, inclusive, supportive and collaborative research culture.

This document is intended to set out the key expectations for PGRs and their supervisors, and is a distillation of the policies, regulations and guidance set out in the Code of Practice. This can be used as a starting point for conversations between students and their supervisors when establishing and maintaining their partnership throughout the duration of the research programme.

Joint Expectations of PGRs and Supervisors

- Establish the parameters of the relationship (including meeting frequency / responding to emails / feedback etc.).
- Agree a project plan including milestones / deadlines, with the aim of submitting the project within the time frame set out at the outset of the programme.
- Agree a training and development plan and revisit periodically.
- Attend supervisory meetings on a regular basis.
- Keep a record of supervision meetings.
- Respond to communications in a timely manner.
- Maintain an open dialogue, discussing any issues at an early stage.

Expectations of PGRs

- Take ownership of the development and completion of the research project within the time frame set out at the outset of the programme.
- Familiarise yourself with your programme milestones and deadlines, building them into your project.
- Consider what skills development is necessary in order to successfully complete the project and build towards career goals. Complete the DDP requirements, and the TNA with reference to the PGR Core Competencies.
- Comply with all relevant school and institutional policies and processes, as well as those of your funder, if applicable.
- Uphold the principles of research ethics and integrity and adhere to the University's Policy on Good Research and Innovation Practices.
- Be aware of your own wellbeing and seek support if you have any issues or concerns. More details can be found in the PGR Code of Practice.

Expectations of Supervisors

- Undertake compulsory PGR Supervisor Development activities in relation to supervision.
- Provide guidance on the project plans to enable completion within the timeframe
- Ensure an appropriate induction for the student takes place, outlining relevant policies /processes / standards, and options for pastoral support.

- Recommend training / development opportunities (bearing in mind previous academic attainment / necessary skills to complete project / career aspirations).
- Encourage the student to engage with the wider research community in order to build a peer support network (particularly important for lone scholars / part-time and off-campus students) and raise awareness opportunities to develop writing and presentation skills (journals / conferences).
- Outline the parameters of acceptable working patterns in relation to the research project with an appreciation of work-life balance.
- Provide academic guidance on all facets of research.
- Monitor students' progress and ensure that they are aware of any areas for improvement, through constructive and timely feedback, and provided with appropriate support.
- Be alert to the wellbeing of the student and maintain a knowledge of relevant services to signpost to, if necessary. Complete all administrative requirements in a timely manner.

More details can be found in the Code of Practice.

Research, Partnerships & Innovation

Research, Partnerships & Innovation (RPI) is a professional service department which supports academic staff research, PGR students and knowledge transfer. The department includes a PGR Support Team, which is responsible for providing advice and guidance to research students, academic and professional support staff, and other professional services departments on a wide range of areas which are covered by this document, including the following:

- Changes to student status
- Confirmation Review and academic progress monitoring
- Appointment of examiners
- Thesis submission and examination
- Research skills training, including the Doctoral Development Programme (DDP)
- Scholarships and funding

The Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes contains a wide range of information for PGR students, supervisors, and schools. The Code of Practice is updated annually and distributed as a PDF to schools, who should ensure that it is distributed to all new students. Supervisors should also be sent the Code of Practice and should follow the guidance therein. The Code of Practice can be downloaded from the Research, Partnerships & Innovation website as a single PDF, or as a series of stand-alone webpages, each covering a different topic. Occasionally it is necessary to introduce essential changes to the Code of Practice during an academic year. Where this is the case, the relevant section of the website will be updated and, where significant changes are made to processes, information will be disseminated to students via their school.

Peer mentoring for PGRs

If you're a first year postgraduate researcher, PGR Connect will match you with a more experienced PGR who can provide you with informal peer support outside of the staff or supervisor relationship. See PGR Connect for further details

students.sheffield.ac.uk/communities-belonging/pgr/connect

Types of Research Degrees

The University offers a range of higher degrees by research, mostly at doctoral level. Most can be studied on a full-time or part-time basis. Students may not register for study for any other degree or qualification of any university whilst they are undertaking a programme of study or research at the University of Sheffield including within the submission pending period or whilst away on a leave of absence, unless they have special permission of the Senate, which must be obtained in advance.

Joint research degrees

The University has regulatory provision to offer jointly awarded research degrees with another university. Such awards can be agreed only at the cohort level and cannot be negotiated on an individual student basis.

Students undertaking jointly awarded programmes must spend a minimum period of 12 months at each institution.

Schools wishing to request a collaborative research degree programme should first review the Framework for Research Collaborative Provision. Schools should note that setting up any form of collaborative agreement or programme takes considerable time and also requires formal approval at both faculty and University level. Students should not be recruited until all approvals and agreements are in place. Any related queries should be directed to the PGR Support Team in Research, Partnerships & Innovation.

UKRI-funded studentship opportunities

The University has several studentship schemes funded by UKRI. These are either Centres for Doctoral Training (CDTs, now known as Doctoral Focal Awards) or Doctoral Training Partnerships (DTPs, now known as Doctoral Landscape Awards). Many of these funded programmes include additional elements such as specialised cohort training, integrated taught modules, compulsory placements, etc. Students on these programmes will receive further information on the structure of their degrees from their programme lead, and specific programme regulations can be found in the University Calendar. Further information on UKRI-funded studentships is available on the postgraduate study webpages.

PhD or MD by Publication

The University offers the degrees of PhD or MD by Publication for staff candidates only, as an alternative to the standard PhD/MD routes. This is a one-year programme which is designed to enable recognition of the research activities of those members of staff who have already published work, but have not completed a PhD or MD. Further details are available on the RPI website. Members of staff who do not have an existing body of publications may still apply for admission to a standard higher degree by research on a part-time basis, provided they meet the eligibility criteria.

Student candidates who wish to submit a thesis that incorporates published (or unpublished) papers as part of their standard PhD may submit a publication-format thesis. Information on appropriate thesis formats is available in the Code of Practice.

Study away from Sheffield

The University's expectation is that students should normally be present on campus during their programme of research, unless they are registered as a Remote Location or Majority Off Campus student.

However, there may be times when a student needs to undertake research away from the University, for example, as part of a compulsory placement, or when undertaking fieldwork or data collection.

Similarly, students in receipt of CASE awards or other industrially linked or sponsored studentships will normally be required to work for an agreed period at the premises of the collaborating company or outside body. The duration and timing of these periods should, as far as possible, be established at the outset, so that an appropriate timetable for undertaking the research and writing the thesis can be drawn up. Students should also consult the 'Planning for time abroad' section for further information. Periods of off-site research planned by international students must be reported to the PGR Support Team for visa purposes.

The General Regulations for Higher Degrees by Research permit a student to pursue all or part of their programme of research at a specified place away from the University, subject to formal approval at the admissions stage.

Within the scope of these regulations the University has developed arrangements to appropriately administer and monitor this activity. The choice of arrangement depends on the proposed programme of research and whether the student is classified as a UK or non-UK student.

Remote Location Scheme for international students

The University operates a Remote Location scheme to allow International students not resident in the UK to study for a University of Sheffield MPhil or PhD through research carried out at an overseas institution. Candidates spend most of their programme of research at the remote location site and should not spend more than eight consecutive weeks in the UK at any time during their degree. Expectations regarding any required attendance at Sheffield, for example, to attend induction events or examinations, should be discussed and agreed with the candidate during the application process.

To qualify for consideration for admission to the Remote Location scheme candidates must satisfy all the following criteria:

- be an international student
- meet the normal entry requirements for MPhil or PhD at the University of Sheffield
- prove access to the necessary library, computing and other research facilities required to successfully undertake the programme of research within the required period
- demonstrate appropriateness and adequacy of the proposed supervisory arrangements acceptable to the relevant faculty of the University
- comply with the terms and conditions on Remote Location study

Approval of a Remote Location candidature should be sought **prior to admission** through the relevant faculty. It cannot be approved via a change of candidature. Further information is available on the postgraduate study webpages.

Other research away from the University (Majority Off-Campus)

UK students who wish to pursue part of their programme of research away from the University, and International students who do not qualify for the Remote Location scheme, must gain faculty approval to register as a Majority Off-Campus student. Faculty approval is given on a case-by-case basis and is based on a written submission by the supervisor with appropriate school support.

The academic progress requirements of candidates undertaking research away from the University will be the same as for candidates based in Sheffield, and the requirement for students to fulfil the regulations relating to the Doctoral Development Programme also applies.

In all cases, academic approval for a candidate to undertake research away from the University must be gained during the application process from the appropriate faculty.

Registration and Fees

Registration of new research students

Registration is the process by which the University confirms that it holds correct information about its students, their programmes of study, and the arrangements for the payment of their tuition fees.

All full-time research students who are not British or Irish nationals are required to register in person on commencing their studies following a Right to Study check. Part-time students who require a Right to Study check can do so either in person or remotely.

Full-time British or Irish nationals and University staff candidates are required to register at the commencement of their research, but are not required to register in person.

Students entering the University at the beginning of the Autumn Semester are expected to register at the start of the Semester (see the registration webpages).

Full-time students whose research commences part way through the academic year and whose nationality is not British or Irish, will be contacted by the Student Registration and Records Team to confirm where to register.

Before registering, all students must provide satisfactory evidence of their ability to pay tuition fees and other dues.

Students requiring formal confirmation letters relating to registration status and immigration matters should contact the Student Services Information desk (SSiD)

Please note that it is not possible to amend a student's registration start date once they have registered for their degree. If a student is aware that their start of registration date is incorrect (i.e. they have arrived earlier or later than originally expected), and they wish to amend it, this should be done prior to registering. Students should complete the Student Registration and Records Enquiry form for further advice and guidance.

Registration of continuing research students

All full-time and part-time research students are required to register annually. The re-registration of all research students is online, approximately two months prior to the registration start date.

Permission to re-register will be withheld in cases where students have monies outstanding to the University in respect of tuition fees and tuition-related fees.

Payment of tuition fees

Tuition fees for sponsored students are paid direct to the University by the sponsoring body. The holders of university scholarships which cover tuition fees are regarded as sponsored students for this purpose.

Students who intend to pay their fees from their own or family funds which they have control of, or through a bank loan, are regarded as self-sponsored. Self-sponsored students may choose to pay their fees either in full, or in two instalments.

Students must arrange payment of their tuition fee in advance, online, as part of their pre-registration tasks; students will not be able to pay their tuition fee when registering in a registration venue.

Postgraduate doctoral loans are available to Home students. Further information and details about eligibility is available on the government's webpages.

Full details of the University's fee rates and payment plans are available here.

Periods of registration

The minimum, normal and maximum registration periods for research degrees are defined as follows:

- **Minimum period of registration** is the shortest allowable time between initial registration and submission of the thesis for the specified research degree programme, as defined in the University Regulations. Permission is required for a student to submit their thesis before the end of their minimum period of registration. Tuition fees are payable for the duration of the minimum period of registration.
- **Normal period of registration** and tuition fee payment is the typical or optimum time between initial registration and submission of the thesis for the specified research degree programme. Tuition fees are payable for the duration of the normal period of registration. The University's expectation is that ALL research students should submit their thesis within the normal, i.e. tuition fee-paying, period of registration
- **Maximum period of registration** is the time limit for submission of the thesis for the specified research degree programme, as defined in the University's Regulations. Students who do not submit their thesis before their time limit will be withdrawn, unless they are granted an extension to their time limit (extensions are only granted in very exceptional circumstances).

The normal registration period for tuition fee-paying purposes and the time limit for submission of the thesis are specified on a student's offer letter. At present, most full-time PhD students have a normal/tuition fee-paying period of between three and four years and a maximum registration period of four years, depending on the funder and the nature of the project and training required. Projects should be designed from the outset to be completed within the fee-paying/funded period and regularly monitored to ensure timely submission. This will ensure that students do not have to work unfunded during the latter stages of their degree.

Periods of registration and time limits for research degree programmes

Please note: these periods of registration include the writing of the thesis to the point of submission and apply to standard programmes. There are an increasing number of non-standard PhDs, where the periods of registration may be longer than the standard. This may be due to additional training and/or placements, or other funder requirements. Students are advised to consult their offer letter which will specify their exact normal and maximum registration periods.

DEGREE	CANDIDATURE	MINIMUM	NORMAL	MAXIMUM (TIME LIMIT)
PhD	Full-time	2 years	3-4 years*	4 years*
PhD	Part-time	4 years	6-8 years*	8 years
PhD	Full-time University Staff	2 years	3 years	4 years
PhD	Part-time University Staff	2 years	2 years	8 years
PhD with an integrated Masters qualification	Full-time	3 years	4 years	4-5 years*
MPhil	Full-time	1 year	2 years	3 years
MPhil	Part-time	2 years	4 years	6 years
MPhil	University Staff	1 year	1 year	6 years
EdD	Part-time	4 years	6 years	8 years
MD	Full-time	21 months	2-3 years*	3 years
MD	Part-time	42 months	4-6 years*	6 years
MD	Full-time University Staff	21 months	2 years	3 years
MD	Part-time University Staff	2 years	2 years	6 years
EngD	Full-time	3 years	4 years	4 - 5 years*
DEdCPsy	Full-time	3 years	3 years	4 years
DClinPsy	Full-time	3 years	3 years	4 years

* The normal and maximum registration periods for a full-time PhD, PhD with Integrated Masters or EngD vary according to factors such as funder and training requirements and students should refer to their offer letter for their precise duration.

Tuition Fees and other fees

Tuition fees are payable for the duration of the normal period of registration and are collected at the beginning of each year. If a student submits their thesis after passing the minimum period of registration, but before completing the normal period of registration, a refund of tuition fees will be calculated on a pro-rata basis, based on the thesis submission date.

In exceptional circumstances if a student does not submit their thesis by their time limit (maximum period of registration) they may be granted a time limit extension to continue on with their programme. Fees for time limit extensions are incurred on a pro rata basis, depending on the length of the extension. Extension periods of less than a month are charged the full fee for the month. See Time limits and extensions

Additional fees will be incurred should a student be required to resubmit their thesis following their viva examination. See Examination outcomes

Extension and resubmission fees can be paid by credit or debit card online. Queries regarding payments should be addressed to: studentcustomers@sheffield.ac.uk.

Fees in 2025-26

Extension to time limit	£516
Resubmission without oral	£375
Resubmission with oral	£450
Staff Candidate submission	£530

(Please note that these fees are increased annually from 1 August)

Changes to Students' Status

Sponsored students

Students who receive financial sponsorship for their degree, e.g. from an overseas government or a UK Research Council, should be aware that any changes to their student status will need to be notified to their sponsors and may require their sponsor's approval prior to being considered by the University. Students are responsible for requesting permission from their sponsor. This includes requests for the following: leave of absence, including parental leave, time limit extensions, changes to mode of attendance, changes to supervisors or research topics, transfers and withdrawals. Students should be aware that this may delay the consideration of their request.

Change of candidature

Changing circumstances may mean that it is no longer appropriate for a student to remain registered according to their original candidature. The most common of these changes are as follows:

- Change of mode of attendance, i.e. from full-time to part-time (and vice versa). Please contact the Student Fees Team for any financial implications if you have a student loan from Student Finance England.
- Changes to a student's scope of research, degree programme (including length of fee-paying period) or school

Students must request permission from their school and faculty to change their candidature using the Change of Candidature (PGR) form available from the Research, Partnerships & Innovation website. Students are asked to note that once an application is submitted to the faculty it will normally take approximately two weeks for faculty consideration and processing but may take longer depending on the circumstances. Students will be notified by Research, Partnerships & Innovation whether their change of candidature has been approved.

Before applying to change any aspect of their candidature, the student should consult their supervisor for advice.

Sponsored students are responsible for checking that their sponsor will permit the change of candidature and should not assume that this will be the case. Some sponsors do not permit any changes to the student's original candidature to be made.

UKRI-funded students are advised to check the information for scholarship holders web pages for further guidance.

Change of mode of attendance

Students may apply to change their mode of attendance from full-time to part-time study and vice versa, but should be aware of the following restrictions:

- Part-time study is calculated on the basis of 50% of the full-time equivalent degree only. Where a student is changing from full-time to part-time study, the revised time limit (and, where relevant, fee-paying period), will be calculated from the date of the change of mode of attendance
- The University does not offer an option to study part-time to international students who are studying in the UK on a Student or Tier 4 visa.
- Students who are funded by UKRI or the University of Sheffield are not normally permitted to move to part-time within the last 6 months of their degree unless there are exceptional circumstances, for example, due to medical reasons.
- Students may not change their mode of attendance if they are in an extension period, or have submitted their thesis and are undertaking post-viva corrections.
- Students are not permitted to change their mode of attendance to Remote Location once they have commenced their research degree. Remote Location candidature must be applied for from the start of the student's degree.
- Students who wish to change their mode of attendance to University Staff candidate must provide a copy of their university employment contract. Changes from student to staff candidate cannot be backdated more than 12 months.
- Members of University staff who are undertaking a higher degree by research are normally registered on a part-time basis, i.e. 0.5 FTE, as they are also employed by the University and therefore not expected to undertake their research on a full-time basis.

Change of research topic, degree programme or school

Students may apply to make certain changes to their research topic, degree programme or school, but should be aware of the following guidance:

- Students may only transfer to another programme of study via a change of candidature at the same, or lower, FHEQ level.
- Requests to change the length of a student's fee-paying period must be formally requested via a change of candidature. This is to ensure that there is faculty oversight of any requests and the reasons for the change are clearly documented.
- Students changing programme will transfer into the new programme of study at the same point in their registration. The student's normal period of registration and time limit will therefore remain unchanged unless the new programme of study is of a different duration.
- Where a student is moving from one school/faculty to another, both the current and the new schools/faculties must confirm that they approve the arrangement.
- Students are only permitted to commence their new programme of study once they have been formally notified by Research, Partnerships & Innovation that their change of candidature has been approved by the faculty and their student record has been updated.

Transferring from PhD or EngD to MPhil

Funded students who transfer from a doctoral-level qualification, e.g. PhD/EngD, to an MPhil, either voluntarily or because of a failed Confirmation Review, should be aware that this may have implications for their scholarship/stipend. UKRI and University-funded students should refer to the Scholarships webpages for further details. Students sponsored by other funders should refer to their sponsor for guidance.

Information for international students on a Student or Tier 4 visa

Please note that the UKVI has introduced study conditions for students studying on a Student or Tier 4 student visa. For the University to comply with the UKVI's sponsorship duties, schools should only approve changes of programme for students on a Student or Tier 4 student visa if one or more of the following criteria can be met:

For students with a Tier 4 visa applied for before 5 October 2020:

- The new programme of study is related to the previous programme of study for which the student was granted permission, i.e. it is part of the same subject discipline and/or it represents a deeper subject specialism; or
- The previous and new programmes combine to support the student's genuine career aspiration.

For students with a Student visa applied for on or after 5 October 2020:

- The new programme of study is related to the current programme of study for which the student currently has permission, i.e. it is part of the same subject discipline and/or it represents a deeper subject specialism; or
- The new programme supports the student's genuine career aspiration.

If the relevant criteria above cannot be met the student may be required to remain on their current programme of study or re-apply for a new visa from overseas. Furthermore, the conditions of a student's Student or Tier 4 visa may prevent them from studying a new course until they have applied for, and obtained, a new Student or Tier 4 visa.

Anyone with a Student or Tier 4 visa concerned about their change of programme should contact an Immigration Adviser in International Student Support, Advice and Compliance. The University is required to notify UKVI of any changes to the degree programme being studied by a student studying in the UK on a Student or Tier 4 student visa.

In the event of an audit by UKVI, schools may be required to provide evidence of the consideration given to the suitability of the student's change of programme in the context of the criteria above, e.g. through email correspondence with the student and/or notes of meetings or discussions.

ATAS requirements for students changing research topic/degree programme

Non-EU/EEA students who request a change to their research topic or their degree programme may require ATAS (Academic Technology Approval Scheme) clearance. **If both the programme title and the research topic are changing and ATAS is required, it must be obtained before the change of candidature can be approved and students are not permitted to commence their new programme or research topic until proof of new ATAS clearance has been obtained and submitted with the change of candidature application.** For this reason, students are advised to check if ATAS clearance is required and apply for an ATAS certificate as soon as possible.

A new ATAS application is needed if the research topic has changed from what is stated on their original ATAS certificate. Students who require ATAS clearance to change their research topic will need to ask their supervisor for a summary which confirms details about their research, which can be used to make an online application. Please note that most visa categories are subject to the requirement to have ATAS clearance for affected courses and to apply for new clearance if the degree programme or research topic changes. This will affect most students who are subject to immigration regulations and not just those with a Student or Tier 4 visa.

Students should contact International Student Support, Advice and Compliance for further information and guidance on the implications of applying to change their research topic. Students can check whether they will require an ATAS certificate by providing course and nationality details here. Non-EU/EEA students who are nationals of countries listed as exempt from ATAS in Appendix ATAS of the Immigration Rules are still considered to be subject to the ATAS requirement if they submitted the application for their current visa before 05 October 2020.

Leave of absence

During the course of their degree, students may encounter difficulties that are outside of their control and that significantly affect their ability to engage with their programme of research. For example, they may become ill or encounter serious personal problems. Students can apply for an authorised leave of absence (LOA) from their programme of research, where appropriate, in order to overcome these difficulties

The University defines a leave of absence to mean an entire cessation of academic work for a defined period of time. Periods of leave of absence do not count towards the time limit for the degree and are considered a suspension of normal academic requirements. During the leave of absence, the student will temporarily leave their programme of study and their student status will be suspended for the duration of the absence. Students will retain access to online resources during their leave of absence, but should not undertake any work that relates to their research degree and supervision should not be provided during a leave of absence. The student's registration will resume at the end of their leave of absence, after they have re-registered with the University.

Although students should not be undertaking any work towards their degree during a leave of absence, it may be beneficial for them to maintain some contact with their school during their leave of absence, should they wish to do so. This can be particularly helpful if a student is going to be away from their degree for a lengthy period of time. However, this should be the student's choice.

Departments should take note of the additional guidance on an inclusive and supportive approach to leave of absence.

For students in receipt of funding, please be aware that a leave of absence may result in stipend payments being paused for the period of leave. A leave of absence may also impact students' visa status; please see below for further details.

Grounds for leave of absence

Students can apply for Leave of Absence (LOA) on the following grounds

- Medical
- Personal
- Parental (maternity/paternity/adoption)
- Academic
- Financial (requests for LOA on financial grounds are normally only approved if a student's financial situation changes due to unforeseen and exceptional circumstances)

Examples of situations for which LOA may be appropriate are as follows:

- Accidents, physical or mental illness (medical grounds) - appropriate supporting evidence is required and a student must be certified as fit to return by the University Health Service before they can re-register with the University (see 'Evidence to support a leave of absence' and 'Returning from leave of absence' below).

- Maternity, paternity, adoption (parental grounds) - supporting evidence is required, e.g. a birth certificate or MATB1 form in the case of maternity leave.
- Bereavement or serious illness of a close family member or sudden and unexpected caring responsibilities (personal grounds)
- Significant personal difficulties, e.g. family crisis, crisis in the student's home country. (personal grounds)
- Unexpected and serious financial difficulties, e.g. devaluation of currency (financial grounds)
- During an ongoing appeal against an assessment result, e.g. a Confirmation Review downgrade, especially if the student is on a Student or Tier 4 visa and is required to leave the country to apply for a new visa before they can continue studying on the MPhil (academic grounds)

Students who wish to undertake a placement that is unconnected to their research project should refer to the guidance on Placements and use the Placements Application Form, not the LOA form.

Examples of situations for which LOA is not normally granted:

- Where a student is undertaking teaching duties.
- To undertake activities that should be covered by the student's annual leave entitlement. For example, to allow a student to go on holiday, move house, get married. See our working and holidays guidance for more information.

How to apply for a leave of absence

Students must apply for permission from their school and faculty to take a leave of absence, or an authorised absence, using the Leave of Absence (PGR) form.

It is essential that students notify their supervisor/school as soon as any difficulties arise that are starting to affect their research and that applications for a leave of absence are made promptly. Requests for retrospective leave of absence will not normally be approved if they date back further than 30 days. It is recognised that there may be times when this is not possible, for example if the student is suddenly taken ill or hospitalised. However, these should be exceptions to the rule.

Absences that are taken without the student having formally requested a leave of absence, or without the leave of absence having been formally approved by the faculty will be treated as unauthorised absences and may lead to action being taken against the student for non-attendance/loss of contact.

Students are expected to submit any leave of absence requests themselves. In exceptional circumstances, a school may be permitted to apply on behalf of a student, if the student is unable to for good reason, e.g. due to ill health, and if they can demonstrate that they have the student's permission to do so.

Students should ensure that they provide as much relevant information as possible when submitting their application, as the application can only be considered on the basis of the information provided. Applications that are incomplete or provide very little detail risk being rejected.

Students and their school will always be notified by Research, Partnerships and Innovation whether the leave of absence request has been approved or rejected by the faculty. Students should normally await this confirmation from Research, Partnerships and Innovation before proceeding with the LOA, unless the absence is being taken as an emergency.

Evidence to support a leave of absence

Students must submit appropriate documentary evidence to support their leave of absence request. For a leave of absence on medical grounds, a medical or doctor's note is required that covers the entire period of leave of absence requested. Medical evidence should normally be from the GP or medical service with responsibility for treating the student. Medical evidence obtained from sources that are not treating the student, e.g. from an online provider, is likely to be rejected.

Applications on medical grounds without an appropriate medical note will not normally be approved. Where the medical evidence is not in English, a translation must be provided. This is the student's responsibility.

If a student has a Learning Support Plan (LSP) for an existing disability or long-term medical condition, and therefore has already provided evidence to the University's Disability and Dyslexia Support Service, they would not normally be required to provide new evidence for leave of absence requests relating to this condition. However, any leave of absence requests not addressed by the LSP would require separate medical evidence.

Where a request is made on grounds other than medical, but is considered to be a medical leave of absence, the University will notify the student that the grounds for their request must be changed to medical and that fitness to resume evidence will be required.

Minimum period of leave of absence

The University expects all students to manage minor illnesses and other short-term absences themselves, e.g. coughs, colds, sore throats, and to exercise the ability to plan for such contingencies. To that end, the minimum period of leave of absence that will normally be granted is four weeks (i.e. 28 days or over in length). Shorter absences may be taken as an Authorised Absence (see below).

Exceptions to the minimum limit will be considered under certain circumstances, such as where there is a statutory requirement. Examples might include:

- Applications for parental leave
- Statutory bereavement/compassionate leave
- To undertake jury service
- If the student has an ongoing and long-term medical condition with symptoms which fluctuate in intensity and impact (this must be evidenced by a Learning Support Plan). Such students may need to take time off in small, regular amounts which, over the course of the degree, would amount to a significant amount of time lost.

Requests for other exemptions to the minimum period of leave of absence, due to very exceptional circumstances that are outside the student's control, may be considered at the discretion of the faculty.

Authorised absences

Short-term absences of under four weeks (up to a maximum of 27 days), should be requested as an authorised absence, or students may use some of their holiday entitlement, depending on the reasons for the absence. Neither option will extend the student's fee-paying period or time limit for their degree; therefore, students will be expected to manage their time accordingly and make up for any time lost due to short-term absences over the remainder of their degree.

For medical absences that are under seven days, students may normally self-certify (unless their school requires otherwise).

Maximum period of leave of absence

A student's research must remain academically viable for the award of a degree to be feasible. Prolonged and lengthy absences from a degree can severely affect the viability of students' research and diminish the chances of a successful and timely submission of a thesis of doctoral standard. As a result, the maximum amount of leave of absence that can be granted, by regulation, is normally no more than two years (excluding parental leave). Sponsored students should also check that their sponsor doesn't impose a lower cap on the amount of leave of absence they can take. Requests for leave of absence beyond two years, on grounds other than parental, will not normally be considered unless there are exceptional circumstances. Requests for more than 12 months' leave of absence at a time will not be approved.

A Special Cases Committee will consider requests for leave of absence where any of the following conditions apply:

- The student has already been granted more than two years' leave of absence OR the student's current request would mean they exceed two years of LOA in the period for which the application is being made (other than where this was on the grounds of parental leave).
- The student's request is not supported by their supervisor and/or school, or the school has raised concerns about the viability of the student's research should further leave of absence be taken.
- The student's request is made towards the end of their time limit and it is clear that the student will not be able to complete their degree without also requiring an extension to their time limit.

The Special Cases Committee will also consider requests for individual and/or cumulative time limit extensions of 12 months (non-Covid) or 18 months (with Covid), see 'Time limits and extensions'. Limits to both LOAs and time limit extensions apply equally to students regardless of their mode of attendance.

The Special Cases Committee will consider the feasibility of the student's request, taking into consideration whether the request is supported by the student's school, the continued viability of the student's research, and the likelihood of a successful submission. The Committee may request additional information, where required, to help them reach an informed decision, e.g. an evaluation of the student's progress to-date and a thesis plan, however, students should always ensure that their leave of absence application provides sufficient detail for an informed decision to be made by whomever is considering their request.

The Special Cases Committee meets once per month; therefore requests that require consideration by the Special Cases Committee will take longer to consider and students should be aware that there may be a delay in them being notified of the outcome.

Where a leave of absence request is rejected, the student will be informed of the reason why and will be required to either return to their degree or, if they are unable to immediately return to their degree, to withdraw. Students required to withdraw may subsequently apply for readmission at a later date. Requests for readmission will be carefully considered, taking into account factors such as the reasons for withdrawal and the viability of the research project. However, there is no automatic right to readmission following a withdrawal.

Returning from leave of absence

All fully registered students returning from a leave of absence must re-register with the University before recommencing their studies. This is also a requirement for students with a Student or Tier 4 visa at any stage in their degree. Information on re-registering is available on the registration webpage. Students returning from a short authorised absence of under four weeks are not normally required to re-register.

Students returning from a leave of absence, or authorised absence longer than seven days, on medical grounds must obtain a certificate from the University Health Service to confirm that they are well enough to resume their studies before they will be permitted to re-register with the University. This applies regardless of whether or not the student is registered with UHS or is registered with another GP practice. UHS can be contacted on +44 114 222 2100 or email health.service@sheffield.ac.uk.

Students who are registered with the University Health Service should book an appointment with UHS in order to verify that they are fit to resume their studies. Students who are not registered with UHS should book an appointment with their own healthcare professional to obtain medical evidence that they are fit to resume, and must send this to UHS at sheffieldccg.uhs.loa@nhs.net. If the fit note has been issued by a non-UK medical practitioner, the UHS will need to assess it first in order to confirm that the student is fit to resume their studies, so these cases will take longer to process and students may be asked for additional evidence. Any medical evidence obtained outside the UK must be translated into English before it is submitted to UHS.

If students are unable to obtain evidence of fitness to resume from their own GP, for example if their GP has stated that they do not need to reassess the student's fitness for work at the end of the leave of absence, they should contact UHS to discuss how to obtain fitness to resume. UHS will confirm whether they can issue a fit note on this basis, or whether the student will require an appointment with them either in person or by telephone.

In addition to the above practical steps, schools should consider whether any additional support is required for a student returning from a leave of absence, particularly if they have been away for a long period of time. Advice and guidance on this is available here.

Phased return from leave of absence

There may be occasions when a student is returning from a leave of absence due to ill health or maternity leave and is not yet able to undertake effective research on a full-time basis. If this is likely to be for a short period of time only, a phased return to study may be considered. In practice, a student would need to apply for a leave of absence, which, if granted, would be applied to the student's record on a pro-rata basis, i.e. it would cover only a proportional amount of time lost due to these exceptional circumstances, and not the entire period during which these circumstances were a factor. Phased returns must be supported by medical evidence, for example a note from the student's medical practitioner, or a Learning Support Plan.

International students studying on a Student or Tier 4 student visa should note that it may not be possible to support a phased return, due to the additional requirements of immigration regulations. Students on a Student or Tier 4 visa are expected to either be studying full time, or on a full leave of absence.

Students should check with their funder whether or not they will support a phased return from a leave of absence, as not all funding bodies will permit this, or they may only support a phased return over a limited period.

If it is unlikely that a student's circumstances will improve, it may be considered more appropriate for the student to consider requesting a change of mode of attendance from full time to part time, subject to any restrictions e.g. from the student's financial sponsor or immigration regulations.

Sponsored students

Students who receive financial support to undertake their research degree, i.e. those funded by UKRI, a UK Doctoral Loan, an employer, or an overseas government, should ensure that they are aware in advance of any rules or restrictions on their ability to apply for a leave of absence and that they may be required to notify their sponsor that they are applying for a leave of absence.

Students funded either by the UKRI or the University of Sheffield should note that they are normally not allowed to have more than 12 months' funded leave of absence throughout the duration of their scholarship, except under certain conditions, and that leave of absence should not normally be taken during the period between the end of their funded/fee-paying period and their time limit, unless there are exceptional circumstances. Students should refer to the UKRI's Terms and Conditions of Training Grants document, or additional guidance issued by their Research Council.

Students funded by a Doctoral Loan who return from a leave of absence part way through an academic year will need to make a new Student Finance application for that academic year, in advance of their return. Registration with a future date cannot be confirmed and therefore the new application will not be reviewed until after re-registration. This may take up to six weeks to release any future loan instalments. If a student experiences any financial difficulties during this time, please refer to the University's Financial Support webpage.

Financial implications for taking a period of LOA

In most cases, students' stipend payments are suspended during a period of LOA and will resume when the student re-registers at the end of their LOA. This means that the student is normally unfunded during the period of their LOA. However, there are some exceptions to this rule. Students who receive a maintenance stipend from either the UKRI or the University of Sheffield are entitled to a certain amount of paid leave if their leave of absence is for medical or parental reasons, as well as for a range of other specific situations, and provided they are still within their tuition fee-paying period. For further details on paid leave entitlements, please refer to the relevant policy documents contained in the Code of Practice.

Students who receive maintenance funding from another sponsor, for example, an employer, a charity, or an overseas government, must check with their sponsor whether there is any provision to receive additional financial support during a period of leave of absence, as well as whether there are any specific sponsor conditions that must be met. Please note that it is the responsibility of the student to check this, and to ensure that they comply with any sponsor requirements.

Leave of Absence for international students

In addition to the above guidance, international students who are subject to immigration regulations that require them to be studying in the UK, i.e. those on a Student or Tier 4 visa, should note that they must be fully registered and attending in order to meet the requirements of their visa. International students considering applying for a leave of absence are strongly advised to use the leave of absence self-help tool which will provide information on the immigration implications of their request, including whether it will require reporting to the UKVI.

Leave of absence self-help tool

Any outstanding queries should be addressed to International Student Support, Advice & Compliance.

Please note that requests for retrospective leave of absence could raise questions and concerns regarding the effectiveness of school student attendance monitoring procedures.
Any justifications for the amount of time it has taken for a retrospective leave of absence request to be agreed, and if necessary, reported to UKVI will need to be defensible in the event of an audit by UKVI.

Students who require ATAS clearance will need to apply for a new ATAS certificate if their time limit is extended by more than three months due to a leave of absence or cumulative leaves of absence. Please note that most visa categories are subject to the requirement to have ATAS clearance for affected courses and to apply for new ATAS clearance if the course end date is delayed by three months. This will affect most students requiring ATAS who are subject to immigration regulations and not just those with a Student or Tier 4 visa. Please contact International Student Support, Advice & Compliance if you are not sure if you are subject to these ATAS requirements.

International students should note that the University may be required to report Student or Tier 4 visa holders who are on a leave of absence to the Home Office. If the leave of absence must be reported, the Home Office would expect such students to return to their home country for the duration of the leave of absence and will cancel the Student or Tier 4 visa. Such students will need to reapply for a new visa when they are ready to recommence their studies. International Student Support, Advice & Compliance will inform students of the immigration implications of their leave of absence.

Unlike a leave of absence, the University does not consider authorised absences of less than four weeks to be a deferral of the student's studies, as the expectation is that the student will still submit within their time limit, which is not being extended. Therefore, authorised absences will not normally be reported to UKVI or require a new ATAS application. Repeated requests for authorised absences under four weeks will be monitored to ensure that students do not use these to effectively take larger periods of absence without taking a formal Leave of Absence, whereby a report to UKVI may become necessary. In addition, consecutive periods of authorised absence can result in students being escalated for non-attendance under the Visa Attendance Route, whereby they would need to re-engage within a specific timeframe to maintain their registered status.

Likewise, where an authorised absence is immediately followed by a period of LOA, the LOA will be deemed to have started from the first day of the student's combined absence.

Parental Leave

Students who are pregnant should familiarise themselves with the University's Student Pregnancy and Maternity Policy, which outlines their rights and the support the University is required to give them. Students should also advise their school and supervisory team as soon as possible so that they can work together to implement a Pregnancy and Maternity Support Plan, and so that any relevant health and safety issues can be carefully considered and addressed.

All students who are either pregnant, breastfeeding, or have given birth in the last six months must have an individual risk assessment undertaken. This is also a requirement of UKRI Training Grant Terms and Conditions.

Postgraduate research students who are also employed as members of university staff, should refer to the maternity leave policy which relates to staff.

Further information relating to student pregnancy is available here.

Maternity leave

Mothers have a statutory requirement to take two weeks' maternity leave immediately following the birth of their baby. They may take up to 52 weeks' maternity leave in total. Maternity leave can commence at any time starting from 11 weeks before the week of the due date up to the day of childbirth. Arrangements for taking maternity leave should be discussed with the student's supervisory team and school.

Maternity leave is normally taken as a period of leave of absence from the University, which must be applied for before the period of maternity leave commences. Students whose partners are pregnant are also entitled to apply for parental leave. Please note that the normal four-week minimum leave of absence rule does not apply to students taking a leave of absence on parental grounds.

Students are required to submit supporting evidence such as a birth certificate or MATB1 form when applying for a LOA on parental grounds.

International students who are studying in the UK on a Student or Tier 4 visa should refer to the guidance on leave of absence. The immigration rules outlined in this section also apply to those who require maternity leave.

Depending on the student's sponsor, there may be provision for payment of additional stipend during a period of Maternity Leave (see 'Financial support during a period of parental leave' below).

Partner's or paternity leave

Two weeks' partner's or paternity leave is granted to a postgraduate research student who is the partner of a mother or birth parent following the birth of their child. Depending on the student's sponsor, there may be provision for payment of additional stipend during a period of partner's or paternity leave (see 'Financial support during a period of parental leave' below).

Shared parental leave

The University permits students to share their parental leave with their partner provided they are in receipt of a university-funded stipend at the time of the expected birth of the child and provided they and their partner meet the eligibility criteria. Full details of the eligibility for shared parental leave are available from the Code of Practice.

Financial support during a period of parental leave

Many postgraduate research scholarship holders will be entitled to a payment during a period of maternity leave provided they are still within their tuition fee-paying period and receiving a stipend. Students should refer to their funder's terms and conditions for information on what financial support they are entitled to.

UKRI- or University of Sheffield-funded students

Students who are in receipt of a stipend funded either by any of the UK Research Councils (UKRI), or the University of Sheffield are eligible for paid parental leave if they are still within their funded period. Students should refer to the information on 'Suspension of awards and paid leave entitlements' on the following pages:

Information for holders of a UKRI scholarship

Information for holders of a University of Sheffield scholarship

Students funded by other sponsors

Students who receive financial support from a source other than than UKRI or the University of Sheffield, for example, from an employer, a charity, or an overseas government, must check with their sponsor whether there is any provision for additional financial support during a period of parental leave, as well as whether there are any specific sponsor conditions that must be met. Please note that it is the responsibility of the student to check this and to ensure that they comply with any sponsor requirements.

Students who are also employed by the University

Postgraduate research students on the Sheffield Graduate Teaching Contract are entitled to maternity leave and may be entitled to maternity pay as part of the terms and conditions of their employment, subject to meeting the relevant eligibility criteria. Please contact Human Resources who can give advice based on the specific circumstances.

Unfunded students

Postgraduate research students who are either pregnant or adopting a child may be eligible for a one-off support payment from the University, provided they are still within their tuition fee-paying period and are either:

- unfunded and do not have access to statutory maternity pay, or
- funded by a non-University of Sheffield/non-UKRI sponsor and do not have access to a maternity stipend from their scholarship funder, or to statutory maternity pay

An application form is available from the Code of Practice.

Extension to time limits

The University's expectation is that projects should be undertaken that can be fully completed and submitted within the student's tuition fee-paying period (normal period of registration), wherever possible. This includes the necessary training, preparatory work, actual research and writing of a thesis. This expectation should be clearly understood by students, supervisors, and schools from the very beginning of their studies, so that the student's research is planned accordingly to ensure that they submit within their fee-paying period. In addition, regular and effective monitoring of progress milestones by supervisors and schools throughout the programme of research should ensure that students are able to submit their thesis on schedule.

If a student reaches their time limit (maximum period of registration) and has not yet submitted, their registration status will automatically lapse, and they may be withdrawn from the University and not be permitted to continue their degree, or to submit their thesis. If a student tries to submit their thesis after their time limit has expired, even if it is by one day or less, they will be required to apply for an extension and no further action will be taken regarding the submitted thesis until an extension request has been received and approved by the faculty.

A student may apply for an extension to their time limit, but should note that extensions are only granted in **truly exceptional circumstances.** Under no circumstances should a student be led to believe that they will automatically be granted an extension to their time limit. Extensions will only be considered for the purpose of completing and submitting the thesis. Extensions will not be considered where their intended purpose is to undertake work that is unrelated to the student's research degree, for example, to complete additional publications that do not form part of the thesis. Students must apply for time limit extensions between a minimum of one and a maximum of three months before their current time limit expires. Students who apply close to their time limit may not be able to submit their thesis if their extension request is rejected. Extension requests that are received more than three months before the student's current time limit cannot be considered, as it will not be possible to accurately gauge how long they need if an application is submitted too far in advance.

Where exceptional circumstances apply, **the maximum amount of time limit extension that can normally be granted is two years.** Individual and/or cumulative requests for extensions that exceed 12 months (non-Covid) or 18 months (with Covid) will be referred to the Special Cases Committee for consideration. Faculties may grant a shorter extension than the student has initially requested, with any further extensions contingent on evidence that progress has been made during the initial extension.

Extensions should only be considered in response to unforeseeable circumstances that occur that are beyond the control of an individual PGR student, and that adversely affect the student's ability to submit within the expected time limit. There is no guarantee that a time limit extension will be approved, especially if the circumstances could have been mitigated at an earlier stage, for example by applying for a leave of absence, or by the student modifying their research plans to enable a doctoral level outcome.

Examples that could constitute truly exceptional circumstances warranting consideration of a time limit extension are as follows:

- Delays in progress due to unforseeable problems with the degree programme and/or working environment (e.g. moving of offices/buildings, change of supervisor etc.) which are outside of the student's control. The problem must be reported to the appropriate school at the time it occurs, or as soon as possible thereafter (i.e. within one month), to enable appropriate remedies to be sought before extensions become necessary
- Unavailability or breakdown of essential equipment for an extended period, where a student is unable to continue research and the use of alternative equipment or methodologies is not possible

Where the student encounters difficulties (such as equipment failure) at an early stage of the research project, the expectation is that the student should make every reasonable effort to make up any lost time. Difficulties should be documented and reported so that should the student need to apply for an extension closer to their submission deadline there is evidence to support such a request.

In addition, there are a range of circumstances that would normally be considered appropriate for a student to apply for a leave of absence (LOA) rather than a time limit extension. Please refer to the previous section, '[Leave of Absence]' for further details.

Examples of circumstances where an extension **would not normally be considered appropriate are:**

- To enable the student to undertake further active/core research and/or other activities that are not directly related to the completion of their thesis.
- To enable the student to undertake non-research activities such as teaching or conference attendance.
- Where there is a history of poor academic progress or lack of engagement.
- To improve the standard of written English in the thesis, or because the thesis requires proofreading.
- Because of paid employment where the request is based on pressures of work.
- Where the student is registered concurrently for more than one degree and the request is based on other commitments relating to the other degree. (Note: formal Senate approval in advance is also required for a student to be registered for two degrees concurrently).
- Inadequate planning and time management, e.g. where the student has failed to allow sufficient/reasonable time for a supervisor to consider the final draft of the thesis prior to the deadline, or for an external sponsor to approve a final draft of the thesis.
- As a result of holidays, sport, moving to a new house, marriage/honeymoon, or other events that were planned or could reasonably have been expected. Students should use annual leave for events such as this.
- Where the student has regular and ongoing caring responsibilities.
- Computer or other equipment failure or theft where use of an alternative is possible, or loss of work was avoidable.
- Lack of sufficient funds to complete the degree.
- Lack of awareness of the correct policy and application procedures for requesting an extension.

In terms of requests for additional time due to holidays and weddings/honeymoon, the University's expectation is that this should be taken from the student's holiday entitlement. Research students sponsored by UKRI may, subject to the agreement of their supervisors, take reasonable annual leave, not exceeding 30 days, excluding bank holidays and closure days. These UKRI rules may be used as a guide by all full-time research students not subject to the rules of other sponsoring bodies.

Application process

To apply for an extension a student must complete the Time Limit Extension (PGR) form, available from the [Code of Practice webpages], and the application will be considered on its merits by the student's school and then the appropriate faculty. The student must clearly state the reasons why they have been unable to submit on time and demonstrate how they would use the requested extension period effectively to complete the writing of their thesis and submit by the extended deadline. Students should provide this information as a Gantt chart to illustrate the schedule of work to be undertaken. The student's supervisor and school must decide whether they support the student's application and must state the reasons for their decision on the form. Students should ensure that they provide as much relevant information as possible when submitting their application, as the application can only be considered on the basis of the information provided. Applications that are incomplete or provide very little detail risk being rejected.

All extension applications are considered by the relevant faculty, which may support or reject the application.

Individual or cumulative requests for time limit extensions that exceed 12 months (non-Covid) or 18 months (with Covid), or requests for extensions that are not supported by the student's supervisor and/or school, will be referred to the Special Cases Committee for consideration. Limits to both LOAs and time limit extensions apply equally to students regardless of their mode of attendance. The Special Cases Committee will consider the feasibility of the student's request, taking into consideration whether the request is supported by the student's school, the continued viability of the student's research and the likelihood of a successful submission.

The Committee may request additional information, where required, to help them reach an informed decision, e.g. an evaluation of the student's progress to-date and a thesis plan, however, students should always ensure that their application for an extension provides sufficient detail for an informed decision to be made by whomever is considering their request. It should be noted that the Special Cases Committee meets once per month; therefore requests for time limit extensions requiring consideration by the Special Cases Committee will take longer to consider and students should be aware that they may not be notified of the outcome of their request for several weeks.

If an extension application is rejected by the faculty and/or Special Cases Committee the student will not be permitted to continue their degree beyond their current time limit and will be withdrawn unless they submit before their time limit.

If an extension application is marked as a final extension and the student does not submit by the deadline, they will automatically be withdrawn and will not be permitted to submit their thesis after this date.

Students are responsible for checking whether an extension application will have an impact on professional, disciplinary, or sponsor-related requirements that they may have.

Sponsored students should check first with their sponsor before applying for an extension.

An extension fee is charged for any period of extension that is granted beyond a student's initial time limit. The level of this fee is increased annually. Please see 'Registration and fees' for further details. Extension fees are loaded on a student's record when the extension request is approved and will then become immediately due for payment. It is not University policy to waive fees that have been incurred because of an extension to a student's registration period, as forward planning and time management are considered important qualities of doctoral researchers.

Extensions for international students

In addition to the above guidance, international students who consider applying for an extension to their time limit and who are studying in the UK subject to immigration regulations, i.e. those on a Student or Tier 4 student visa, should explore whether they will also need to extend their visa and whether there are any ATAS implications (see below).

Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS)

If a student's time limit is extended by more than three months, and they are studying a course that requires ATAS, they may need to submit a new application for ATAS clearance. This affects most students who are subject to immigration regulations, and not just those with a Student or Tier 4 visa. Therefore, although students in a non-Student or Tier 4 visa category that are subject to the ATAS requirement may not need an ATAS certificate for their visa application, they may need to apply for clearance for the purposes of their time limit extension. Students who are not nationals of countries listed as exempt from ATAS in Appendix ATAS of the Immigration Rules who wish to extend their permission as a student in the UK for some research degrees will require ATAS clearance before they apply to extend their visa. Visa applications made without valid ATAS clearance in cases where this applies will be refused. Students who require ATAS clearance will either need to use the research statement given on their offer letter from the Admissions Service or, if their research area has since changed, ask their supervisor for a summary which confirms details about their research, which can be used to make an online application.

Students should contact International Student Support, Advice and Compliance for further information and guidance on the implications of applying for an extension, or refer to their webpages for international students.

Students can check whether they will require an ATAS certificate by providing course and nationality details here.

Withdrawal from the University

Before making a decision on whether to withdraw or continue with their postgraduate research degree, students should discuss their options with their supervisor or other appropriate member of their supervisory team or school Postgraduate Lead.

Reasons for withdrawal may include a change in personal circumstances, resulting in the research degree no longer being feasible or appropriate for the student. It is therefore recommended that students discuss their circumstances with their supervisor, and where appropriate, consult with other support services within the University, before making a final decision. Students may benefit from first taking a period of leave of absence whilst they consider their options.

Students may also wish to withdraw from the University of Sheffield to transfer to another University.

Process for withdrawing or transferring

Once a student has decided to withdraw or transfer, they must complete the Notification of Withdrawal or Transfer (PGR) form. Students should then pass the form to their primary supervisor for their signature. Once the form has been signed off by the school (supervisor and PGR Lead), it must be submitted to Research, Partnerships & Innovation as soon as possible.

When will the withdrawal take effect?

- The Notification of Withdrawal or Transfer (PGR) form will ask for a date on which the withdrawal or transfer should take effect. Processing the withdrawal form normally takes 1-2 weeks after the student has submitted it, so it is important for students to think carefully about the effective withdrawal date when they are completing the form, and to leave enough time for their request to be dealt with. (Please also refer to the 'Fees and Finances' section below).
- The effective date of withdrawal should normally be in the future. Please note that retrospective withdrawals or transfers cannot be backdated more than 30 days from when the student completes the form, as the University has a duty to report PGR withdrawals to some sponsors and other relevant bodies within 30 days. Withdrawals of visa-sponsored students must be reported to the Home Office within 10 days of processing.
- While all teams involved in the processing of the form will do everything they can to abide by the requested date, sometimes this may not be possible, especially if the date is close to when the form was submitted.
- Students will be informed of the actual date of withdrawal/ transfer as soon as this can be confirmed.

Fees and finances

Tuition Fees: Students should note that they are still registered as students and are liable for payment of outstanding tuition or tuition-related fees up to the date Research, Partnerships & Innovation processes the withdrawal form and notifies the student that they have been withdrawn.

Other debts: Any outstanding debts to the University will become payable once a student has left.

Stipends: If a student receives a studentship that is paid in advance, they may need to repay any overpayment covering the period from the effective date of withdrawal to the end of that stipend payment period. A precise value for the repayment total cannot be provided until the withdrawal is approved and processed by Research, Partnerships & Innovation, as any changes to the final withdrawal date will affect the repayment total calculation. Communication of this amount may be a few weeks after the withdrawal request is processed to allow time for the Finance team to make the necessary calculations.

Refunds: Some students may also be eligible for a partial refund of tuition fees, depending on when they formally withdrew. Please refer to the University's tuition fee refund policy.

Financial hardship: The Students' Union can advise students facing challenging financial circumstances.

Access to university systems

Following a student's withdrawal their access to university systems such as their MUSE account and emails is revoked and their UCard is disabled. Students should ensure that they save any information or emails that they wish to keep before they lose their access. If the withdrawal is planned, students should ensure that they transfer or dispose of any research data they have collected, in line with university guidance.

Loss of student contact

Where students appear to have stopped attending the University without giving any formal notification of their withdrawal, schools (usually supervisors, administrators or PGR Leads) should report this as soon as possible to their contact in Research, Partnerships & Innovation, so that the student may be formally deemed withdrawn. A final attempt will normally be made to contact the student before their student record is closed down. Problems arise when students are still expected to pay fees they feel are not due, which is why it is essential that the University is notified of their intention to leave as soon as possible.

Withdrawal of international students

International students should note that the University is required to report to the Home Office any Student or Tier 4 visa holder who withdraws from the University or transfers to another university. The Home Office will cancel a student's visa once a report of a withdrawal is made. Students are advised to leave the UK within 60 days of their withdrawal from the University or submit any further visa application that they may be eligible to make inside the UK before this date. Students transferring to another university should seek immigration advice from their new institution.

Requests for readmission following a withdrawal

Students who have withdrawn, or who have been deemed withdrawn from the University, have no automatic right to readmission. If a request for readmission is received by the former student's school it should be considered carefully, in particular taking into account any difficulties which may have led to the student's withdrawal in the first place. Requests for readmission can be approved or rejected by the school and consideration should be given to factors such as whether appropriate supervision can still be provided and whether the student's research is still current and/or original.

If a school supports the request for readmission advice should be sought from Research, Partnerships & Innovation and from appropriate professional services, depending on the circumstances of the original withdrawal. For example, if a student was previously withdrawn for medical reasons, it would normally be appropriate to consult with the University Health Service at this point and to request evidence that the student is now fit to resume their degree. Students who were withdrawn due to registration or fee issues would need to have fully addressed these issues before being readmitted. With international students, there may be outstanding issues relating to immigration/visa/leave to remain that require expert advice from International Student Support, Advice & Compliance.

Changes to personal details

All students are responsible for keeping the University informed of any change to their personal details, especially addresses and email addresses.

Students must also check their university email accounts regularly to ensure that they do not miss important notifications from the University.

Personal details can be checked and changed via MUSE.

Notification of a change in name can be made to the Student Services Information Desk (SSiD) upon presentation of original documentation proving the name change.

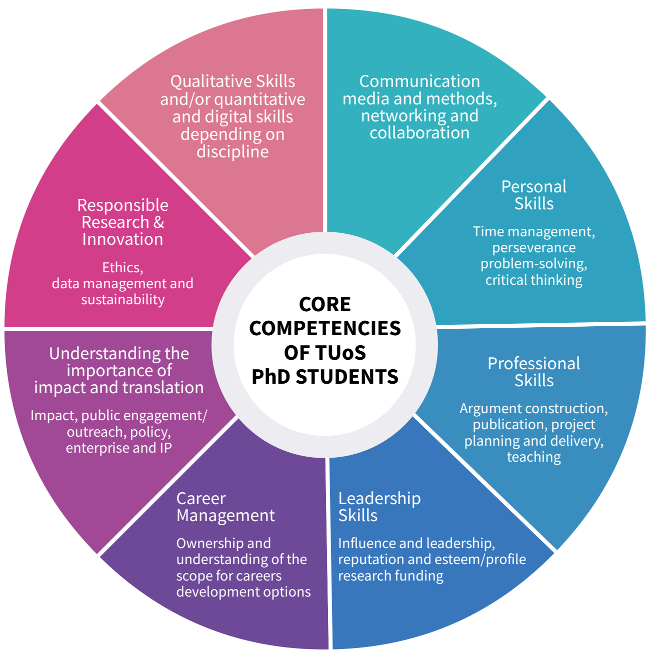
Doctoral Development Programme (DDP)

Introduction

The Doctoral Development Programme (DDP) is a flexible, needs-based programme of training and development for all PGR students at the University. Although engagement with the DDP is a regulatory requirement, in recognition that each student has a unique academic and professional background and is undertaking a specific research project, the emphasis is on a programme of training and development that is individualised to the student. PGRs are entitled to up to 100 hours a year on DDP activities to build transferable skills and enhance employability (roughly equivalent to at least one day per month). However, it is not a requirement to use all 100 hours. By engaging with appropriate training and development during their DDP, students will gain and enhance the skills needed to:

- successfully complete their research project
- become a world-class researcher
- increase their future employability – whether they are looking to stay in academia or pursue a career in another sector

The framework for development focuses on demonstration of eight core competencies. The core competencies have been selected based on feedback from academics, funders, and industry, and thus encompass skills that are highly valued in doctoral graduates across a range of sectors.



Examples of existing good practice: opportunities for personal and professional development

The following are a selection of innovative ways that schools have provided opportunities for PGRs to develop their personal and professional skills:

- PGRs significantly involved in an ‘Excellence with Impact’ bid, from the original submission through to the final judgement, attending several Q & A sessions, and writing ‘impact statements’.
- PGRs active in public engagement activities, including presentations, exhibitions, and projects.
- PGRs co-presenting with staff at international conferences; PGRs joining school research clusters where they are encouraged to present data, or host journal discussions, and be external speakers.
- PGRs organising, chairing, and hosting a conference for their fellow students, enabling them to showcase their research and network with students and staff.
- Delivering high quality journal publications and presenting at international conferences is enshrined into the student progression procedures.

PGR Faculty Forums

There are also opportunities at faculty level for PGRs to get involved in PGR Forums, which aim to develop initiatives for the benefit of both PGRs and the University, enabling PGRs to:

- Apply their doctoral skills in practice.
- Enhance their skills as influencers and entrepreneurs.
- Gain skills and experience in areas including event management, public engagement, business development and leadership.
- Gain skills in cross-faculty networking and networking with external colleagues/organisations.

Key Components of the DDP

Training Needs Analysis

The Training Needs Analysis (TNA) is provided as a tool to guide students through the process of identifying their technical and personal development needs and considering how and when they will be addressed. The supervisory team will provide guidance and approve a development plan on an annual basis, ensuring that students have a clear understanding of their training aims at any point during their research.

Students complete their TNA in collaboration with their supervisory team within the first three months (six months if PT), and it should be reviewed regularly throughout the programme (every six months at minimum, or 12 months for PT students). When completing the TNA, students assess their competence in eight key areas and identify corresponding training and development needs.

Effective training needs analysis is an iterative process and updating the TNA and modifying the development plan should be regularly undertaken by agreement as the student progresses over the course of the programme, including when requirements or directions change.

Further guidance and the TNA form can be found on the DDP student hub.

Development Plan

The development plan agreed between the student and the supervisory team should be informed by the TNA but also the demands of the research programme. It should be reviewed and updated annually.

The development plan might include formal training, informal training, or experiential learning; these should total no more than approximately 100 hours per year to ensure that student workloads remain manageable.

To achieve training, students can select modules or skills training available within the University, as well as accrue relevant experiences that are not formally taught or that are gained outside the University. The DDP training hub contains information about the wide range of training and development opportunities open to PGR students.

Students should be encouraged to think creatively about development opportunities which might arise during research. For example, attending conferences and meetings, publishing work, getting involved in outreach programmes, undertaking teaching, and presenting, engaging with the careers service, acting as a PGR Representative, and making use of work experience or mentoring opportunities could all contribute to developing and demonstrating the core competencies. There are further examples of competency-based training on the DDP hub. Any training or activities students undertake should be chosen thoughtfully to support their research and development.

Evidencing Development Summary

The Evidencing Development Summary is a key component of the DDP, designed to support students in reflecting on their progress against the eight core competencies. In identifying examples to include within the summary, students will be preparing themselves for employment selection processes in the next stage of their career.

The summary is also the principal means by which a student's progress on the DDP is monitored. Submission of the summary is required to meet the regulatory requirement of 'engagement with the DDP', and, except where otherwise stated in programme regulations, a student cannot be awarded their degree without having completed this step.

Further guidance on the Evidencing Development Summary can be found on the DDP student hub.

Compulsory Research Ethics and Integrity Training

Although the majority of the DDP is individually tailored, all doctoral researchers are expected to undertake the research integrity and ethics training module provided by their faculty. Good research practices are fundamental to good research, and it is essential for every researcher to understand how to conduct their research ethically, and with integrity.

Each faculty runs a module that has been tailored to the needs of its own doctoral researchers. All students will be automatically registered to attend but will need to book onto the appropriate session for their faculty.

In addition to the faculty research ethics and integrity training, some schools also require their students to complete compulsory subject-specific modules. Where this applies, students will be automatically enrolled.

For more details about compulsory modules, please refer to the DDP student hub.

Optional modules and additional training

PGR students have the option to attend subject-specific taught modules, where a training need is identified through their TNA and/or development plan.

Participation on any taught subject-specific modules will usually be in the student's first year of full-time study or the first and second year of part-time study. PGR students are not required to submit assessment for taught modules; however students are expected to attend the whole module and fully engage with every class.

Arrangement for attendance of any training module or skills activities is the responsibility of the student even though their selection is in consultation with the supervisory team. Students need to ensure that they register for taught modules either via the DDP module registration portal, or by email to the DDP Team.

The DDP training hub also contains information about the wide range of non-modular training and development opportunities that are open to PGR students.

DDP – Monitoring, Assessment and Key Milestones

Below is a checklist of the actions that are needed to fulfil the DDP requirements. The student should work through these actions with their supervisory team.

1. **Pre-registration**
   A series of self-reflective questions are included within the pre-registration material sent to students via email.

2. **Faculty inductions**
Faculties run induction events in early October and March each year. Each school will also hold its own induction and students should check school webpages or handbooks for details. Cross-sessional students who are unable to attend a scheduled induction event should speak to their school PGR Lead in the first instance.
3. **Setting supervisory expectations**
Within the first month of starting their studies, students and supervisors should meet to discuss expectations for the supervisory relationship
4. **Training Needs Analysis**
Within the first three months (six months if PT) of starting their studies, students should draft a first version of the TNA. This is then discussed within a supervisory meeting, the output being a Development Plan to cover training and development for the coming year.
5. **Development Plan**
The Development Plan will be reviewed (often by the school PGR Lead) at the point of Confirmation Review, approximately 9-12 months after registration (18- 24 months if PT).
6. **Ongoing review**
Students should review the TNA and reflect on their progress on a six-monthly basis following Confirmation Review. It is also recommended that discussion of progress against the Development Plan takes place regularly at formal supervisory meetings. The Development Plan should be reviewed and updated on an annual basis.
7. **Evidencing Development Summary**
At around 2-3 months before the end of their normal registration period (4-6 months if PT), the student should use their completed TNA to reflect on the training and development they have experienced throughout their research. On the Evidencing Development Summary, the student should give one example of development for each of the core competencies.

   The Summary should be signed by the supervisor and then submitted to Research, Partnerships & Innovation by the student. The relevant Faculty Officer is required to confirm the student's successful completion of the DDP, based on the Summary.
8. **Successful completion of DDP**
This faculty review confirms that regulatory requirements have been met. At this stage, Research, Partnerships & Innovation will also check that all other compulsory elements of the DDP have been met, e.g. completion of the faculty ethics and integrity training and any compulsory school modules as necessary. Once completed, the student will receive a copy of the Evidencing Development Summary signed off by their faculty as confirmation that they have fully completed the DDP.

Additional Considerations

Cross-Sessional Students

Those students registering after October must pay particular attention to the start date of training courses/modules that they are advised to undertake. This may mean that they must delay the start of some of their training until the beginning of a future semester.

Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS)

Non-EU/EEA students wishing to take certain modules that fall within the science, engineering and technology disciplines should be aware that they may need to apply to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office for an ATAS certificate, depending on their subject discipline.

If ATAS applies to you and you do not already have this clearance, it is VERY IMPORTANT that you apply for this clearance before you register on such modules. However, if you have already gained ATAS clearance at admissions stage you will already be covered and need not reapply.

For further details on ATAS, please contact International Student Support, Advice & Compliance, or refer to the Student Services Information Desk ATAS pages for International Students.

DDP enquiries

Enquiries can be made by email to: ddpenquiries@sheffield.ac.uk

Further information is detailed on the DDP student hub

Research

Good academic practice

All research students are expected to comply with the University's policy on Good Research & Innovation Practices (GRIP), which can be found on the Research Ethics and Integrity homepage. The policy sets out the University's expectations for how research should be undertaken, from start to finish, and applies to everyone involved in carrying out and supporting research. It sets out expected good practice in each key aspect of research from planning and designing projects through to achieving impactful outcomes. Everyone involved in research, including students, is expected to raise issues if they encounter something which concerns them. Research Ethics and Integrity (student intranet)

Preventing harm in research (safeguarding)

All research students are expected to comply with the University's policy on Preventing Harm in Research & Innovation (Safeguarding), which can be found on the University's central Research Ethics and Integrity website. The policy sets out the University's duty of care to all individuals involved in or affected by its research activities, and sets a clear expectation that exploitation, abuse, and harm are not tolerated. Researchers are required to consider the potential risks of harm to individuals involved in/affected by their research and to take appropriate steps to mitigate these, including ensuring that there are appropriate mechanisms in place for safeguarding concerns to be reported. Safeguarding in research (student intranet)

Ethical approval

If a student plans to do research involving human participants, whether directly or indirectly, (e.g. interviews, questionnaires, focus groups, observations), accessing personal data about individuals (including via social media), or collecting/using any human biological materials, then the research must normally be independently ethically reviewed and approved before the student begins data gathering. The supervisor is responsible for ensuring that this takes place. Failure to gain ethics approval when required may result in the student's dissertation or thesis being failed or deemed ineligible for submission. Guidance on when ethics approval is required, the different routes for obtaining ethics approval, and when each applies, is available from the University's central Research Ethics website.

This site contains the University's full Research Ethics Policy and broader guidance on ethical issues. Research Ethics (student intranet)

Research governance approval for health and social care research

Health and social care research involving the NHS or social care services is required to follow the University's Research Governance Procedure, which ensures that appropriate approvals are in place in line with the UK policy framework for health and social care research. Further information about the Procedure, and when it applies, can be found on the University's central Research Governance website. Research governance (student intranet)

Research data management and Data Management Plans

The University's Policy on Good Research & Innovation Practices (GRIP) sets out how all researchers, including PGR students, should manage data generated by research projects. Research data are diverse and vary enormously between disciplines, but broadly speaking, they are the evidence used to support or inform research conclusions. All students must plan how they will manage the data they will create and gather by writing a compulsory Data Management Plan.

Data must be recorded accurately and systematically and managed appropriately throughout the research project. This includes (but is not limited to) the creation, processing, analysis, preservation, access to and reuse of research data.

Data should be shared with at least one other person (e.g. the supervisor) throughout the research process to minimise the risk of data loss. Most major funders, notably UKRI, the EU and major UK charities, require research data underpinning publications, including student theses, to be made publicly available for re-use (unless restrictions on the release of data are necessary for ethical or legal reasons). A statement indicating where the underlying data can be found should be included in all publications.

The University encourages all researchers to make their research data discoverable by recording details in its research data catalogue, ORDA, with a link to where it is stored:

Data Management Plans are compulsory for all students who commenced their research programme from the 2019/20 academic year onwards and are reviewed at Confirmation Review. Students should refer to the information on Data Management Plans and should consider using the DMP online tool.

DMP Online

For information on Research Data Management.

For information on the University's Policy on Good Research & Innovation Practice.

ORCID IDs

Setting up an ORCID ID

An ORCID ID is a unique identifier that you can use to easily distinguish your work from that of other researchers. For PGR students and early career researchers, an ORCID can be especially valuable in boosting your research profile and helping you to establish your academic network.

Benefits of an ORCID ID include:

- It clearly distinguishes you and your work from that of other researchers with the same or a similar name.
- It stays with you throughout your career, wherever in the world you work.
- When added to your email signature, online profiles, and outputs, an ORCID makes it easier for others in your field to identify and access all your outputs, including publications, conference presentations, posters, datasets, and more. This may lead to increased engagement with your work and new collaborations.

- It enables you to showcase community activities such as society membership or conducting peer reviews, ensuring credit for all your academic work.
- Your ORCID ID can be used when applying for funding and jobs, and when submitting proposals for conferences, articles and more, enabling funders, employers and editors to see the full picture of your academic work and outputs.

View a short video from ORCID on the benefits of setting up an ORCID ID here: https://vimeo.com/97150912

How to register

1. Go to https://orcid.org/register
2. Complete the registration form using any of your email addresses (you can add other email addresses later to your profile). If you experience any problems at this stage, see the ORCID help page.

3. Go to your email and verify your address.

Populating your ORCID profile

Once you have set up your ID, you can begin to populate it. You can choose what information you would like to add - any sections you leave blank will simply not appear on the public version of your profile. You can also use the visibility icon next to each item to decide who can see that part of your profile.

For guidance on how to populate your profile, including how to configure your ORCID profile to automatically keep your list of outputs and grants up to date using information from publishers and funders, view this short video from the University Library.

Instant messaging in research

The University has introduced new guidance for staff and students on using instant messaging tools for research projects. The full guidance is available at: https://students.sheffield.ac.uk/research-ethics/other-guidance/instant-messaging-research

Transferring and disposing of research data at the end of your degree

It is the responsibility of all postgraduate research students to ensure that they review and move, delete or transfer ownership of any data they have collected during their time at the University. Please read the detailed guidance on how to do this and take the appropriate steps to manage your research data.

Transferring and disposing of your research data at the end of your degree

Managing security-sensitive research

The UK Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 imposes a duty on universities to ‘have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism’. This requires the University to have appropriate arrangements in place for staff or students working on sensitive or extremism-related research. The University’s ‘Policy and process for managing security-sensitive research’ can be found on the Research Ethics and Integrity website. Policy for managing security-sensitive research.

Rights and responsibilities of students

All students at the University have a number of rights and responsibilities and should take the time to familiarise themselves with the University’s expectations.

Upon registration all students must commit to abide by the University’s Regulations and to observe the Code of Practice relating to Health and Safety. There are also expectations regarding acceptable conduct and behaviour of all students and the University reserves the right to take action against any student whose behaviour is judged to be unacceptable. All students and University staff are expected to behave in a way which respects and takes account of the diversity of the University community and the values of truth, toleration, and justice.

Students should familiarise themselves with the following documents.

- Our Commitment
- Student Code of Conduct
- Statement of expectations for postgraduate researchers and supervisors
- Guidance for PGRs on the use of social media

Induction

School induction arrangements for PGR students commonly involve some, or all, of the following:

- A meeting with, or presentation by, key staff in the school (e.g. PGR Lead and other relevant staff members such as key administrative staff)
- An initial meeting with supervisors
- A tour of the school facilities
- Provision of a PGR handbook and the University’s Code of Practice for Research Degrees
- Presentations on issues such as health and safety
- A meeting with PGR student representatives and/or a buddy/mentor
- A welcome social event (often involving staff and existing PGRs)

Essential practice

Schools, rather than individual supervisors, should be responsible for the induction of new PGR students, to ensure consistency (e.g. the PGR Lead, School Manager, or other appropriate member of staff with a key PGR role should be involved in the induction of all students). All new PGRs should be provided with a school handbook or equivalent at induction and a copy of this Code of Practice.

All new PGR students should also be made aware of the structure of the school and introduced to key members of staff (e.g. Head of School, PGR Lead, postgraduate support officers, etc.), as part of their induction programme.

Desirable practice

- It is desirable for existing PGR students to be involved in the induction of new PGR students (e.g. through a ‘buddy’ system or an open question and answer session).
- An induction session specifically dealing with cultural issues for international students could be particularly helpful, especially if such sessions involved existing international PGR students rather than academic staff.
- It is helpful for new PGR students to be provided with an induction checklist on which different aspects of the induction could be signed off when complete. The three-month review meeting for the Doctoral Development Programme (DDP) could be used as an appropriate opportunity to check that all requirements have been met. This could be particularly useful for cross-sessional students, whose induction may not be as structured as those starting in September/October.

Examples of good practice in induction

The following are a selection of innovative ways that schools have provided opportunities for PGRs to develop their personal and professional skills:

- Induction should be considered a process rather than an event, providing students with information gradually over a period of time (e.g. via a series of introductory sessions or events) rather than overloading them with information in the first week.
- Provide students with a clear structure for their research, by setting progression milestones at the outset (including target dates for Confirmation Review and submission).
- A session on ‘You and your supervisor’ for new PGRs run by the Director of Research on importance of agreeing expectations and goals.
- An induction lecture for new PGRs which also includes more established PGRs, to encourage them to reflect on the development of their research and generic skills. Continuing PGRs could be provided with a similar opportunity to enable them to reflect on their experiences and progress and review their Training Needs Analysis.
- Where possible, PGRs have a student buddy/mentor for pastoral purposes.

International students can face challenges in settling into their degree, especially if they have not previously studied in the UK. The following suggestions could be considered:

- Organising an informal lunch to which PGRs are invited to bring foods typical of their home countries to share with others.
- Arranging for PGRs to undertake group activities (e.g. for an afternoon) designed to introduce them to their fellow students and to the city of Sheffield.
- Arranging opportunities (often involving existing PGRs) to discuss the cultural differences international students are likely to face, and to clarify the expectations of student and supervisor.
- A dedicated member of staff assigned to helping new overseas PGRs.
- An international society set up to help with the orientation and integration of new international students into the school.

Resources for international students

The International Student Success programme is a free online resource with practical guidance and support for all new international students. The programme is developed by Epigeum (part of SAGE Publishing) in collaboration with the University of Sheffield and aims to equip you with the knowledge, skills, and understanding that are central to preparing for, and adjusting to, university life in the UK.

International Student Success Programme

Physical, social & research environment

Postgraduate research students must have access to the facilities necessary for them to achieve success in their studies. This does not necessarily mean that they will all have their own designated desk space within their school, and it should be noted that the specific requirements of students do vary significantly between subject disciplines and even at different stages of their research project.

Schools would normally provide some or all of the following facilities for their PGR students, although these will often be shared with other users:

- Access to desk space and computer facilities (designated facilities are often provided where required by the student) The student should complete a DSE assessment within the first 2 weeks as part of their compulsory University training.
- Laboratory space if required according to the discipline
- Kitchen and social and/or meeting space
- Access to discipline-specific technical support
- Access to shared printers, photocopier, and phones
- Access to storage facilities (including some lockable storage)

For disabled students in receipt of a Learning Support Plan, bespoke arrangements for their working environment may be required. DDSS will communicate with schools to discuss and agree implementation.

In addition, schools provide PGRs with a wide range of formal and informal mechanisms designed to better integrate them with other PGR students and with the school research environment, for example:

- Regular school research seminars
- Regular PGR student seminars at which students can hear about each other’s research and practice presenting their own work, and/or hear from internal or external speakers
- Research training modules accessible to, or specifically for, PGRs (covering key research skills and/or skills for successful completion of a research degree)
- Social events (e.g. induction networking, informal coffee & cakes, Summer and Christmas parties)

Planning for time abroad

The University has a duty of care to protect, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of its staff and students. At times, due to the necessity to carry out activities away from the University, either in the United Kingdom or overseas, students might conduct work and other activities in locations not under university control, but the University still remains responsible for them and others exposed to their activities.

As such, it is essential that students keep their supervisor and school informed of when they will be spending time away from Sheffield, and where they will be.

It is important that careful thought is given not only to the research data collection but also to the potential issues and problems that could arise. High standards of health and safety in fieldwork are paramount and therefore the University strongly advises that discussions should take place between the student, supervisor(s) and the school about measures that can be taken to ensure the student's wellbeing. This should be in plenty of time before travelling to be able to plan appropriately.

What you need to do if you intend to work / research internationally

The University has a request process that applies to all staff and PGR students. You can view the International Working Hub for information. There are 3 stages each explaining the steps you need to take. A summary is detailed below, however you should always refer to the website guidance.

1) Planning
    - Check the Foreign Office website for your destination
        - Check travel advice, entry requirements
        - Check your own visa restrictions if you are currently in the UK on a student visa.
    - Check whether your destination is classified as a high risk destination by our insurer
    - Check export controls
        - Does your research fall within export control regulations?
        - Do you need an export license for your work or anything you are taking? If so you must apply for a license by law.
    - Get a ballpark estimate of the cost, and check budgets / whether it is within your grant terms by speaking to your P.I.
    - NOTE: destination and export control requirements can increase the timescale for approval to travel. Do not book any travel until you have had authorisation.
    - NOTE: PGRs who are staff candidates only:
        - If the international trip is 28 days or more, OR they are a national of the travel destination, they should also complete the International Working Tax form
2) Get approval to travel
    - Complete the international travel request and risk assessment form.
    - You must get approval from your Supervisor
        - Exception: PGRs who are Staff candidates employed by the university (but not casually nor as a GTA) must complete the form as a member of staff, and get their line manager approval.
    - Depending on the nature of your trip, it may be necessary to have additional senior levels of approval.
3) Book your trip - arranging international working
    - You must have approval, then you can book
    - You must book accommodation and travel in accordance with the Business Travel and Related Expenses policy (eg no Airbnb)
    - After booking, you must get University Travel insurance (follow the links on the Travel Hub page)
    - Ensure IT and devices meet information security when travelling rules
        - Note if travelling to China, you must get a secure loan laptop and phone from ITS service desk.

Supervision

PGR Supervisory Teams: Roles of Supervisors and Personal Tutors

All postgraduate research students will be allocated a core supervisory team of at least two members of academic staff who will support them through their academic and development programme.

Primary supervisor

The primary supervisor is the key institutional link for the student and will provide significant academic input into the student's research. The relative academic input within the supervisory team may vary - it could be anything from a 90:10 split, to a 50:50 joint supervision arrangement, to a three or four way division including other supervisors in addition to the primary and second, based on the needs of the research. The student will be registered in the school of the primary supervisor.

Below are the responsibilities of a primary supervisor. Where the supervisory team are more equally supporting the student, the sharing of these responsibilities needs to be agreed together, with a clear articulation and shared understanding of the responsibilities of each supervisor.

It is the primary supervisor's responsibility to:

- Ensure compliance with the University's Code of Practice for Research Degrees and such other University documents as are relevant to the student's work (e.g. research ethics, research integrity, data protection and health and safety). The supervisor must ensure that the student is aware of regulations that affect their conduct and/or work.
- Set up formal and regular in person meetings with the student, on an individual basis, (a minimum of once every four weeks, pro rata for part time students) with a clear plan for what is expected for each meeting. Ensure that there is a written record of the meeting.
- Ensure the student understands the key progression milestones and what is required to complete those milestones, including the format and standard of work required.
- Support the student to complete their Training Needs Analysis and Development Plan to support their technical and personal development. Point them to essential elements of the Doctoral Development Programme and any other training they need to undertake.
- Read and provide timely feedback on any pieces of work towards progression milestones (i.e. Confirmation Review, Submission Review) and final submission of the thesis.
- Consider requests from the student for periods of study away from campus, annual leave, leaves of absence (LoAs), parental leave etc., whilst ensuring that the impacts of any such arrangements on the research programme are clarified and documented as required.
- Complete any training required for the supervisory role as mandated by the Faculty/ University.
- Give guidance on academic publishing and careers (or signpost to appropriate sources) and provide references for job applications following the degree, as appropriate.

Please also see the full list of Responsibilities of the supervisor as set out in our Code of Practice.

Second supervisor

The second supervisor will normally provide additional academic expertise for the research degree programme and will be an alternative point of contact where the primary supervisor might be temporarily unavailable. Ideally, they should be willing to step in as primary supervisor should the original primary supervisor cease to be available for some reason, but it is recognised that this will not always be possible or appropriate.

Even where the primary supervisor is the main supervisor and will take principal responsibility for managing student progress, the second supervisor should still meet the student at least once every three months, in conjunction with the primary supervisor.

Additional supervisors, as necessary

Additional supervisors can be involved to provide input into the project where that expertise is not available from the core supervisory team (e.g. a third academic supervisor, a postdoc with special technical skills or expertise; an industry or external supervisor to provide specialist information; an independent advisor to provide advice on the content or progression of the project from outside of the core supervisory team). However, the additional supervisor(s) would not be expected to provide regular general supervisory support or engage with any of the administrative processes involved in student progression.

Personal tutor

In addition to the two named supervisors, all postgraduate research students will have access to a Personal Tutor, another academic member of staff based in their School who is unconnected to the research project and who is available to signpost advice and support on pastoral issues when required. Schools will inform their students about the roles and responsibilities of such support, including its boundaries and limitations.

Personal Tutor arrangements within the school and what the student can expect from this should be outlined at inductions and be explained in the School PGR Handbook. These arrangements should include details of other services available to students to access, such as Student Mental Health, Counselling and Therapies Service, University Health Services, DDSS, the Belief, No Belief and Religious Life Centre, Student Experience and Support, International Student Support, Advice and Compliance.

All students should be invited to a meeting with their Personal Tutor every six months (pro rata for part-time students), with a record maintained of these meetings. PATS enables meetings to be recorded as a one-to-one academic tutorial for this purpose, and this helps to maintain a fuller picture of the student's interactions with the university which is essential where there are welfare concerns.

The confidentiality of provision should be assured, except in disciplinary or other serious cases, when this should be made clear to the individual. Any issues should be identified and resolved at an early stage. The Personal Tutor is responsible for raising any issues to the School PGR Lead if required.

It is important that students can speak to someone in their school, in confidence, if they have any concerns about the supervision they are receiving. This could be another member of the supervisory team, a personal or pastoral tutor, the PGR Lead or Head of School. Schools should ensure that students are aware of the opportunity for providing confidential feedback on supervision and the mechanism for doing so.

Detailed information about which categories of staff are eligible to act as a primary supervisor is available in the University's policy statement on supervision eligibility for postgraduate research degrees.

The University also has a statement outlining the joint expectations of students and supervisors.

Where to find support for postgraduate research students – supervisor tool

Supervisory meetings: frequency and record keeping

Essential practice

Formal meetings between the research student and supervisor(s) to review progress should normally take place at least every four weeks for full-time students (pro-rata for part-time students). It is essential for written records of formal student-supervisor meetings to be made, either by the student or the supervisor, and for both to retain a copy. Notes of supervisory meetings need not be lengthy or detailed documents, but should record the progress made on the project, key points discussed and any agreed actions or objectives to be achieved before the next meeting. This could take the form of a series of bullet points. This is essential for both pedagogical reasons (to ensure the student's understanding of points made by the supervisor) and to provide an accurate record of the supervisory sessions. Students often take the lead in producing these records. An online form to record formal supervisory meetings between PGR students and supervisors is available via the Personal Academic Tutoring System (PATS). PATS can be accessed via the 'All Services' menu on MUSE.

Supervisory meetings should be conducted in English and the written records of such meetings should also be in English, even if the student and supervisor share a different native language. This is to assist the student in developing the necessary written and oral English language skills that are required for conducting successful doctoral research in the UK.

The University's expectation is that students should normally be present on campus during their programme of research, unless they are registered as a Remote Location or Majority Off Campus student.

However, there may be times when a student needs to undertake research away from the University, for example, as part of a compulsory placement, or when undertaking fieldwork or data collection. Where this is the case, arrangements must be made in advance for ongoing contact and remote supervision whilst the student is away from Sheffield.

It is also the expectation that supervision should primarily take place in-person, although there may be exceptional circumstances where some remote supervision is also appropriate, by prior agreement. For example, if a student has an external supervisor, or where recommended in a student's Learning Support Plan.

Supervision should continue throughout the different stages of the degree, including when the student is writing the thesis or undertaking post-viva corrections. There should be a minimum of one supervisory meeting every 4 weeks.

If a supervisor is going to be absent from the University for more than the length of time between two supervisory meetings, then the school must ensure that there are appropriate supervisory arrangements in place for the student(s) affected. This may involve another member of the supervisory team taking a lead role during the period of absence, or the appointment of a new supervisor, on either a temporary or permanent basis, depending on the specific circumstances and the length of the absence. These issues should be managed on a case-by-case basis.

Policy on recording supervisory meetings

The University has developed the following policy on the audio recording of supervisory meetings by students, which only permits the recording of supervisory meetings in exceptional circumstances and where both the student and supervisor consent to the recording being made.

1. Supervisory meetings may be recorded by the student where this is considered beneficial to the student's personal learning or to aid the student's comprehension, for example, where a student's first language is not English.
2. Any student wishing to make a recording of a supervisory meeting must request permission from their supervisor(s). If permission is not granted, the student should respect this decision and should not attempt to make an unauthorised recording.
3. Students should always be encouraged to take written notes of any supervisory meetings, regardless of whether they have been granted permission to record a supervisory meeting. The Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes requires that a written record should be kept of every formal supervisory meeting. This is an essential part of the supervisory process, both for pedagogic reasons, i.e. to demonstrate that the student understands the feedback provided, and to provide an official record of the supervisory sessions. Students often take the lead in producing these records and in sharing them with their supervisor.
4. All parties should be aware that there may be instances where the recording of supervisory meetings is recommended by Disability & Dyslexia Support Services (DDSS), as part of a specific Learning Support Plan to support a student with a confirmed disability.

Guidance on changes within a supervisory team

A number of situations may arise that require the replacement of a member within a PGR student's supervisory team. In such cases it is the responsibility of the Head of School, or nominated deputy, to manage any new appointment of supervisors, and arrange for cover of supervision should a supervisor leave before the end of the student's research programme (in accordance with the University's Supervision Eligibility Policy). The primary aims should be to ensure the continuity and quality of supervision, and that the student is duly cared for and consulted from the outset. The School's PGR Lead, and the Faculty Doctoral School, should be consulted each time such a situation arises. Research, Partnerships and Innovation must also be informed, as this is essential both for the effective monitoring of student progression and to ensure the accuracy of University records, which are used to make key data returns. A statement should be provided detailing the situation, as well as an assessment of the progress of the student and the feasibility of completion by the time limit. The statement should also provide evidence that all parties (student and supervisors) agree with the changes and progress statement.

The situations that may require a change of within the supervisory team include:

a) **A relationship has broken down** – Should significant problems emerge between the student and a supervisor, these should be flagged at the earliest opportunity to the School PGR Lead, and flagged to the Faculty Doctoral School for consultation. If, regardless of resolution attempts, the relationship eventually does break down, the PGR Lead should discuss the circumstances with both student and supervisor, and make them aware of the University's policies regarding Appeals, Complaints and Conduct. If it is considered appropriate, feasible, and in the best interests of all parties, the Head of School should identify a new supervisor who can ensure continuity in the project, and consult the Faculty Doctoral School for their input, as necessary.

b) **A supervisor moves to another institution, or retires** – The supervisor may continue to advise on the project, provided that a suitable local supervisor is appointed, and a contract of expectations is signed by the departing supervisor and the student to establish responsibilities, including: how much time the supervisor will continue to dedicate to the project, and how often they will meet (in person or online) with the student. The level of responsibility taken on by departing supervisors may vary and should be assessed on a case-by-case basis, so Human Resources should be consulted to advise on the appropriate form of appointment for their new role within the supervisory team. The main supervisory responsibilities (including provision of feedback, nomination of examiners, and liaison with sponsors) will, however, reside with the new Sheffield supervisor. The delineation of responsibilities within the supervisory team should be clearly defined to the student. A role as second supervisor may be appropriate for a retiree, and academics should in general avoid taking on new students in a supervisory capacity if they anticipate that they will retire before project completion.

   When an academic leaves the University, their departure may affect a number of different students, not only with reference to supervisory roles, but also relating to confirmation review assessments or vivas. All of these instances must be considered. It may be necessary to instigate the transition of the student to their new supervisory team ahead of their previous supervisor's departure if this best ensures continuity of support.

c) **A supervisor is absent** (e.g. sabbatical or illness) – Where a supervisor is likely to be absent from the University for an extended period of time (broadly, a semester or more), including where a serious illness occurs and may result in a disruption of unknown duration, it is recommended that another supervisor be appointed to guide the project during the period of absence. In some cases this may be another supervisor from the existing team. If circumstances allow it, plans for handover should be discussed with the School PGR Lead prior to the departure of the supervisor, and progression milestones for the duration of the project should be agreed. For sudden absences, an initial meeting with the new acting supervisor, School PGR Lead and the student is recommended to review progress to date and agree future milestones. Similarly, upon return of the supervisor, a handover meeting including the PGR Lead and student is required. Note that during a period of study leave, staff remain responsible for their research projects and PGR supervision throughout the leave period, although another supervisor from the existing team may take more day-to-day responsibility during this time.

In the unfortunate case of the death of a supervisor, the School PGR Lead, Head of School, and the supervisory team must work together to recruit a new supervisor. The student may be signposted to SSID for bereavement support if necessary, and a period of LOA could be discussed.

In all instances of a change in the supervisory team, it is recommended that the School PGR Lead attends an initial meeting with the student and new supervisor(s) to agree on a plan of supervision, review the project and agree on milestones and deadlines for progression. If a supervisor and student change schools, then the PGR Lead from the new school should also attend this initial meeting. If a supervisor is leaving the project (or the University), they are requested to provide a statement of progress as input into this meeting, and to attend if possible/appropriate. It would be advisable to hold a follow up meeting 3-6 months later, to check on progress.

Conflicts of interest in postgraduate supervision

Every staff member is required to declare to their Head of School any potential conflict of interest in respect of other roles/relationships, which could potentially be in conflict with their university role. This relates to personal (which would include, but is not limited to, spouse or cohabiting individuals) and business relationships. University guidelines on this are available.

The University also has a new policy concerning Intimate personal relationships between staff and students.

With specific regard to postgraduate supervision, the following additional guidelines have been approved.

Conflicts of interest between supervisors and PGR students

1. In all cases where a real or perceived conflict of interest between a supervisor and PGR student exists or develops, the academic member of staff involved should declare this at the earliest opportunity to the relevant Head of School and PGR Lead. If a conflict of interest is deemed to exist, the member of staff should withdraw from supervising that student and every effort should be made to find alternative supervisors.
2. If the academic member of staff concerned considers that withdrawal from supervision is impossible or undesirable, a written case should be made detailing the nature of the relationships involved and the attempts made to find an alternative supervisor. A final decision will be made by the Faculty Lead in consultation with the Head of School.

Conflicts of interest between supervisors or examiners

1. In line with the University's Code of Practice, a supervisory team should be appointed for each postgraduate research student. Each member of the supervisory team should be identifiably independent. Where this is not the case, as above, the academic member of staff involved should declare this at the earliest opportunity to the relevant Head of School and PGR Lead. Where there is an identified relationship between supervisors (personal or business) they should not constitute the only members of the supervisory team for a research student and an additional supervisor should be appointed. The student should be made aware of the perceived conflict of interest at the outset/as soon as possible and informed of the mitigation steps taken by the school. They should also be informed of who their 'independent' supervisory contact is. The same principle applies to the student's examination team (i.e. there should be no conflict of interest between the supervisors and the appointed examiners, as well as between the student and the examiners).
2. Research should not commence until the constitution of the supervisory team has been agreed with the PGR Lead and Head of School.
3. If a student has concerns relating to an academic/personal relationship and is concerned that it is impacting on their studies, they should discuss this matter at their earliest opportunity, in confidence, with the Head of School or PGR Lead. In the event that both the Head of School and PGR Lead are the subjects of the student's concerns, the student should seek advice from their personal tutor in the first instance. If this is not possible for any reason, they should consult with the relevant Faculty PGR Lead.

Compulsory PGR Supervisor Development

The University recognises the crucial role that supervisors play in the experience of PGR students and provides them with opportunities to develop their practice at regular intervals. Based on a set of Senate agreed principles, supervisors must undertake compulsory PGR Supervisor Development according to their individual level of experience:

- New supervisors must complete a programme of activities consisting of interactive webinars and asynchronous online learning. This equates to eleven hours of development in total.
- Experienced supervisors who are new to Sheffield will be required to engage in the two-hour SuperVisionaries webinar, 'PGR Supervision at Sheffield'.
- Experienced colleagues who are not new to Sheffield will participate in two-hour discussion-based workshops, delivered at school level, every two years.

Further information can be found on the Compulsory PGR Supervisor Development webpage.

Consequences of non-completion

Experienced supervisors & incoming supervisors: If a supervisor fails to complete their compulsory PGR Supervisor Development activity by the required deadline, the issue will be referred to their line manager (usually their Head of School) for discussion. Supervisors who fail to engage with compulsory PGR Supervisor Development after this reminder will be unable to supervise any new PGR students until it is complete.

New supervisors: This activity should be completed within one year of the start of supervision and before the end of their probationary period. This is a requirement for passing probation for all staff on research-only contracts and teaching & research contracts on probation from 2021 onwards.

Responsibilities of the student

General

- Every student must ensure that their contact details and addresses are kept up to date.
- All students must maintain appropriate standards of behaviour when dealing with others, including fellow students, members of staff and the public. All students should adhere to the Student Code of Conduct.

Induction

- The student must ensure that they have read, understood, and comply with the University's policies, procedures, and regulations, which are set out in the Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes and the University's Regulations.
- In the early stages of the research the student should discuss with the supervisor the type of guidance believed to be most helpful and the training which may be required, to clarify both the needs and aims of the research. The student should work with the supervisor to identify and select strategies to meet these needs and aims. This will require undertaking a Training Needs Analysis.
- The student should work with the supervisor to establish an effective supervisory relationship, tackling the research with a positive commitment, and taking full advantage of the resources and facilities offered by the academic environment.
- The student should reach an agreement with the supervisor on the record keeping of supervisory meetings. Both the student and supervisor should keep copies of the written or electronic record. Notes of supervision meetings should be recorded in PATS.
- The student should discuss any financial arrangements in connection with their work with their supervisor and ensure that these are carried out in accordance with the University's Financial Directives.
- The student should check their university email account on a regular basis, so as not to miss important messages.

Supervision

- The student should agree with the supervisor to have regular meetings, which should take place at least every four weeks, and to attend supervisory sessions in accordance with the agreed schedule.
- The student should work with the supervisor to establish and maintain a satisfactory timetable for the research, leading to Confirmation Review and submission of the final thesis within the student's tuition fee-paying period, or as soon as possible thereafter. The student should, by the end of the first year (or second year for part-time students) have defined the area of research, become acquainted with the background knowledge required and the relevant literature, and have established a provisional timetable for conducting the research and writing the thesis. Confirmation Review should have taken place and students should also have made satisfactory progress in the Doctoral Development Programme.

- The student should submit written work to the supervisor regularly and in good time, in accordance with the agreed timetable. This work should be word processed, not handwritten.
- The student should take note of any guidance and feedback offered by the supervisory team.
- The student should discuss any problems, e.g. access to data, information, facilities, equipment, or supervisory relationship with the supervisor, at the time they occur. The early identification and resolution of problems can prevent difficulties later. If the student feels unable to raise the problem with their supervisor, then their Personal Tutor, Head of School or PGR Lead should be consulted. If for any reason this is not felt to be possible, the student should contact Research, Partnerships & Innovation or the Advice Centre in the Students' Union for guidance.
- The student must submit a Data Management Plan, which will be reviewed at Confirmation Review and should be maintained and updated over the course of the student's research.
- The student must attend regularly and must agree in advance with the supervisor any periods of absence from the University and seek appropriate permission.

Academic progress

- The student should keep written records of their work, which may form the basis of progress reports required by the supervisor, school, faculty, or financial sponsor.
- The student should raise with the supervisor any concerns which they may have about the progress being made and request additional support if necessary.

The final stages

- Wherever possible, the student should ensure that all active/core research is completed within their tuition fee-paying period and should aim to submit by that deadline. Where this is not possible, the student should solely be completing the preparation and writing of their thesis.
- The student should familiarise themselves with the procedures for the submission and examination of their thesis.
- Prior to submission the student should provide the supervisor with the opportunity to see a draft of the complete thesis. Supervisors have many commitments on their time, so it is essential that the student takes into account their supervisor's schedule and workload and allows their supervisor sufficient time to be able to read and provide comments on the thesis and for any amendments to be made prior to the submission deadline. This requires advance planning and should not be left until the last minute.
- The decision to submit rests with the student, and whilst the student should take due account of their supervisor's opinion, at this stage it is advisory only.

Responsibilities of the supervisor

Induction

- At the outset of the research, the supervisor should explore in detail the student's academic background to identify any areas in which further training (including English language training) is required. In particular, the supervisor should advise the student in the choice of subject-specific knowledge and skills training required.
- If the student has a Learning Support Plan, the supervisor must acknowledge at an early stage that they have received and read this, and provide an open invitation to discuss this further.
- The supervisor will give guidance on the nature of the research and the standard expected; the selection of a research programme and the topic to be covered; the planning and timing of the successive stages of the research programme; literature and sources; research methods and instrumental techniques; attendance at appropriate courses; data management, avoidance of academic misconduct and respect for copyright.
- The supervisor should define all the compulsory milestones and communicate their requirements and timescales to students in writing. If this is already stated in school handbooks, the supervisor needs to ensure the student knows where to find this information
- The supervisor should ensure that they have a thorough understanding of the DDP and its benefits, to ensure students make the most appropriate choice of modules and other training and development opportunities.
- The supervisor should ensure that the student has a clear understanding in general terms of the main aspects of graduate research: the concept of originality; the different kinds of research; the form and structure of the thesis (including the appropriate forms of referencing); the necessary standards to be achieved; the importance of planning and time management; the procedures for monitoring and reporting progress.
- The supervisor should ensure that the student is aware of the University's Good Research & Innovation Practices (GRIP) Policy. In addition, the supervisor should ensure that the student has a clear understanding in general terms of good academic practice and, where relevant, ethics approval and research governance.
- The supervisor should work with the student to establish an effective supervisory relationship, thereby supporting the student. This should include an agreement on the frequency of progress meetings and the arrangements for keeping records. Supervision meeting notes should be recorded on PATS.
- At the induction stage, the supervisor should ensure all parties are aware of the date of the Confirmation Review and regular progress milestones, to ensure that the length of time available for each stage of the project is clear.

Supervision

- The supervisor should ensure that the research project can be completed fully, including preparation and submission of the thesis, within the student's tuition fee-paying period, and should advise the student accordingly.
- The supervisor must ensure that a clear agreement is made with the student on the frequency and nature of the supervisory contact required at each stage of the project. Supervisory meetings should take place on an individual student basis and should be uninterrupted, as far as possible. The frequency of such sessions should be every four weeks as a minimum (pro-rata for part-time). The frequency may depend on the nature of the research (e.g. whether laboratory work is involved) and the specific research project. The length of sessions will also vary, from student to student, across time and between disciplines.
- The supervisor should comply with the attendance and engagement monitoring requirements of the school/ university and raise any attendance or engagement concerns at an early stage.
- Written records of formal supervisory meetings should be made and retained by both the student and supervisor for at least the duration of the student's registration.
- Both the supervisor and student should keep any relevant or significant correspondence, including emails, which relate to the student's degree. This is especially important for students who are studying via Remote Location programme or who are spending a significant amount of time off-campus.
- The student and supervisor must have an agreed procedure for dealing with urgent problems (e.g. by telephone, email and/or the arrangement of additional meetings at short notice).
- The supervisor should, in discussion with the student, establish and maintain a satisfactory timetable for the research, including the necessary completion dates for each stage, so that the thesis may be submitted on time. This planning should take into account the requirements of the relevant funding body in relation to submission.
- The supervisor should read promptly any written work submitted in accordance with the agreed timetable and provide constructive and timely feedback. The supervisor should advise the student of any obstacles to providing timely feedback, e.g. periods of time away from the University, particularly when the student is approaching submission.
- The supervisor should arrange, as appropriate, (in many schools it is a requirement) for the student to present work to staff or graduate seminars and should take an active part in introducing the student to meetings of learned societies and to other researchers in the field. The supervisor should provide advice, where appropriate, on publication of any of the research.
- The supervisor should advise the student, in advance, of any planned periods of absence from the University. If the period of absence is significant (more than the length of time between supervisory meetings), the supervisor should ensure that appropriate arrangements for alternative supervision are made, and that the student is informed of them.
- The supervisor should take note of feedback from the student.
- The supervisor should engage with compulsory PGR Supervisor Development appropriate to their level of supervisory experience, in line with University requirements.

Academic progress

- The supervisor should ensure that the student is informed of any inadequacy of standards of work below that generally expected from research students and should suggest remedial action, or training, as appropriate.
- The supervisor should comply with all school, faculty and/or sponsor requirements concerning the monitoring of progress and submission of progress reports.

The final stages

- The supervisor should nominate appropriate examiners well in advance of the thesis being submitted, bearing in mind that all nominations require faculty approval before they can be appointed. Failure to do so will lead to delays in dispatching the student's thesis and arranging the viva examination.
- The supervisor should read and comment on drafts of the thesis before submission.
- The supervisor should ensure that the student understands the procedures for the submission and examination of the thesis and should assist the student in preparing for the oral examination, including offering a mock viva. Should the student be asked to resubmit their thesis, the supervisor will be responsible for continuing to provide support and supervision throughout the resubmission period.
- The supervisor should discuss and agree with the student if there is a need to embargo the thesis and should sign off on the Access to Thesis form which specifies any embargo requirements.

Responsibilities of the School

- Each school will have a PGR Lead, who is a senior member of staff responsible for coordinating postgraduate research within the school. Their role should be formalised to support students and supervisors, as well as developing policy and liaising with faculty. Schools should ensure that all students are aware of the contact details and responsibilities of their PGR Lead and any other support staff at induction.
- Schools must provide all research students with an appropriately constituted supervisory team, in accordance with the University's requirements
- Schools should provide new research students with the details of a contact (usually the supervisor) who will meet them on their arrival at the University.
- Schools should ensure that supervisors engage appropriately with compulsory PGR Supervisory Development, in line with University requirements and take follow-up action on non-completion, where appropriate.
- Schools should provide new students with relevant information on current research areas of staff and research students in the school; available facilities and students' entitlement to make use of them; school personnel (including technical and professional support staff); procedures and services relevant to their study; out of hours access; guidelines on the expected frequency of contact between student and supervisor and length of formal supervisory sessions; school procedures for monitoring progress, Confirmation Review and Submission Review; details of postgraduate representatives on school committees.

- Schools should maintain a file for each student, which should contain relevant information on the student's academic progress, e.g. supervisory meeting notes and formal assessments of progress, as well as information relating to the student's academic and personal and professional skills development.
- Schools must make arrangements for the provision of alternative supervision if the primary supervisor is absent for more than the length of time between supervisory meetings, or leaves the University, and should inform Research, Partnerships & Innovation of the new arrangements at the earliest opportunity.
- Schools must ensure that procedures are in place to monitor the attendance and engagement of all students, to comply with the University's Student Attendance and Engagement Monitoring Policy and government requirements in respect of international students.
- Schools must ensure that students have adequate facilities with which to pursue their research effectively. Schools should aim to provide facilities appropriate to the research to be undertaken. Requirements will vary between schools and different types of research or stages of the research degree. Alternative arrangements should be made when equipment breaks down or when there is a shortage of specialised equipment, to minimise the delay to the student If the student is in receipt of a learning support plan, the school should discuss and agree with DDSS and the student with regards to how any changes or adaptions may be implemented.
- Schools must ensure that students are aware of the relevant Health and Safety regulations.
- Schools should ensure that they have transparent written procedures for the Confirmation Review process that are provided to students at induction and that Confirmation Review takes place within the first year of a student's registration.
- Schools must ensure that students undertaking teaching duties receive appropriate induction and support, and that they are given adequate instruction in the use of teaching equipment. Teaching and other duties to be undertaken by students should be specified in writing in advance, including the rate of pay and the number of hours to be undertaken.
- School should provide information on new procedures relating to research degree programmes and opportunities to spread good practice, e.g. via an annual seminar or forum for all supervisors, experienced and new, as part of their PGR Supervisor Development programme for research supervisors.
- Schools should provide a mechanism for students to give confidential feedback on supervision and ensure that students are aware of how to do this.
- Where complaints are made about the quality of supervision these should be raised with the supervisors concerned and responded to appropriately, in line with the University's complaints procedure. Depending on the circumstances, it may be considered appropriate to appoint an additional or replacement supervisor, but this decision normally rests with the Head of School.

Academic Progress Monitoring

Essential practice

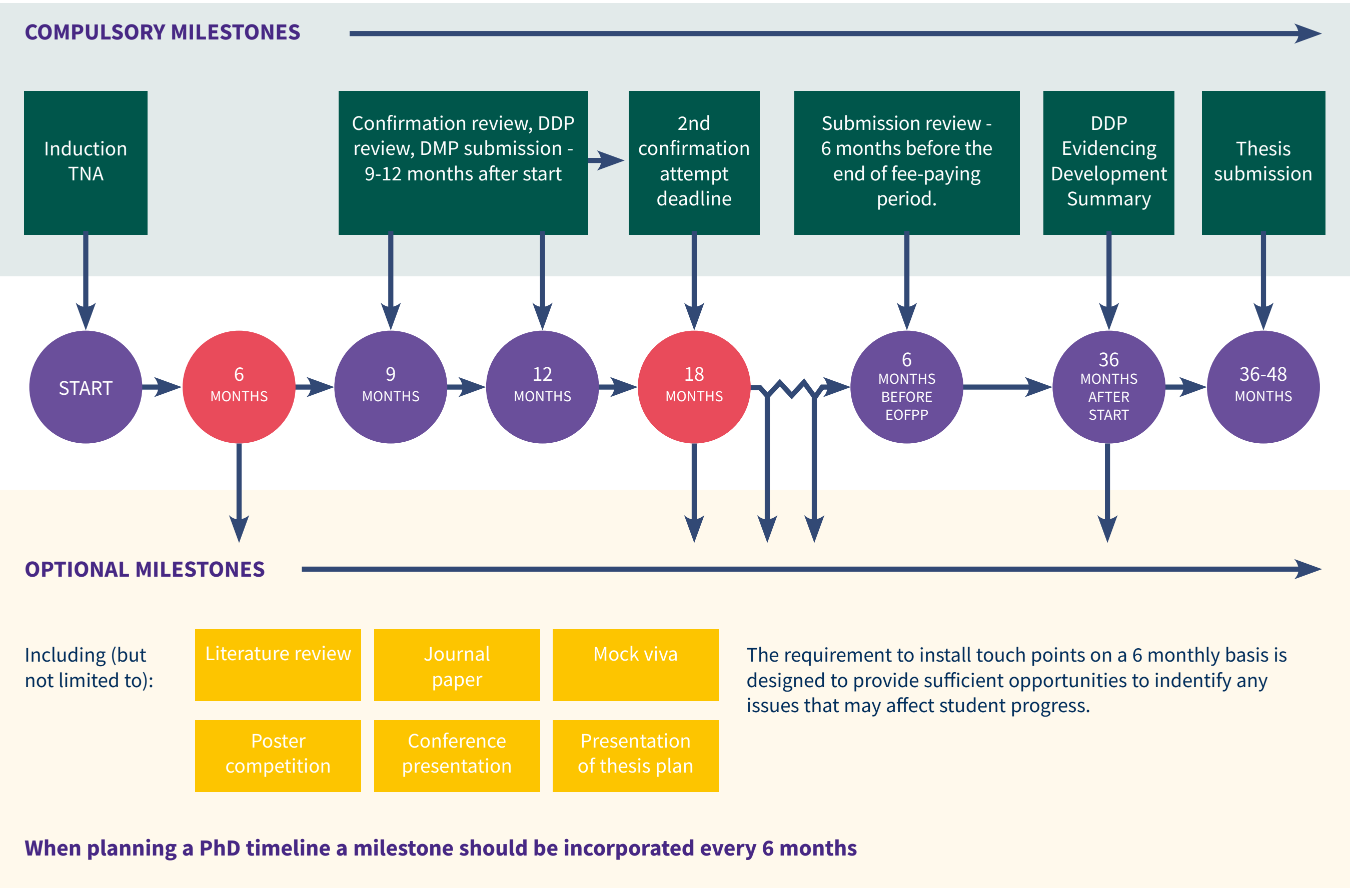
The academic progress of all PGR students must be formally assessed by schools throughout the student's research degree. For a full-time student, progression milestones should take place every six months (pro rata for part-time students). This is in addition to the regular recording of formal supervisory meetings. These progress reviews may take the form of mandatory milestones, e.g. Confirmation Review and Submission Review, or they may constitute a designated task to be completed by the student, such as a poster presentation or submission of a journal-quality paper.

Mandatory milestones

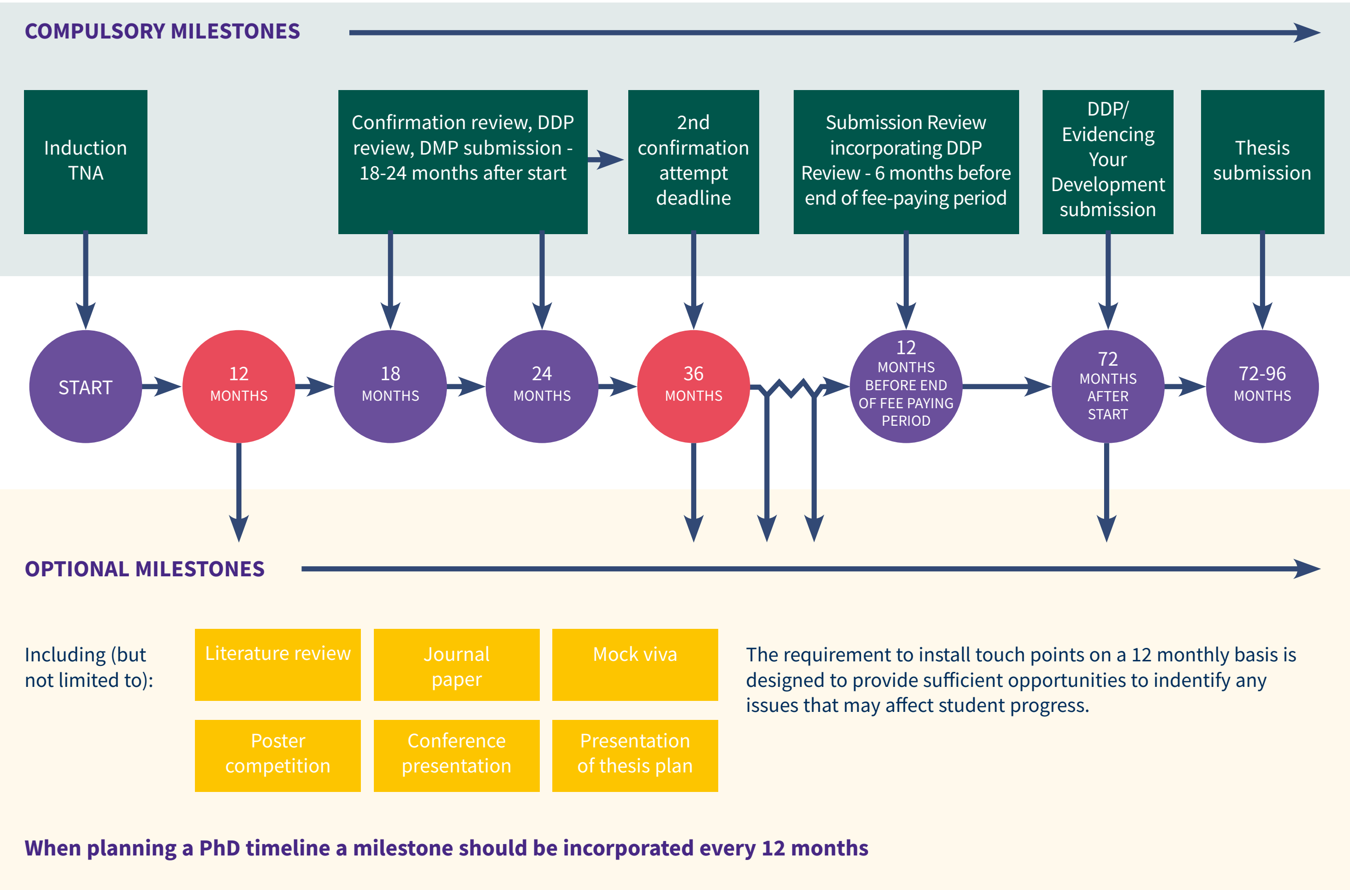
The University has agreed that the following progression points should be mandatory milestones:

- Induction/Training Needs Analysis
- Confirmation Review (PhD, MD, EngD only)
- Data Management Plan (compulsory for all students commencing a research degree from 2019/20 onwards)
- Submission Review
- DDP Evidencing Development Summary
- Thesis Submission

Full-time PhD timeline with milestones



Part-time PhD timeline with milestones.



Confirmation Review

Students undertaking the degrees of PhD (including PhD with Integrated Studies), MD and EngD are required to undergo a Confirmation Review to confirm their registration as a doctoral student. The first year of the degree is considered a probationary year, pending successful completion of the Confirmation Review.

The Confirmation Review is a key progression milestone. Its purpose is to confirm whether the student and their research project have the potential for successful completion at doctoral level within the fee-paying period, where possible, and no later than the time limit, and whether there is a clear plan in place to achieve this.

The Confirmation Review is also intended to ensure that the student has made satisfactory progress on the DDP, in line with the student's needs identified via the Training Needs Analysis. In addition, students who commenced a research degree from 2019/20 onwards are required to write a Data Management Plan outlining how they will manage the data they create and gather. Data Management Plans should be reviewed at Confirmation Review.

The Confirmation Review is also the opportunity to discuss access and disability support required to facilitate disabled students' successful and timely submission.

Confirmation Review requirements for students

The University's requirements for Confirmation Review are that students must submit a significant piece of written work and undergo an oral examination. Schools should provide more detailed guidance on their own procedures and requirements for Confirmation Review at induction and via student handbooks. Students who have a Learning Support Plan (LSP) should include a copy of it with their submission.

Minimum requirements for the written submission should be agreed by schools and/or faculties. However, some examples which could form the basis of work to be submitted for the Confirmation Review are as follows (this is neither a prescriptive nor an exhaustive list).

- A clear statement of the area of research and contextualisation with respect to literature
- A synopsis of the work undertaken so far
- A schedule of further work
- Draft chapter(s) of the thesis
- Details and reflection of any training undertaken on the DDP, as well as future training plans, e.g. a completed Training Needs Analysis

The schedule of further work should include consideration of any potential challenges to the project's successful completion (i.e. circumstances that could impact the project), as well as any steps or contingency plans that can be taken to minimise the impact of these challenges.

Confirmation Review panels

Schools must ensure that the Confirmation Review process is rigorous and fair. An impartial Confirmation Review panel must be appointed comprised of individuals who are able to reach an independent judgement on a student's capability to undertake research at doctoral level. Confirmation Review panels should comprise a minimum of two academic members of staff, who have not had any previous close association with the student's research project.

Schools may require larger panels but must ensure that the composition of the panel has the relevant expertise to effectively judge the student's progress and research potential. Given the need for impartiality, it is not appropriate for supervisors to be involved in deciding the outcome of the Confirmation Review as members of the panel. It may be considered appropriate for the student's primary supervisor only to attend the Confirmation Review as an observer, with the permission of the student and assessors. Independent Advisors, where used, and personal tutors, can be used as Confirmation Review panel members. If the student submits a copy of their LSP, this should be read by all members of the panel.

Confirmation Review process

Students are permitted a maximum of two attempts at Confirmation Review. If a student fails to pass the first attempt, schools may defer a final decision on whether to confirm a student's doctoral candidature pending a second attempt (resubmission). Resubmissions for Confirmation Review may be arranged either with or without a further viva examination, depending on the nature of the issues identified during the first attempt.

For example, if the student's initial viva performance was satisfactory, and only amendments of a minor nature are required to the written work, it is unlikely that another viva will be required. However, if the student's initial viva performance was considered unsatisfactory, or if the nature of the amendments required for the student to pass their resubmission are of a major nature, then a resubmission with viva should be chosen.

If a second attempt is required, the student should be provided with clear written guidance as to why the work is currently not at the right standard, the nature of any additional work or revisions required, and the timescale and arrangements for resubmission. If the second attempt is unsuccessful students will no longer be able to continue the PhD programme and will be automatically transferred to an MPhil programme.

Students are normally expected to attend their Confirmation Review in-person, rather than remotely. Exceptions may be considered on a case-by-case basis where it is felt that a remote Confirmation Review would be appropriate. For example, where a student is suffering from a long-term illness and is unable to travel or where the student has other professional commitments that might preclude travelling to Sheffield within the specified timescale (especially where any further delays would take the student outside the appropriate timescale for Confirmation Review).

Students transferring into the University from elsewhere will be expected to undergo Confirmation Review, unless they can provide evidence from their previous university that they have already passed a similar confirmation or upgrade process, in which case they may be exempted. Evidence will be in the form of a letter or email from their previous university.

If a student has an LSP in place all recommended reasonable adjustments relating to the viva should be put in place wherever possible. This will require discussion between all parties prior to the viva.

Timing of the Confirmation Review

By regulation, the first attempt at Confirmation Review must be completed within 12 months of the student's initial registration and, where a second attempt is required, this must be completed within 18 months of initial registration (pro rata for part-time students). Where exceptions to these timescales are required at programme level, this should be specified in programme regulations.

To achieve these deadlines, it is **highly recommended** that the student should submit at nine months, to allow time for a viva to be arranged and conducted and work to be assessed. Where a student has had an approved leave of absence, this will be taken into account in calculating the 12- and 18-month deadlines. Schools must ensure there is sufficient evidence at that point to make an informed decision about the feasibility of both the student and the project.

In exceptional circumstances, it may be appropriate for the first attempt to take place later than 12 months, e.g. where recommended in a student's Learning Support Plan. However, schools must still ensure that the second attempt is held by the 18-month deadline. If there are any extenuating circumstances that might have an impact on a student's performance in the Confirmation Review, it is the responsibility of the student to inform the school as soon as possible and not retrospectively. However, it is the responsibility of the relevant staff to have read and implemented the recommendations of an LSP wherever possible and reasonable.

The responsibility for ensuring Confirmation Review takes place within the approved timescale rests with the school and not with the student and it is important to adhere to the regulatory deadlines. Delays in holding Confirmation Reviews can cause significant problems for schools and students, especially if the student subsequently fails and is transferred to MPhil.

Students should be made aware that failure to submit work by the deadline specified by their school, and/or failure to attend the Confirmation Review without prior notification to the school, and/or without good reason, will be considered grounds for failure of that attempt provided the student has been given fair and reasonable notice of the deadline. This may lead to the student having only one attempt at Confirmation Review. If a student has a legitimate reason for absence and/or non-submission of work, this must be evidenced, i.e. an appropriate medical note, or LSP where appropriate, must be provided to cover the period when the Confirmation Review should have taken place or work should have been submitted.

Outcomes from the Confirmation Review

The following outcomes are available from the Confirmation Review:

- Pass - Confirmation of doctoral status
- Resubmission - The result is deferred pending a second attempt within 18 months of the start of the student's study, either with or without a further viva
- Fail and transfer to MPhil - The student is no longer permitted to continue the doctoral programme and is transferred to an MPhil (normally only available following a resubmission)

Students who are transferred to an MPhil will be expected to continue that programme and to submit an MPhil thesis. There is no option to automatically withdraw a student who does not pass their Confirmation Review. However, if the school considers it highly unlikely that the student will even successfully complete an MPhil, then they should discuss this with the student and may wish to recommend that the student withdraws from the University.

Students who are transferred to an MPhil programme will have their time limit reduced to three years, in line with the MPhil time limit. Sponsored students who are transferred to MPhil are responsible for informing their sponsor, as this is likely to have an impact on the conditions of their sponsorship.

Students may be entitled to appeal against their Confirmation Review outcome, but only if they have appropriate grounds for appeal. Appeals on the grounds of academic judgement are not permitted. For further details of how to submit an academic appeal see Complaints and appeals.

Once the Confirmation Review has been completed and a decision has been reached, schools must complete the University's Confirmation Review form and send it promptly to Research, Partnerships & Innovation for faculty consideration. A separate form must be completed for each attempt at Confirmation Review so that there is a full audit trail of the process and decisions. Following faculty approval of the recommendation, the student's record will be updated.

Information for international students on a Student or Tier 4 visa

International students studying on a Student or Tier 4 visa should be aware that if they fail the Confirmation Review and are transferred to an MPhil programme, they may no longer meet the academic progression requirements or the conditions of their current student visa and may need to return to their home country to make a fresh visa application. This will not apply to all students in this situation. The University will report the change from a doctoral degree to MPhil to the Home Office, but this will only affect the Student visa in certain circumstances. The International Student Support, Advice and Compliance Team will advise each student on the immigration implications of transferring to MPhil individually.

Submission Review

Purpose of the Submission Review

The purpose of the Submission Review is to provide a formal check for the supervisory team and student to discuss and agree a plan to support thesis submission within the student's tuition fee-paying period, where possible, or as soon as possible thereafter. The Submission Review should comprise a review of the student's thesis plan and existing thesis chapters, their engagement to-date with the DDP, and an evaluation as to whether the student will have completed their active/core research by the end of their tuition fee-paying period.

If a student has a Learning Support Plan (LSP), this is also the critical point to ensure that any appropriate support suggested in the LSP has been implemented.

Submission Review is compulsory for all PGRs, irrespective of their degree programme. The Submission Review may involve the supervisory team, but schools or faculties may also wish to involve a reviewer from outside the supervisory team for a more independent evaluation (some schools already do this). If this is the case, a student's LSP should be shared, with the student's permission. A Submission Review form is available from the Code of Practice website and should be completed for all students. The forms should be submitted to the school PGR Lead for review once the Submission Review has been completed.

Submission Review requirements and outcomes

Submission Review should include a detailed consideration of the student's progress and plans, and should demonstrate the following:

- That the student has a realistic plan detailing how they will complete their active/core research and submit their thesis by the end of their tuition fee-paying period, indicating any risks to meeting their deadline and how those risks will be mitigated.
- That they have started to write up their research in an appropriate academic format.
- That they have acquired the wider background knowledge of their research field required for a successful defence of their research.
- That they have undertaken all the required training and made progress towards completing an Evidencing Development Summary.
- That any issues of concern identified at an earlier stage of the research project, e.g. Confirmation Review, have been appropriately addressed.
- If a student has a LSP, this should be included with the Submission Review.

The outcomes of a Submission Review should be a clear plan to ensure that the student can submit by the end of their tuition fee-paying period, and, if that is not achievable, an understanding of what is required to support the student to submit as soon as possible thereafter. This may involve helping the student to understand how they can modify their plans if it is apparent that an on-time submission is unlikely, and may include applying additional reasonable adjustments as detailed in their LSP, where relevant.

Another outcome should be an indication of whether the student is likely to need to undertake active/core research beyond the end of their tuition fee-paying period, in which case they must request permission to do so no later than three months before the end of their tuition fee-paying period. Any such requests will require approval by the Head of School, or their delegate, e.g. the PGR Lead or appropriate school committee, before being forwarded to the Faculty PGR Lead for oversight and monitoring (see 'Requests to continue active/core research within the submission pending period').

It is understood that the delineation between core research and thesis writing may be less clear in theory-based PhDs where students engage in desk-based research throughout. Schools are expected to apply this guidance in the way that makes the most sense for their discipline, and to base outcomes of the Submission Review process on the amount and nature of work that has been completed, and remains, against the supervisory team's expectations and original plans.

It is important that the outcomes of Submission Reviews are properly documented on the Submission Review form, which should be completed by the reviewers, reviewed by the school PGR Lead and retained within a schools.

Timing of the Submission Review

The Submission Review should take place no later than six months before the end of the student's tuition fee-paying period. Schools can also have an additional earlier submission review checkpoint and should ensure that regular progress monitoring takes place throughout the degree.

Tuition fee-paying period	Timing of Submission Review
3 years	2.5 years (month 30)
3.5 years	3 years (month 36)
4 years	3.5 years (month 42)

Expectations within the submission pending period

This guidance outlines the level of access students can expect to have to research facilities and supervision during the submission pending period, to clarify and manage the expectations of students and supervisors and to ensure a consistent approach.

What is the submission pending period?

The submission pending period (previously known as the continuation or writing up period) refers to the time between the end of a student's tuition fee-paying period of registration (which is between 3-4 years, depending on the research project and amount of additional training required) and their time limit (which is normally 4 years for a full-time PhD). Most funded students will only receive a stipend during their tuition fee-paying period; therefore, students are often unfunded during their submission pending period.

Principles of the submission pending period

Students' research projects should be designed so that they are able to undertake all their active/core research during their tuition fee-paying period, as well as writing up their research as they progress. By the time they reach the submission pending period, if they have not already submitted, they should only be engaged in completing the writing and final preparation of their thesis for submission.

The submission pending period should not be used for the completion of stand-alone publications, or for undertaking other work that is not directly related to the completion and submission of the thesis, for example teaching. Most students will no longer be funded by this stage; therefore the emphasis should be on completing and submitting their thesis as soon as possible. Where students were intending to write papers for publication, they should be made aware that these can be incorporated into their thesis without having to be rewritten and the thesis can be submitted as a publication format thesis.

Access to facilities and supervision during the submission pending period

The University has agreed the following principles around expectations for the submission pending period.

1. Students will continue to be entitled to supervision in line with the expectations of the Code of Practice, i.e. a minimum of one formal supervisory meeting every four weeks for a full-time student (pro rata for part-time students). This is to ensure that students receive the guidance and support they require during the final stages of completing their thesis and to assist schools in monitoring progress and ensuring that the student is on course to submit before their time limit.
2. Students will continue to have full access to University IT and library resources throughout the submission pending period.
3. Students should not normally undertake any active/core research (e.g. lab work, experiments, fieldwork, archival research, primary data collection and analysis) during the submission pending period. If further active/core research is required during this period, this should only be permitted on a time-limited basis (see point 5. below).
4. Students should not normally undertake any further academic modules or formal training for the purposes of completing the Doctoral Development Programme. Any further essential training required must be specifically approved by the supervisor, and directly contribute towards the completion of the thesis.
5. Where further research and access to research facilities is required during the submission pending period, a case must be put forward by the supervisors for approval by the Head of School, or their delegate, e.g. the PGR Lead or an appropriate school committee. Requests for continued access to active/core research facilities will be considered against university-wide criteria (see 'Requests to continue active/core research within the submission pending period').
6. Schools should ensure that students' progress is carefully monitored from the start of the programme of research, and that milestones, such as the Confirmation Review, Submission Review, and regular six-monthly progress reviews, are effectively used throughout to ensure that they are on track to submit within their tuition fee-paying period. Students should also be strongly encouraged to write up their research as they proceed, and not to leave this to the end.
7. Where students are unable to engage effectively with their programme of study they should be supported to apply for a period of leave of absence so as not to lose valuable research time. A change to part-time candidature may also be considered appropriate, although this would need to take account of sponsor and regulatory requirements, e.g. it would not be permitted for visa-sponsored students. Visa-sponsored students may wish to consider whether they need to remain in the UK throughout their submission pending period, or whether they could return to their home country to complete, in which case such visa restrictions would no longer apply. Students would first need to discuss and agree with their supervisors whether or not this was feasible.
8. The University should continue to work towards the aim that all funded students are funded for the appropriate length of time required for them to undertake their research project and associated training, and to submit their thesis in this funded period.

Requests to continue active/core research within the submission pending period

Requests for students to continue to make use of active/core research facilities, on a time-limited basis, where this is deemed essential to a successful thesis submission must be considered and approved at school level.

The process of identifying which students may require continued access to active/core research facilities should be considered during supervision and will be formally reviewed during the Submission Review process, which will be used to explore potential remedial or mitigatory actions to try to avoid students entering the submission pending period with outstanding active/core research. Students who are identified at Submission Review as being at risk of not completing their active/core research by the end of their tuition fee-paying period will be flagged at this stage and required to proceed to a second stage no later than three months prior to the end of their tuition fee-paying period, at which point they will make a formal application for continued access to active/core research facilities using the 'Application for continued research in the submission pending period' form. As part of this process, students and supervisors will be asked to provide information on why the active/core research has not yet been completed, why the work is necessary for the thesis submission, and what the plan and timescale is for completion of that work.

Requests for continued access will be considered by the Head of School, or their delegate, e.g. the PGR Lead or appropriate school committee, in the first instance, and continued access may be refused in circumstances where they do not feel the student's needs align with university-wide criteria. Faculties will oversee this process and provide support to schools. Requests will be considered against criteria such as the following (this is not an exhaustive list):

- Extending the core/active period of research will not interfere with the student's ability to submit within their current time limit, i.e. without requiring a time limit extension, and there is sufficient evidence of progress towards writing the thesis to support this assessment.
- Not granting the student continued access to undertake active/core research will compromise their ability to submit a thesis that meets doctoral standards, bearing in mind the onus on quality, not quantity. See QAA guidance.
- If the student is coming to the imminent end of a programme of experimental work.
- If the extra access is needed due to facilities being closed for reasons outside the student's control.

The following are examples of reasons that would not normally be considered good reasons to extend access:

- Where the delays are due to students undertaking activities that are not directly related to the completion of their thesis.
- To enable the student to undertake non-research activities such as teaching or conference attendance.
- Where delays were encountered earlier in the research that should have resulted in an LOA, but one was not taken (e.g. lack of access to essential facilities, personal circumstances). It is acknowledged, however, that visa-sponsored students face restrictions on the amount of LOA that they can take without their visa being curtailed, and that this can sometimes prohibit them from applying for lengthy periods of LOA for practical or financial reasons.
- To start a new programme of experimental work. Any future Time Limit Extension sought where non-essential research or non-essential activity has been undertaken in the submission pending period is unlikely to be approved.

Student engagement and attendance monitoring

It is essential that all students regularly attend all the scheduled sessions (e.g. supervisory meetings, school research presentations, DDP modules, laboratory sessions, etc.) that are listed in their timetable or that are communicated to them by their school. It is only by attending all the scheduled sessions that students will be able to engage with their research and progress effectively, as required by university regulations.

To ensure that students make full use of the learning and research opportunities that are available, schools will monitor both the attendance and academic engagement of all students throughout the year, in accordance with the University's Student Attendance and Engagement Monitoring policies.

This applies both to students on campus and those who are undertaking research or working away from Sheffield as part of their degree. This process should assist schools in identifying problems at an early stage and offering students appropriate support, including training or referrals to relevant support services, where required.

Information about how individual schools will carry out attendance monitoring and how they will use this information is normally included in student handbooks.

If schools have any concerns regarding the attendance or engagement of their students, they should consider what appropriate follow-up action is required to address their concerns. Schools are advised to seek guidance from Research, Partnerships & Innovation, who will advise on the available options.

Progress concerns and Faculty Student Review

If a student's progress is poor, schools should initially take action to identify why this is the case and whether any additional support or guidance is required and can be offered, either by the school or by other support services. Poor academic progress can sometimes be a signifier of underlying problems that might best be dealt with by the student taking a period of leave of absence. For example, the student may be struggling with personal, medical, or financial difficulties that are affecting their concentration and impeding their progress. An approved break from their studies may enable the student to recover and/or deal with the cause of the difficulties.

If a school has explored options for additional support and still has sustained concerns about the academic progress of a research student, they should discuss their concerns at an early stage with the student and should seek ways to address the situation. If the student is still at an early stage in their degree any concerns should be addressed by the Confirmation Review process, which is intended to confirm a student's potential for doctoral-level study. A student who fails to demonstrate sufficient progress and potential for doctoral-level research at Confirmation Review will be transferred to MPhil. This reinforces the need for Confirmation Reviews to take place within the University's required timescale.

If the school has tried to engage the student in improving their progress and there is still no improvement, the matter should be referred to the relevant faculty. This can be done in several ways. Lack of attendance and/or engagement should be flagged via Research Engagement Checkpoints or visa attendance checks. Concerns that are raised in this way will be followed up by Research, Partnerships & Innovation and may lead to a student being sent a faculty warning letter and/or being asked to meet with the Faculty Officer to explain the reasons for their lack of progress. Where a school has completely lost contact with a student this may lead to the student being deemed withdrawn.

Faculty Student Review Committee

If this still does not result in an improvement in the student's performance, a school may request a formal review of a student's academic progress, on certain grounds which are specified in the Regulations as to Progress of Students. This is a formal process designed to determine whether a student should be permitted to continue their programme of research, and if so, on what terms. Such decisions are taken at faculty level by a Faculty Student Review Committee, following a thorough review of the student's progress at which the student and school are usually present. See Progress concerns and faculty student review.

Schools should note that they can report a student for unsatisfactory progress under the Progress of Students Regulations at any point in the year and not just following an attendance or engagement monitoring checkpoint. However, schools must have already raised any progress concerns with the student before progressing the matter to the faculty. Schools should contact their faculty administrator in Research, Partnerships & Innovation for further guidance.

Working and Holidays

Working hours and holidays

Research students' working hours and holiday entitlements are not governed by regulation. The differing requirements of disciplines and types of research will, to a large extent, determine the length of the working day/week appropriate to the individual concerned, and students should be guided by their supervisor and school.

Research students are not entitled to the same lengthy vacation periods as undergraduate students, however, they are entitled to take annual leave, and should ensure that they do so to help maintain an appropriate work/life balance. Research students sponsored by UKRI may take reasonable holidays not exceeding 30 days per year, excluding closure days and Bank Holidays. Annual leave should be agreed, in advance, with their supervisors. These UKRI rules may be used as a guide by all full-time research students unless they are subject to the rules of other sponsoring bodies. Students requesting annual leave should do so by completing the relevant faculty booking form, or alternative, to ensure that a record of the number of days taken is kept.

Students may apply for a period of leave of absence to cover unforeseen difficulties that may arise during their studies, such as illness or serious personal problems (see 'Leave of absence'). Students will not be granted a leave of absence or a time limit extension to cover a holiday; holidays should be taken as annual leave.

The employment of research students by schools

The University encourages the employment of research students in a number of capacities (e.g. as part-time teaching assistants, demonstrators, etc.), provided that this can be undertaken without detriment to the completion of the student's research and submission of the thesis by their deadline. Such teaching helps to develop a broad range of personal and presentational skills which can be of considerable long-term benefit to the student concerned. Research students commonly have recent experience as recipients of teaching and are often well placed to assist in course delivery. Teaching also represents a valuable source of additional income for students. It must be stressed, however, that the scope for such employment varies widely across schools, and students should not assume that teaching opportunities will always be available.

Students may be employed either under the University's Graduate Teaching Contract, or as a student casual worker, depending on the type of work undertaken, The University has agreed a Graduate Teaching Contract and guidance is available on the Human Resources website.

The University accepts the following broad principles relating to the employment of research students as teachers:

- Other things being equal, teaching work in schools should be shared out among research students as fairly as possible. No research students will be expected to teach unless they wish to, unless this is a condition of their bursary or scholarship.
- All research students employed by the University should be assessed for their suitability before appointment.
- Full-time research students employed by the University in any capacity will be restricted to a maximum of 180 working hours per year, including preparation time and marking. This figure is based on the rules relating to UKRI studentships.
- The University strongly discourages students from undertaking teaching work during their submission pending period, as it is likely to adversely affect their ability to submit by their deadline. Teaching commitments will not normally be regarded as a legitimate reason for granting a student permission to continue their active research during the submission pending period. Teaching commitments will also not be regarded as a legitimate reason for approving either a leave of absence or a time limit extension, or for the waiving of any additional fees that may be incurred due to thesis submission being delayed.
- Students involved in teaching should be given a written specification detailing their duties, including the total number of hours required in preparation, class contact hours and marking, the payment involved and the method of payment. University recommended rates of payment should be used.
- All students involved in teaching should receive guidance and help regarding course content and delivery methods from the member of academic staff concerned and it is good practice for them to attend training courses covering the necessary teaching skills required.
- Students involved in demonstrating will be given prior experience with relevant equipment and guidance regarding expected results and any potential problems.
- Each school should have a member of staff responsible for the co-ordination of teaching undertaken by research students.
- Responsibility for delivery and examination of modules taught by research students remains with the member of academic staff concerned.
- Research students formally employed by the University are covered by the University's professional indemnity insurance policy in the same way as other members of staff.

Details of pay rates and how to determine pay are available from HR. Payments will be authorised by schools on the completion of teaching duties or at the end of each semester in which teaching is undertaken, whichever comes first.

The University offers workshops under the Sheffield Teaching Assistant programme that students can participate in. These workshops are available to research students who are also part-time teachers in the University. Information and support for Graduate Teaching Assistants is available from this Google Site.

The University has developed guidance to manage the dual relationship that students may have with the University as both students and employees or workers. The guidance clarifies procedures that may be invoked should action need to be taken against a student in either capacity. Further information is available from HR.

Work permission for international students

International PGR students studying in the UK on a Student or Tier 4 student visa are allowed to work up to a maximum of 20 hours per week during term time. The University recommends they should work no more than 16 hours per week to ensure an appropriate study-work balance. Unlike other students, PGRs are considered to be in term time for the duration of the academic year, except during agreed periods of annual leave (as detailed above) which must be agreed with the student's supervisor. During agreed periods of annual leave, visa-sponsored students can work full-time hours, albeit only if their leave period covers a full week block, running from Monday to Sunday. If they have a mix of study and vacation days in any given week, they are still subject to the term-time restrictions on working hours for that week.

Immigration regulations require all employers to obtain written proof from Student or Tier 4 sponsored students of their term time and vacation periods. Further information about working conditions is available from ISSAC.

Optional Placements

The University believes that doctoral researchers should have the opportunity to undertake a placement if that will benefit their development or career opportunities. Placements in Higher Education traditionally relate to periods of learning activity away from the usual education environment available from the institution during a programme of study.

Partners providing placement opportunities are likely to include business and industry, NHS, charities, public sector bodies such as local authorities or central government. Where placements are with an educational institution, this should provide opportunities for skills development that are different from those obtained in the PhD.

A period of research that is part of the student's programme at an off-campus location would not constitute a placement. This could include fieldwork, data collection in archives, research attachments at other institutions to learn specific research techniques or to access specific facilities or equipment.

Placements must be agreed upon with the supervisory team and should not adversely affect a student's submission deadline. Students who wish to undertake a placement during their studies which is unrelated to their research topic can apply to reclaim the time spent on placement using the placements application form. Students who are granted permission to undertake a placement are given a registration status which reflects the fact that they are on placement and have their time limit extended accordingly.

Please note that students undertaking placements of this nature will not normally be supervised or monitored by the University during the placement period.

The placements form must be completed before the start of the placement and should be checked and approved by the student's supervisor and returned to the PGR Support Team in Research, Partnerships and Innovation, who will check the student's eligibility and put the application forward for faculty approval. Once approved, the student's record will be updated to reflect the student's status on placement and to update the student's fee-paying period and time limit.

International students and optional placements

Unfortunately, due to immigration regulations, this scheme cannot generally be accessed by students on a Student or Tier 4 visa. This is because of restrictions on the amount of leave of absence permitted, and on the right to work full time in the UK (see guidance from the International Student Support, Advice and Compliance team here). An alternative option could be to undertake work experience informally within visa permitted working hours, alongside the PGR programme. This would not require an application form or any changes to the student record, but would need to be balanced carefully alongside other commitments because the time limit would not be extended in these circumstances. Any part-time work a student on a Student or Tier 4 visa does on placement inside the UK alongside the PGR programme will count towards their 20 hour per week limit under their visa conditions. Students must be careful to ensure they limit any additional employment they do during this time to ensure they are not working a total of more than 20 hours per week in the UK.

Alternatively it may be possible to undertake a placement outside of the UK (subject to working restrictions in that country), in which case it would be permitted to apply for time away from the programme via this process. It is important that international students understand that the placement would contribute to the total amount of Leave of Absence permitted by a Student or Tier 4 visa, or may result in the cancellation of their current visa and a new visa application to return to the UK in future. International students must familiarise themselves with the guidance here in advance of submitting an application.

Compulsory Placements

Some PGR programmes include mandatory placements which students must take as an integral and assessed part of their course. Where this is the case the placement will be a mandatory and assessed component, usually linked to a module, which must be completed in order to progress to the next stage of study, or to be eligible for award. The placement requirement must be approved when the programme is set up, and specified in the programme regulations.

In these cases, students do not need to submit an application form and no changes will be made to the student record or time limit to reflect the placement. This is because it forms part of the programme the student was admitted to, and time for this is factored into the normal registration period.

International students are permitted to work full time as part of a compulsory placement of this nature, because it is part of the programme specified on the visa. The only additional requirement for international students is that details of the placement (dates and location) are reported to Research, Partnerships and Innovation in advance of the placement starting, so the temporary change of location can be reported to UKVI. Normally the administrative team managing the programme's placements will be responsible for this.

Please note this applies to compulsory placements as reflected in the University's programme regulations only. If a funder, industry partner or other party requires a placement to be completed, but students are not enrolled on a specific programme with an approved and integral placement, this will need to be managed via the "optional placement" route above. Any programmes interested in introducing an assessed and integral placement should consult the PGR Programmes team.

Placement application form

Thesis Preparation

The following section provides guidance to postgraduate research students on requirements for the preparation and submission of a thesis for a higher degree by research. Students are advised to read this section carefully to ensure that they are familiar with the requirements.

English Language requirements

Theses should normally be written in English. In exceptional circumstances, a student may request permission from their faculty to present a thesis that is written in another language where there is a clear academic justification for doing so, e.g. where the language is directly linked to the research project, or where there is a clear benefit to the impact and dissemination of the research.

Likewise, the oral examination should normally be conducted in English, except in cases where there are pedagogic reasons for it to be held in another language, or where there is a formal agreement in place that requires the viva to be conducted in another language. Permission should be sought from the appropriate faculty for a viva to be conducted in a language other than English.

Guidance on writing the thesis

The main source of advice and guidance for students beginning to write their thesis is the supervisory team. Students should discuss the proposed structure of the thesis with their supervisor at an early stage in their research programme, together with the schedule for its production, and the role of the supervisor in checking drafts. Supervisors should be prepared to advise on such matters as undertaking a literature review, referencing, and formatting the thesis, and on what should or should not be included in the thesis, including any supplementary or non-standard material.

The University offers a Thesis Mentoring programme to help students to manage better the process of writing their thesis. StudySkills@Sheffield is a repository of digital resources, downloadable templates, information and links to support all areas of research, quantitative analysis, and thesis writing.

Students may also find it helpful to consult theses from the same subject discipline that are available in institutional repositories such as White Rose eTheses Online or via the British Library's EThOS service.

Students who intend to include in their thesis any material owned by another person should consider the copyright implications at an early stage and should not leave this until the final stages of completing the thesis. The correct use of third-party copyright material and the avoidance of academic misconduct are taken very seriously by the University. Attendance at a copyright training session offered by the Library is strongly recommended. Please see: Use of copyright material

Guidance on good practices in authorship and acknowledgement is set out in the GRIP policy expectations.

Students should take care to ensure that the identification of any third-party individuals within their thesis (e.g. participants in the research), is only done with the informed consent of those individuals, and in recognition of any potential risks that this may present to them. This is especially important because an electronic copy of the thesis will normally be made publicly available via the White Rose eTheses Online repository.

Acceptable support in writing the thesis

It is acceptable for a student to receive the following support in writing the thesis from the supervisory team (that is additional to the advice and/or information outlined above), if the supervisory team has considered that this support is necessary:

- Where the meaning of the text is not clear the student should be asked to rewrite the text in question to clarify the meaning.
- If the meaning of the text is unclear, the supervisory team can provide support in correcting grammar and sentence construction to clarify its meaning. If a student requires significant support with written English above what is considered to be correcting grammar and sentence construction, the supervisory team will, at the earliest opportunity, request that the student obtains remedial tuition support from the University's English Language Teaching Centre.
- The supervisory team cannot rewrite text that changes the meaning of the text (ghost writing/ghost authorship in a thesis is unacceptable).
- The supervisory team can provide guidance on the structure, content, and expression of writing.
- The supervisory team can proofread the text.
- Anyone else who may be employed or engaged to proofread the text is only permitted to change spelling and grammar and must not be able to change the content of the thesis.

The Confirmation Review and the oral examination are the key progression milestones for testing whether a thesis is a student's own work.

Requests for an extension to a student's time limit for the student to improve their standard of written English in the thesis will not be approved. Students who require additional language support should be signposted to appropriate sources of help at an early stage in their degree to avoid such an occurrence.

Yellow sticker scheme for disabled students

The University runs a sticker scheme for students who have an impairment that can affect aspects of their written communication. This applies to all students, including PGRs submitting a thesis for examination.

Further information is available at: from the DDSS website

Word count

The University does not have any regulatory requirements governing the length of theses, but most Faculties have established guidelines:

- Arts & Humanities - 40,000 words (MPhil); 75,000 words (PhD)
- Health - 40,000 words (MPhil); 75,000 words (PhD, MD)
- Science – 40,000 words (MPhil); 80,000 words (PhD)
- Social Sciences - 40,000 words (MPhil); 75,000-100,000 words (PhD)

The above word counts exclude footnotes, bibliography, and appendices. Where there are no guidelines, students should consult their supervisor as to the length of thesis appropriate to the topic of research.

Thesis formats

The University permits theses to be submitted in a range of formats, depending on the nature of the research undertaken and to allow inclusion of material in a form suitable for submission for publication in a peer-reviewed journal. The student and supervisory team should discuss at an early stage which thesis format would be most beneficial to their learning and career path. Sponsored students are advised to check first with their sponsor whether there are any restrictions on the format of their thesis. Some sponsors may only allow the submission of a monograph format thesis.

The following formats are permitted:

- Monograph
- Thesis including published works (or works formatted with the intention or possibility of publication)
- Practice-based thesis

Irrespective of the format, all doctoral students must be able to satisfy the examiners that the thesis:

- is original work undertaken under the supervision of a Sheffield supervisor which forms an addition to knowledge; and
- shows evidence of systematic study and of the ability to relate the results of such study to the general body of knowledge in the subject; and
- is worthy of publication, either in full or in an abridged form.

In addition, the format of the thesis should be such that it is demonstrably a coherent body of work, i.e. includes a summary, an introduction, a description of the aims of the research, an analytical discussion of the related findings to date, the main results, and conclusions, and sets the total work in context.

A thesis submitted for examination must be substantially different from any material that has previously been submitted by the student for any degree or qualification at this or any other institution.

1. Monograph format thesis

A monograph-style thesis is a thesis comprising several chapters. The thesis typically includes the following: a summary, an introduction, chapters describing the aims of the research and a description of the methods used and the theoretical basis underpinning them, and an analysis of the results and conclusions that sets the work in context. The student is the sole author.

2. Publication format thesis

This format incorporates a collection of papers that are in a format suitable for publication in a peer-reviewed journal. This may include scientific papers, book chapters or other appropriate published formats. The papers may appear alongside traditional thesis chapters, or they may comprise the majority of the thesis as a collection of published works that forms a substantial and coherent whole, supported by a commentary that links the submitted works and outlines their coherence and significance.

Materials included in the publication format thesis may include those that are solely and/or partly authored by the student.

The papers or chapters may have already been published, be accepted for publication, or be planned for submission for publication where a specific format is expected. Equally, there may be no intention of submitting the papers for publication because of the nature of the results, but the purpose is to familiarise the student with the conventions of academic publishing. The benefit to students in incorporating any such publications into their thesis is that there is no requirement for them to be re-written into a more traditional, monograph-style format thesis, thus saving students from undertaking unnecessary additional work.

The thesis must remain an original contribution to the field of research. Within the introductory section to the thesis, the student should clearly explain the nature and extent of their contribution to each of the publications presented, as well as the contribution of any co-authors and other collaborators. The materials contained within the thesis must normally be derived from original research undertaken by the student while supervised by a University of Sheffield supervisor. There may be exceptional cases where this is not the case, e.g. where a student has transferred to Sheffield, having already commenced their research at another university.

The intention to submit a publication-based thesis must be discussed and agreed upon with the supervisors at an early stage to ensure that there is a clear understanding of the expectations required for thesis submission.

Contributions and permissions - The normal expectation is that the student should be the primary contributor to the writing of each of the papers, including the design and conduct of the reported research. It is relatively commonplace in some disciplines for students to co-author publications with their supervisory team or wider research group. In many disciplines, 'primary contributor' would be denoted by the student being the first or last author.

This is not, however, the case in all disciplines. Where a student has made a substantial contribution to a paper that they wish to include, but is not the first or last author, they should include a statement clarifying the nature and extent of their contribution, and that of any collaborators, within the thesis, to justify its inclusion.

If there is any doubt as to the specific contribution of the student to material with multiple authors, the University retains the right to contact other authors to seek assurance about the student's contribution.

If a thesis contains published material the length of which has been determined by a particular publisher's requirements, students must ensure that additional explanatory text pertaining to methodology or detailed and critical analysis of the work or supplementary statistical data or other aspects are included to ensure the thesis is a coherent whole.

Confirmation that permission has been obtained where appropriate to include material that has been published or accepted for publication in the thesis must be obtained by the student.

Pagination – The main function of the thesis is to allow the examiners to conduct an assessment of the student's work; therefore, it is essential that the thesis contains a strong general introduction, and that the pagination of the thesis makes sense and is easy for the examiners to navigate. Where possible, the pagination sequence should flow throughout the thesis. This might necessitate including separate versions of the papers, rather than inserting pre-prints.

To ease readability, figures, tables and accompanying legends should be included at the appropriate point in the text, and not at the end of the text as would often be typical for a paper submitted for publication. Should this not be possible, the thesis may include published material that already has its own pagination. However, in this instance, the pages of the publications themselves should not be included in the overall pagination sequence of the thesis to avoid confusion.

If the same information is repeated across multiple chapters/publications, students should consider ways to make the thesis more concise and readable. For example, if common experimental details are included in each publication, it might make more sense to include them once as a concise methods chapter.

It is recommended that a page should be included before each publication with the publication number, title, and page number of the thesis. The pagination sequence of the thesis will then resume at the end of the publication.

Copyright considerations - A paper that has been published or accepted for publication may have involved the student signing a copyright transfer agreement, transferring the copyright to the publisher. Some publishers allow the retention of certain rights, sometimes including reprinting a whole paper or parts of it in a thesis. Students must confirm this with the publisher at the time of publication. If not confirmed at the time of publication, retrospective permission must be sought before submitting a final electronic thesis.

Students should deposit the author accepted manuscript (post peer review) version of journal articles accepted for publication in the University repository, White Rose Research Online, via myPublications, at the point of its acceptance by a publisher. The University Library will then offer assistance in managing adherence with any embargo periods. Publishers may permit the inclusion of the author-accepted manuscript in the ethesis under embargo for the relevant period. See Publishing work prior to submission.

Amendments to published work - The examiners may request corrections to a part of the thesis that is already a published paper following the viva examination. It is recommended that where corrections to published papers are requested this should be addressed in the final thesis by the insertion of a page immediately following the paper in question explaining the nature of the corrections required by the examiners.

Where these are substantive changes, the student and supervisor may need to consider whether a formal correction also needs to be submitted to the journal as well, although this will be a rare occurrence.

3. Practice-based thesis

A practice-based thesis allows students to submit a shortened monograph-style thesis supplemented by additional material comprising a practical component, for example, a portfolio of original compositions, portfolio of creative work, a recital or performance. This format is only accepted in specified degree programmes.

The thesis must clearly present the additional material in its relevant context and describing the research methodology and process. A permanent record of the additional material will be bound and submitted with the thesis, where practicable.

Students should follow the regulations for the specific degree programmes where such a submission is allowed. Apart from the inclusion of practical materials, the thesis itself should conform to the same standards expected for a monograph format thesis.

A template statement for acknowledging collaborative work included within the thesis is available from the Code of Practice.

Academic integrity and academic misconduct

What is academic integrity?

Academic integrity is a positive commitment to approaching academic work in a way that is honest, fair, respectful and responsible, and is a fundamental value in higher education. Academic integrity is a component of academic rigour.

What is academic misconduct?

Academic misconduct is any act that compromises the integrity of the academic process, and/or has the potential to gain an unfair advantage for a student or group of students in a formal university assessment.

Academic misconduct was previously referred to as ‘unfair means’.

Consequences

The consequences of academic misconduct can be serious. Students may face action by their school or formal disciplinary action.

The Regulations relating to the Discipline of Students can be found in the University Calendar.

There is lots of guidance and support available to help students to understand what different forms of academic misconduct are, and how they can prevent them from occurring. If students are unsure, they should speak to their supervisors, or a member of staff in their school.

How academic misconduct is detected

We use a range of strategies to detect academic misconduct, including Turnitin, which helps detect plagiarism. Students should only use University-approved software. If a non-University plagiarism checker is used it might collect, share, publish or sell their work without their knowledge or consent. This could lead to a case of academic misconduct.

Students are required to declare that all work submitted is entirely their own. Their school may require students to attach a declaration form to work that they submit.

Some assessments may take place online, but the rules around academic misconduct do not change. Students should ensure that they understand what is expected of them, and check with their supervisor if unsure.

Generative AI and academic misconduct

Using Generative Artificial Intelligence isn’t in itself academic misconduct, it depends upon how it has been used, particularly where work, such as the thesis, is to be assessed. Where a student has used a GenAI tool or service to generate work and submit it as their own, that will be considered as academic misconduct: it is effectively commissioning work rather than doing their own. Generative AI is prone to hallucinations, presenting incorrect information or indeed presenting information without proper referencing. As such, there is a risk of unintentional fabrication or plagiarism.

If you would like to access further guidance on the use of GenAI within your studies you can access the following resources:

The Library Guide on Generative AI Literacy: a guide to taking a critical approach to GenAI

Generative AI in Assessment: a practical guide to using AI in your studies

Types of academic misconduct

Plagiarism

Plagiarism occurs when a student submits someone else's work or ideas – e.g. the work of an expert, lecturer, or fellow/former student – without making it clear that it is not their own work. It is sometimes referred to as false authorship.

Plagiarism can be either intentional or unintentional. Intentional plagiarism may involve deliberately copying sections of text from other sources into your work, or purchasing an essay online. Unintentional plagiarism may include forgetting to include references to sources, inappropriate use of Generative AI or misrepresentation of the sources that you have referred to. Students can also self-plagiarise if they submit their own previously assessed work as part of a new assignment, without proper acknowledgement.

Essay or code buying

This is when a student buys or commissions part of, or the whole of, a piece of work from another student, or an essay-writing or coding website or a GenAI tool, and submits it as their own. It is sometimes referred to as contract cheating.

Students may be encouraged to use, or be approached by these services claiming to help or support their studies at University. Using external websites and submitting third-party content as their own work is an extremely serious form of academic misconduct. This can result in disciplinary action and sanctions, including expulsion from the University.

It is illegal to provide and advertise these services to students, and students who use these services are at risk of blackmail, including threats to report them to the University.

Coursework sites

These sites encourage students to share course materials such as lecture notes, essays, lab reports and exam questions. The University does not support the use of these sites and may take disciplinary action in line with the Student Discipline Regulations.

Students can access additional guidance and support in relation to coursework sites.

Collusion

Collusion can occur when a student works with someone else, or a group of others, on a piece of assessed work that they are supposed to be completing by themself.

Collusion can occur intentionally or unintentionally. For example, if work is shared with a friend and then used by them without your knowledge, you may face an accusation of collusion.

If more than one student has independently used similar GenAI outputs within their work then the resulting assignments may appear to be the product of collusion.

Fabrication

When a student submits made-up information (such as quotes, lab results, references, or survey findings that are untrue).

GenAI tools are unable to evaluate whether its sources are objectively true or factually accurate, and can give a convincing fabricated response to a question that it has found no answer for. False or misleading outputs are sometimes called 'hallucinations'.

GenAI should not be used to generate or provide data. If AI fabricates data this will be treated in the same way as if you have fabricated the data yourself.

Students can find more detailed information on the different types of academic misconduct, and how to prevent them, here: www.sheffield.ac.uk/study-skills/assessment/academic-integrity/academic-integrity.

How can academic misconduct be prevented?

Referencing is a key skill that can help to prevent the use of academic misconduct. Whenever a student takes notes, they should note down referencing details at the same time, otherwise they may find it difficult to credit other scholars properly in assessed work later on.

The Library also offers information and online tutorials about referencing and avoiding plagiarism.

Further information and video tutorials are available here.

What happens when academic misconduct is detected?

If the University suspects academic misconduct, they will investigate and take action where appropriate. If there are concerns that academic misconduct has been used in a thesis following submission, the viva examination will be postponed pending an investigation and any subsequent disciplinary action. Schools/ examiners should first seek advice before proceeding further with the examination process.

Use of copyright material

Material owned by a third party - another author, photographer, publisher, etc. – is protected by copyright. Use of third-party material in your thesis therefore has copyright implications, particularly when publishing your thesis online. Permission to include material can come in several forms:

- If the work is old (generally copyright exists for 70 years following the death of the author).
- If re-use of the work is covered by an open licence such as Creative Commons.
- If there is an exception in law which applies to a student's use - this will usually be for a small amount of published work.

If the use does not fall under any of the terms above, students will need to seek permission directly from the copyright holder. If the material is from a published book or journal, it is best to contact the publisher of the work in the first instance. Many large publishers have Rights and Permissions departments used to dealing with copyright clearance, email addresses can often be found on publishers' websites. It is important to realise that no response does not mean that permission is granted. Where permission to use the third-party copyright material is obtained, students should make sure that clear acknowledgements are provided within the thesis, and that a written record of all correspondence is kept. It is important when requesting permissions from rights holders that it is made clear to them that the eventual thesis will be online and open access and not print.

If clearance is not obtained to use copyright material that is considered essential then it will be necessary to edit the electronic thesis so that it complies with third-party copyright requirements, clearly indicating the excisions made. A full copy of the thesis will also be required to be deposited, but will not be made publicly available.

Further information about copyright can be found on the Library webpages.

All newly registered research students are strongly encouraged to undertake training on using copyright materials. Details of training events are on the Library Doctoral Development Programme pages, or contact the relevant Librarian for further information.

Publishing work prior to submission

Students may include in their thesis work that has already been published, in part or in whole, but should consider the following copyright implications.

Publishing a journal article or conference proceedings paper has in the past often meant signing a copyright transfer agreement, by which the author(s) transfer the copyright to the publisher. Students should be aware when publishing that they can negotiate to keep their copyright, or to give a licence to publish.

They should also now familiarise themselves with the University's Research Publications and Copyright Policy. The policy enables authors to control copyright, as set out in the University's new IP policy, to their own journal articles and conference proceedings papers, apply a CC BY licence to them and make them available via the institutional repository, White Rose Research Online (WRRO) without embargo. The policy does not apply to monographs, book chapters or long-form publications, though students publishing these whose research degree has been funded by UKRI, Wellcome Trust, the European Union or any other funder with an open access mandate should see the guidance in the Open Research section below.

Postgraduate research students at Sheffield who have their articles and conference proceedings papers accepted for publication should deposit their accepted manuscript versions into WRRO, via myPublications, in order to comply with the policy. This also ensures students are able to include this version of their manuscript in their thesis.

Where circumstances do not allow compliance with the Research Publications and Copyright Policy and an exception is requested - for example where a co-author is unable to agree to make the accepted manuscript open access, or specific corporate funding restrictions apply - then some publishers may still allow students to retain certain rights, which might include reprinting the whole paper or part of the paper in a thesis. This should be confirmed with the publisher at the time of publication, or they will need to write for permission retrospectively before submitting the eThesis. In such cases students will need to document in their eThesis that they have permission from the publisher or have retained the right to publish the material. If a student wishes to include a paper excepted from the policy that has multiple authors, they will also need to obtain the permission of any co-authors before it can be incorporated into the eThesis.

Turnitin will identify any previous publication of the text in a journal or conference paper in the originality report. If the resubmission is accepted practice within a school and the student has retained their rights under the policy, or obtained permission from the publisher and any co-authors, this match can be excluded from the results.

If any of the above conditions cannot be met, i.e. the paper was not deposited in WRRO under the Research Publications and Copyright Policy, or publishers or a co-author does not give the necessary permission, or where resubmission of material is not accepted practice within a school, then the only alternative to embargoing the eThesis is to rewrite the material which they have authored and to reference it appropriately to avoid self-plagiarism.

Students should ensure that they properly reference any published papers within their thesis, even if they are the author.

Publishing or posting research online

Academic publishing is growing and developing with new journals and publishing platforms emerging, many of them offering open access options. This has led to a rise in "predatory publishing" - publications lacking in identifiable scholarship, academic rigour, or credibility. Students are advised to check the credentials of any unfamiliar publisher or journal before proceeding to publish with them. Use the guidance from Think, Check, Submit. Students may also be interested in Think, Check, Attend, which is a similar initiative aimed at helping students avoid fake or fraudulent conferences.

Students should also check they own any content before posting it on a social network or website. It is advisable not to post published papers or research that they intend to publish. The best way to make previously published research available online is through White Rose Research Online (WRRO) via myPublications, which can be accessed from the services menu in MUSE.

Formatting

All theses are now submitted electronically. However, it is sometimes necessary to print a copy of the thesis, e.g. where requested by an examiner, so it is important that students adhere to the following basic formatting rules.

Printed theses are normally A4 in size. Alternative sizes may be permitted where there is good academic reason (for example where the thesis includes a design portfolio) and with the prior approval of the supervisor.

Single spacing throughout the body of the text is acceptable and is essential for indented quotations and footnotes, but double or 1.5 spacing may be more easily readable for 11pt or 12pt text and is more commonly used. Print copies may be requested by the examiners, therefore margins at the binding edge should be not less than 20mm and other margins not less than 15mm. Where a print copy of the thesis is required, it should preferably be printed double-sided.

Pages should be numbered consecutively throughout the thesis, including pages containing diagrams, figures, illustrations, appendices, and references. Figures or images included within the thesis must be of sufficient size and clarity as to be legible.

Where appropriate to the discipline, theses may be written in LaTeX.

Format of the cover page

The cover page must show:

- the University's name and logo
- the author's name in full
- the full title of the thesis
- the degree for which the thesis is submitted
- the year of submission
- the volume number (if the thesis comprises more than one volume)

Thesis summary

It is a regulatory requirement that the thesis should include a summary or abstract, which should not exceed 300 words in length.

Thesis binding

Should the student require a hard copy of the thesis, Print & Creative Services provides a thesis printing and binding service using a channel binding system. There are three binding packages available for theses, which include comb, wiro and hard binding and include a CD copy.

All packages meet university regulations for thesis first submissions and resubmissions.

Hard binding has your details (e.g. name of student, title of thesis and date of submission) gold foiled onto the cover of the document. Full details of the three options, including prices, are available from Print & Creative Services.

It is recommended that 100gsm A4 paper is used (although 80gsm is acceptable). The maximum thickness of a bound volume is 35mm with covers (or 32mm without covers). Therefore, if the unbound copy of a student's thesis is more than 32mm thick, the thesis will have to be bound into two volumes. Where two or more volumes are required, normal practice is for the bibliography and/or appendices to form the second volume. In such cases, the thesis will require two title pages, which specify 'Volume 1' and 'Volume 2' respectively; however only one contents page is required in Volume 1.

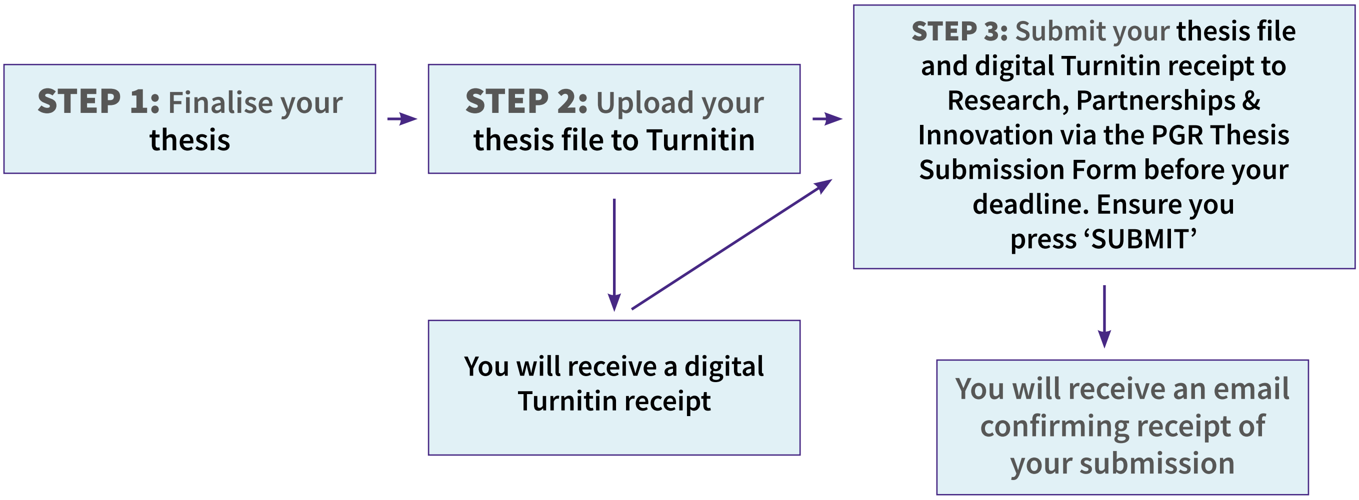
If amendments are required after the oral examination has been held, volumes can be rebound by Print & Creative Services following insertion of new pages (RE bind cost applies).

Before submitting work for binding, students are advised to make sure that the material is in good order, as pages are bound strictly in the order in which they are delivered. Items for rebinding should have the new pages inserted by the author.

Binding work is usually completed within 2-3 working days of acceptance. However, at busier times it may not be possible to complete all work within the normal timescale. Students are advised to present their work in good time for binding or alteration. Under certain circumstances Print & Creative Services provides a same day/24-hour service; however this incurs an extra charge per copy. Further information is available from Print & Creative Services.

Thesis Submission

Summary of requirements for thesis submission and resubmission



Once you have completed step 3, your thesis submission is complete

Troubleshooting: if you have difficulties in submitting your thesis, first note the following:

- If Turnitin is not available, please proceed to step 3 and submit your thesis to Research, Partnerships & Innovation via the PGR Thesis Submission Form. You will still need to upload to Turnitin for a similarity check and forward on your digital receipt as soon as possible. You should contact your school administrator for Turnitin assistance.
- If you are unable to access the PGR Thesis Submission Form, please email your thesis and Turnitin receipt to pgr-enquiries@sheffield.ac.uk by your expected completion date. We will accept your submission via email.

1. The thesis must be submitted to Research, Partnerships & Innovation via the PGR Thesis Submission Form no later than your time limit and also uploaded to Turnitin for a similarity check. These are two separate steps (see diagram above) that must both be completed for your submission to be accepted.
2. The thesis uploaded to Turnitin should be identical to the thesis submitted to Research, Partnerships & Innovation, unless it exceeds 800 pages and 100MB, in which case any pictures or diagrams may need to be excluded from the Turnitin similarity check. You will be prompted to download a copy of your digital receipt when you upload, which should also be submitted to Research, Partnerships & Innovation via the PGR Thesis Submission Form.
3. If you are unable to access Turnitin, contact your school PGR administrator who can grant you access to the final Turnitin folder. If you are still unable to upload your thesis to Turnitin for any reason, e.g. due to a technical issue or loss of service, you must still ensure that you submit your thesis to Research, Partnerships & Innovation by your time limit. You should then upload the exact same file to Turnitin as soon as possible thereafter (seeking help from your school PGR administrator if needed), and forward the digital receipt to Research, Partnerships & Innovation as soon as possible.
4. When submitting your thesis to Research, Partnerships & Innovation, the thesis file must be correctly labelled in the format 'Surname, Forename, Registration number' to avoid processing delays. Please also include any supplementary documents that form part of the thesis (e.g. research data, recordings, etc). If you are submitting a Covid Impact Form, please also include this. Don't forget to include your Turnitin receipt. You can download this when you upload your thesis to Turnitin.
5. If you are unable to access the PGR Thesis Submission Form for any reason, then you must instead email a copy of your thesis to pgr-enquiries@sheffield.ac.uk no later than your time limit. Under no circumstances should you send your thesis to your examiners yourself. This must be done by Research, Partnerships & Innovation.
6. Please be aware that **only uploading your thesis to Turnitin does not constitute submission of the thesis to Research, Partnerships & Innovation**, as the version in Turnitin is not accessible by Research, Partnerships & Innovation and it is also not always a complete copy of the thesis, as it may not include some pictures or diagrams. It is essential that you also submit your thesis to Research, Partnerships & Innovation via the PGR Thesis Submission Form, or via email if you cannot access the form.
7. Your thesis must be submitted in electronic format only. Print copies are not required. If examiners request a hard copy, Research, Partnerships & Innovation will arrange for one to be printed and sent to the examiner(s).
8. We strongly recommend that you do not leave thesis submission to the last minute. Any submissions received after midnight on the day of your submission deadline will be regarded as out of time, and you will need to apply for a time limit extension.
9. Please be aware that thesis submission is final. Once a thesis has been submitted, it cannot normally be retracted. You are responsible for ensuring that the thesis you submit is the correct version and is appropriate to be examined.

For full information on the thesis submission process, please read the information below.

Preparing to submit

Whilst the responsibility for the writing, preparation, and submission of the thesis rests with the student, it is expected that the supervisor will read and comment on the draft, with a view to enabling the student to produce a thesis which is coherent, well-documented and written in good English. Ideally, the student and supervisor should be in agreement as to when the thesis is ready for submission. Ultimately, however, the final responsibility rests with the student.

Occasionally, a student may choose to submit their thesis without the knowledge or approval of the supervisor. Whilst students are within their rights to do so, this is not recommended. The University strongly recommends that all students take account of the academic advice given to them by their supervisor and inform their supervisor when they intend to submit. Failure to do so is likely to compromise the quality of the thesis and will also result in delays in the examination process if examiners have not been appointed at the time of submission.

Please note that students must submit their thesis online no later than midnight on their submission deadline, even if the deadline falls on a weekend or university closure day. If a student tries to submit their thesis after their time limit has passed, even if it is by one day or less, they will be required to apply for an extension and no further action will be taken regarding the submitted thesis until an extension request has been received and approved by the faculty.

Thesis submission process

First submissions and resubmissions

Students must submit their thesis to Research, Partnerships & Innovation, who will ensure that it is despatched to the examiners, along with the relevant forms and guidance.

Under no circumstances should a copy of the thesis be sent direct to the examiners by either the student or the student's school.

The electronic thesis submission should be made through Google forms, via the PGR thesis submission form. This should include the thesis and the Turnitin digital receipt. Students can also upload any supporting materials that form part of their thesis examination (e.g. supplemental data, audio recordings, and list of corrections in the case of a resubmission). Please note that, depending on the thesis file size and internet speed, the submission upload process may take a few minutes, so students are strongly advised not to leave submission to the last minute.

To ensure that the submission is dealt with promptly, students must ensure that the file name of their thesis is in the format 'Surname, Forename, registration number', and that any additional files that form part of the submission are clearly labelled so that they can be easily identified.

Students will receive email confirmation of their thesis submission. Please be aware that thesis submission is final. Once a thesis has been submitted the examination process will be deemed to have commenced and it cannot normally be retracted. Students must ensure that the thesis they submit is the correct version and is appropriate for examination, i.e. it should be in a readable format and it should be complete.

Students experiencing difficulties in submitting should contact pgr-enquiries@sheffield.ac.uk in the first instance for advice. If the thesis is being submitted from a country that does not allow access to Google Forms, students should instead submit a pdf of their thesis and Turnitin receipt by email to pgr-enquiries@sheffield.ac.uk. Students must also upload a copy of their thesis at the same time to Turnitin (see further details below).

If any of the examiners request a print copy of the thesis, this will be arranged by Research, Partnerships & Innovation.

Staff candidates are required to pay a fee on submission of the thesis. In 2025-26 this will be £530. Payments required upon the submission of any thesis may be made online.

If the student has completed their Doctoral Development Programme (DDP) Evidencing Development Summary and their Access to Thesis form, now is a good time to also submit these forms to Research, Partnerships and Innovation. However, please note that these documents are not required at the thesis submission stage and should not delay the student's thesis submission if they have not yet been completed.

Turnitin similarity check

The University requires all theses for higher degrees by research to be uploaded to Turnitin for a similarity check. Turnitin is a text matching tool that is licensed for use in the University of Sheffield where, among other things, it is used as an aid in the prevention of academic misconduct. This requirement applies to both first submissions and resubmissions. Turnitin produces an 'originality report' which will be checked by the internal examiner to ensure that there has been no academic misconduct.

Before the final thesis is submitted for examination students should contact their school PGR administrator for information on the procedures to be followed for uploading the final copy of their thesis through Turnitin.

Once uploaded, the student will be able to download a digital receipt, which should be included when they submit their thesis to Research, Partnerships & Innovation.

As stated above, uploading a thesis to Turnitin does not constitute formal submission of the thesis. Students must also submit their full thesis file to Research, Partnerships and Innovation according to the procedures set out above.

Students should be aware that there is a limit to the size of file that can be uploaded to Turnitin, which is 800 pages and 100 MB. Students whose theses exceed the Turnitin limit may need to exclude pictures or diagrams to successfully upload to Turnitin.

The thesis uploaded to Turnitin must be an exact copy of the thesis submitted for examination (notwithstanding any material such as diagrams, images and tables that may need to be excluded due to file size) and should be uploaded when the student submits their thesis to Research, Partnerships & Innovation. The uploaded file is stored in the Turnitin database, which allows it to be checked against all previous work uploaded to Turnitin. Please note that theses will not be formally sent out for examination until the originality report has been checked by the internal examiner and the thesis is cleared for examination.

Submission checklist

Submission Checklist	1st Submission	Resubmission	Minor Amendments
Prior to the submission of your thesis, ensure that your faculty has approved the inclusion of any non-standard materials	Yes	Yes	Yes
Your supervisor should nominate examiners, who are available to examine your thesis within ten weeks, well in advance of your first submission	Yes		
An electronic copy of the thesis is submitted to Research, Partnerships & Innovation via the PGR thesis submission form. This should include the thesis file and the Turnitin digital receipt	Yes	Yes	
An electronic copy of the thesis is also uploaded to Turnitin for a similarity check, and a digital receipt downloaded. Remember – this is in addition to the online submission to Research, Partnerships & Innovation	Yes	Yes	
Third-party copyright clearances obtained and acknowledged, where relevant	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ensure you have an abstract, or summary, not exceeding 300 words	Yes	Yes	Yes
Cover page should show: 1. The University name and logo 2. Author's name in full 3. Full title of thesis 4. Degree for which the thesis is submitted, e.g. PhD 5. Year of submission 6. Volume number (if the thesis comprises more than one volume)	Yes	Yes	Yes
Margins at the binding edge should be not less than 20mm and other margins not less than 15mm	Yes	Yes	Yes
Page numbers to be numbered consecutively including appendices	Yes	Yes	Yes

Turnitin and publication

The University does not consider the uploading of work to Turnitin for a similarity check as publication of that work. The act of publication is understood as making content available to the general public. Content uploaded to Turnitin is not available to the general public, in the sense that the public are able to access the content. The Turnitin process merely allows licensed members of the public to request that Turnitin compare an uploaded file with other works to check for any matching text. The Turnitin originality report returns those parts of the work that match another source and the metadata for that source (name, date, title, etc.).

If Turnitin users wish to have access to the content of a matched source that is not already publicly available (as is the case for content that resides on the Turnitin database but not elsewhere) then they must seek permission from the owner. Therefore, the content of work uploaded to Turnitin should not be deemed to be publicly available and thus content in Turnitin should not be deemed to be published.

Thesis despatch

Theses will be sent out to examiners electronically, along with reports and guidance notes, as soon as the Turnitin similarity check has been completed and the thesis has been cleared for examination. Theses will normally be despatched to the examiners within three working days of receipt of confirmation that the Turnitin originality report is acceptable and provided the examiners have been formally appointed by the faculty.

UCard from submission of thesis

Should a student's time limit run out once they have submitted their thesis (but before their award has been made), they can go to SSiD (located in the Students' Union) to have their UCard renewed for the interim period.

Following examination, if a student is required to make any further amendments to their thesis or to resubmit their thesis, then their time limit will be changed accordingly, and they will be able to extend their UCard in line with the new time limit on their student record.

Thesis Examination

Appointment of examiners

It is the supervisor's responsibility to nominate suitable examiners with appropriate subject expertise and experience well in advance of the student submitting their thesis. It is essential, therefore, that the student keeps their supervisor informed of progress towards thesis submission, so that a recommendation for the appointment of examiners can be made to the faculty in good time. Students who submit their thesis without first informing their supervisor should note that this may result in delays in the examination process if the examiners have not yet been appointed. All nominations for the appointment of examiners require faculty approval prior to the thesis being sent out.

Supervisors should informally approach the external examiner(s) initially to verify their willingness to act and must complete the Appointment of Examiners form for approval. Supervisors should also check that the proposed examiners are aware of the timescales for examination of the thesis and completion of examiners' reports and are available to act within the relevant timescales. Forms are available from the Code of Practice.

At least two examiners must be appointed for every examination, at least one of whom must be an external examiner. The external examiner is a senior academic or professional/practitioner with expertise in the relevant subject area of the thesis and must be appointed from outside the University. Most students are required to have one internal and one external examiner, apart from university staff candidates, who are required to have two external examiners. It may also be deemed appropriate to appoint two external examiners for candidates who are undertaking work in their school, even if they are not formally registered as staff candidates. If it is not possible to appoint a suitable internal examiner, it may be possible to appoint two external examiners.

Where two external examiners are appointed, schools must also nominate a senior member of academic staff to act as an internal coordinator. An internal coordinator may also be appointed if the internal examiner has not yet accrued much examination experience. The internal coordinator's role is primarily to ensure that the University's regulations and procedures are correctly followed and, where there is no internal examiner appointed, to liaise with the examiners and the student concerning the arrangements for the oral examination.

To avoid any potential conflict of interest, examiners should have no previous association with the student or direct involvement with their research project and must declare any past or planned future connections with the student. This includes, but is not limited to, current or former academic supervision, pastoral relationships, family relationships, friendship, employment, or professional connections. The examiners should also advise Research, Partnerships & Innovation if they have a connection to the supervisor, or the other examiner, that might constitute a conflict of interest (such as those listed above). In cases of uncertainty, Research, Partnerships & Innovation should be consulted.

Schools are expected to appoint a diversity of external examiners and not to reappoint the same examiners on multiple occasions. Where possible, an external examiner should not be reappointed within a three-year period. Regular pairings of the same internal and external examiner should also be avoided.

Examiners should always treat the contents of the thesis they are examining as strictly confidential throughout the assessment process and afterwards, and under no circumstances should they share the contents of the thesis with anyone who is not authorised to read it, or put the thesis into any form of Generative AI programme. This is essential for preserving the student's copyright. In some instances there may be an additional requirement for a formal confidentiality agreement to be put in place to cover the examination of the thesis, for example where specified in sponsorship agreements or if there are commercial considerations. It is the responsibility of the supervisor to ensure that arrangements are made for a confidentiality agreement at an early stage, e.g. when the examiners are nominated. Confidentiality agreements can be drawn up by Research, Partnerships & Innovation and initial enquiries should be directed to the PGR Support Team.

Eligibility criteria for appointing examiners

The University has agreed eligibility criteria for the appointment of examiners for research degrees to ensure that the composition of the examination team is appropriate in terms of specialist expertise and experience. The external examiner is expected to have significant and demonstrable knowledge of the field covered by the thesis to provide an in-depth analysis of the thesis and to provide a rigorous viva voce examination. The internal examiner should be able to assess the thesis and to ensure that the examination process is conducted fairly and rigorously and must therefore have a sound knowledge and understanding of university regulations and procedures governing the examination process.

In order that the candidate is treated in a fair and equitable manner consistent with the standards and expectations of the University of Sheffield, the examiners should have demonstrable experience of the PhD process beyond their own candidature and should have experience of successfully supervising at least one doctoral candidate and/or significant experience of examining at least three doctoral theses. Should this not be the case, the curriculum vitae of the proposed examiner and a supporting statement as to why they are considered appropriate should be provided. The case will then be assessed by the relevant Faculty Officer.

Honorary members of the University's academic staff may act as internal examiners, provided they meet the above criteria and provided they will continue to hold their honorary status for the duration of the examination process.

Former members of the University's staff are not eligible to act as an external examiner until a period of at least four years has elapsed following their departure.

A more detailed document describing the eligibility criteria for examiners is also available.

The Appointment of Examiners form for completion by supervisors is available to download from the Code of Practice webpages. Completed forms must be forwarded to Research, Partnerships & Innovation for faculty approval, along with any additional supporting information on the proposed examiner's qualifications and suitability. If it becomes necessary to replace an examiner, the same appointment procedure must be followed, and the Replacement of Examiners form must be used.

In all cases, examiners must be formally appointed by the faculty before the thesis is despatched to the examiners and the date of the viva voce examination is set.

Appointing examiners from overseas

It may sometimes be appropriate to appoint an external examiner from outside the UK, due to their subject expertise. However, for reasons of environmental sustainability and cost, the University is keen to ensure that international air travel is only undertaken where absolutely necessary. For this reason, where an examiner is appointed from outside the UK, a remote viva is the preferred option.

Exceptions for international air travel can be requested by prior agreement with Research, Partnerships and Innovation (RPI). For example, the examiner might already be planning a trip to the UK for another purpose which can be combined with the viva. Where there is a compelling reason for a viva to be held entirely in-person, such as a recommendation in a student's Learning Support Plan, schools should consider whether a UK-based external examiner should be appointed. If this is not possible, RPI should be consulted (pgr-enquiries@sheffield.ac.uk).

Non-UK-based external examiners who are visiting the UK to participate in paid work such as a viva must ensure that they enter the UK on the correct visa. Information regarding the Permitted Paid Engagement Visa is available on the government website.

Examiners' fees and expenses

Expenses and fees incurred by examiners solely because of carrying out the examination should be claimed through Research, Partnerships & Innovation, not the school. Expenses will be paid in line with the University's guidance on allowable expenses, which is issued to examiners.

The oral examination (viva voce)

Essential practice

All PGR students should be provided with general information about what to expect during the viva in order to prepare them (i.e. an overview of the process, who will be there, how long it might last, what the format is likely to be, etc.). This could be provided by individual supervisors or via an organised session at school or faculty level. It is essential that all students with a Learning Support Plan (LSP) have their recommended reasonable adjustments for viva implemented during this preparation period.

Arrangements for preparing PGR students for the final viva examination may involve some of the following:

- Tailored support from supervisors (e.g. discussions about what to expect and which questions or topics may come up, practising answering key questions, signposting students to useful information)
- Offer of a formal mock viva
- Practice of defence of research at Confirmation Review or progression milestones (e.g. interviews or presentations)
- Practice in presenting research and answering questions at conferences or seminars
- Seminars/training sessions addressing topics such as how to prepare for the viva

Arrangements for the oral examination (viva voce)

All examiners are sent a copy of the Guidance Notes for Examiners when they receive their copy of the thesis. It is also issued to the internal coordinator, where one is appointed.

The guidance contains information on:

- The examination of the thesis
- Arrangements and conduct of the oral examination
- Reporting on the examination

Separate guidance notes on the examination process also exist for candidates and for their supervisors.

Examiners are advised, on appointment, that the oral examination should normally take place within ten weeks of their receipt of the thesis. This is an expectation, not a mandatory requirement. Where relevant, all examiners should be sent a copy of a student's Learning Support Plan, provided the student has given their permission for it to be shared. The student will need to download a copy and send it to their school, who will then forward it to the examiners. Viva dates should not be set before the student has submitted and the thesis has been sent out. A period of at least one month can be expected to elapse between the thesis being sent out and the oral examination; however, significant delays in the examination process can have a potentially adverse impact on students, especially overseas students' immigration status. Research, Partnerships & Innovation must be notified of any significant delays in holding the viva examination, either on the part of the examiners or the student. Permission should normally be sought from the faculty if the viva is delayed for more than four months from the date the thesis was sent to the examiners, unless there is a valid reason, e.g. if the viva has been delayed due to an investigation into potential use of academic misconduct.

It is the responsibility of the internal examiner (or the internal coordinator where there is no internal examiner) to arrange the date, time, and venue for the oral examination (viva) and to inform the candidate of the arrangements which have been made. Before doing so, the internal examiner, or coordinator, should ensure that the examiners have been formally appointed and have received the thesis. Students should not be asked to make such arrangements themselves and should not make contact with their examiners prior to the viva. Please note that Research, Partnerships & Innovation cannot make arrangements for the oral examination.

Before the oral examination takes place, the examiners are required to read the thesis and independently prepare a written preliminary report. Examiners should not exchange preliminary reports too far in advance of the viva, but it is expected that the preliminary reports will be shared and discussed shortly before the viva, e.g. at a pre-viva meeting. Where relevant, a student's LSP recommendations should be considered by the examiners at this point. Examiners are advised that their judgement of the thesis should be based on what may reasonably be expected of a diligent and capable student after completion of the prescribed period of research and with due regard to the University's criteria for the degree for which the thesis has been submitted.

Oral examinations that are held in-person are normally held within the University. Fully or partially remote vivas are also permitted. Remote vivas are the preferred option if an examiner is appointed from outside the UK, for reasons of environmental sustainability and cost. The student's supervisor should be available to the student prior to and following the oral examination, to offer advice and support to the student. In exceptional circumstances, the candidate's primary supervisor may attend oral examinations at the request of the candidate, and subject to the prior agreement of the candidate and the examiners. If present, the supervisor must not participate in discussions, questioning or assessment, though examiners may ask them to provide clarification on a specific matter. If present, the supervisor should enter and leave the viva with the candidate and should not be present during any deliberations over the overall outcome of assessment.

Where an internal coordinator has been appointed, they will attend the oral examination to ensure that university procedures and regulations are followed. The internal coordinator will play no other part in the examination process but may be called upon for advice or guidance on viva procedures, including the most appropriate recommendation the examiners should make in the light of their discussions.

Conduct of the oral examination

The oral examination is a regulatory requirement for all students undertaking a higher degree by research. The purposes of the oral examination are as follows:

i. To enable the examiners to assure themselves that the thesis and the research it reports are the candidate's own work.

ii. To give the candidate an opportunity to demonstrate that they can defend the thesis verbally, clarify any issues that the examiners have identified and discuss the subject of the thesis in its wider disciplinary context.

iii. To enable the candidate to demonstrate a firm understanding of the field of research and thus give the examiners an opportunity to assess the candidate's broader knowledge of the field or discipline within which the thesis falls·

iV. To ensure that the candidate's knowledge and understanding of the subject are of the standard expected for the award of the degree.

The oral examination is an integral part of the examination process and attendance is compulsory. Failure to attend a prearranged oral examination without prior notification to the supervisor and/or internal examiner and/or without good reason or justification for non-attendance, may result in the student failing the oral examination and ultimately failing their degree.

The examination will normally be chaired by the external examiner. The oral examination should normally be conducted in English, except in cases where there are pedagogic reasons for it to be held in another language, or where there is a formal agreement that requires the viva to be conducted in another language.

It is recognised that the viva is a stressful and often lengthy assessment process. Therefore, the normal expectation is for a break to be scheduled at an appropriate point during the viva. If none of the parties want to take a break during the viva then that is acceptable; however, examiners should plan for a break to occur and students should feel empowered to ask for one if this is not the case.

On completion of the oral examination, the examiners should inform the candidate of their recommendation to the faculty.

For disabled students, DDSS has guidance on what support they may need in the run up to their viva, as well as what information may or may not be shared with external stakeholders, such as external examiners.

Sharing information with external stakeholders

Viva-related recommendations

Examination outcomes and reports

After the oral examination, the examiners must complete a report that is sent to Research, Partnerships & Innovation for faculty approval. This is a joint report, to which the preliminary reports completed by each examiner prior to the examination must also be appended.

If the examiners are unable to agree on a recommendation, a third examiner, external to the University, is normally appointed. Research, Partnerships & Innovation must be informed immediately so that appropriate arrangements for this can be made.

Examiners must clearly indicate on the report form their recommendation concerning the award or non-award of the degree. The recommendations open to the examiners following first submission and oral examination are set out on the joint report form, as follows.

- that the degree be awarded without the need for any corrections to the thesis
- that the degree be awarded once specified minor corrections have been completed to the satisfaction of the examiners
- that the degree be awarded once specified major corrections have been completed to the satisfaction of the examiners
- that the degree be not now awarded, but that the candidate be allowed to undergo a further oral examination without modification of the form or content of the thesis
- that the degree be not now awarded, but that the candidate be allowed to submit a revised thesis after such modification of form or content as the examiners may prescribe, with/without oral re-examination
- that the degree be not awarded

In addition, examiners for the degree of PhD may also make either of the following recommendations:

- that the degree of PhD be not awarded, but that the degree of Master of Philosophy (MPhil) be awarded (subject only to the necessary changes to the cover page of the thesis or very minor changes to content, as specified by the examiner)
- that the degree of PhD be not awarded, but that the candidate be allowed to submit a revised thesis for the degree of MPhil after such modification of form or content as the examiners may prescribe, with/without oral re-examination

Recommendations for resubmissions and for other degrees may vary and are specified in the Guidance Notes for Examiners and on the appropriate examiners' joint report form. Recommendations other than those specified for a particular degree are not permitted.

Students may be entitled to appeal against the outcome of their viva examination, but only if they have appropriate grounds for appeal. Appeals on the grounds of academic judgement are not permitted. For further details see Complaints and appeals.

Once completed and signed, the joint report form should be returned to Research, Partnerships & Innovation within two weeks of the date of the oral examination. Where minor or major corrections are required, the separate minor/major corrections sheet should be detached and retained until the corrections have been completed to the examiners' satisfaction. One of the examiners will be required to approve the corrections once they have been completed. This is normally undertaken by the internal examiner. The examiner should then sign and date the separate minor or major corrections sheet and return it immediately to Research, Partnerships & Innovation.

Pass with minor corrections

This option may be chosen where the examiners are satisfied that the thesis meets the requirements for the award of the degree, but where there are minor weaknesses or editorial errors that must be rectified before they can recommend the award of the degree. The thesis is generally acceptable and the candidate should not be expected to undertake any further research or substantive analysis. The nature and extent of the required corrections must be genuinely minor in nature, e.g. omissions and improvements to the argument that do not alter the results/conclusions of the thesis.

Students have three months to complete the corrections, regardless of whether they are registered as full-time or part-time, and should be able to reasonably complete the corrections within that period from the date they are notified of the corrections by the examiners.

The candidate cannot fail the degree if this outcome is selected, but they will be withdrawn if they fail to complete the corrections to the examiners' satisfaction within the time limit.

Where minor corrections are required, it is the examiners' responsibility to provide the student with details of the required changes as soon as possible following the viva.

The examiners should also advise the student of the three-month timescale for completion of the corrections. Students who are undertaking minor corrections to their thesis will have their time limit extended by three months and can request that their UCard is extended by SSiD in line with the new time limit on their student record.

Exceptionally, the time limit for completion of minor corrections may be extended by the faculty for a further period; however, lengthy, or repeated extensions are unlikely to be approved, as three months should be adequate time to complete minor corrections. Students who need to request an extension should complete the Time Limit Extension form available from Research, Partnerships & Innovation and, if the extension is granted, will be required to pay the standard extension fee for the duration of the extension period.

Examiners must confirm that they are satisfied with the corrections undertaken by the student before the degree can be awarded. If not, they may ask the student to undertake further work to bring the thesis up to the required standard, which may require an extension to the time limit. If a student is still unable to complete the required corrections to the examiners' satisfaction, and their time limit has passed, then they may be withdrawn.

When the student has completed the required minor corrections, they should send a copy of the revised thesis directly to the examiner who is going to check the amendments (normally this is the internal examiner). It is acceptable for the candidate to email a copy of the thesis directly to the examiner for checking. This is the only circumstance where it is acceptable for candidates to send a copy of the thesis directly to the examiners. Once the thesis corrections have been approved by the examiner, students must provide a final electronic Library copy of their thesis (see 'Final Library copy').

Pass with major corrections

This option may be chosen where the examiners are satisfied that the thesis will merit the award of the degree for which it has been submitted but does not yet satisfy the requirements for the award and contains deficiencies that are more significant than editorial or presentational corrections and that will take more than three months to address, but are not enough to require resubmission of the thesis.

The candidate should not be required to undertake any further original/substantive research, but may undertake further analysis of existing data.

Students have six months to complete the corrections, regardless of whether they are registered as full-time or part-time, and should be able to reasonably complete the corrections within that period from the date they are notified of the corrections by the examiners.

The candidate cannot fail the degree if this outcome is selected, but they will be withdrawn if they fail to complete the corrections to the examiners' satisfaction within the time limit.

Where major corrections are required, it is the examiners; responsibility to provide the candidate with the details of the required corrections as soon as possible following the viva.

The examiners should also advise the student of the six-month timescale for completion of the corrections. Students who are undertaking major corrections to their thesis will have their time limit extended by six months and can request that their UCard is extended by SSiD in line with the new time limit on their student record.

Exceptionally, the time-limit for completion of major corrections may be extended by the faculty for a further period; however, lengthy, or repeated extensions are unlikely to be approved, as six months should be adequate time to complete major corrections. Students who need to request an extension should complete the Time Limit Extension form available from Research, Partnerships & Innovation and, if the extension is granted, will be required to pay the standard extension fee for the duration of the extension period.

Examiners must confirm that they are satisfied with the corrections undertaken by the student before the degree can be awarded. If not, they may ask the student to undertake further work to bring the thesis up to the required standard, which may require an extension to the time limit. If a student is still unable to complete the required corrections to the examiners' satisfaction, and their time limit has passed, then they may be withdrawn.

When the student has completed the required major corrections, they should send a copy of the revised thesis directly to the examiner who is going to check the amendments (normally this is the internal examiner). It is acceptable for the candidate to email a copy of the thesis directly to the examiner for checking. This is the only circumstance where it is acceptable for candidates to send a copy of the thesis directly to the examiners. Once the thesis corrections have been approved by the examiner, students must provide a final electronic Library copy of their thesis (see 'Final Library copy').

Resubmission of a thesis

This option may be chosen where the examiners do not feel able to recommend the award of the degree for which the thesis has been submitted at this time. The thesis requires substantial revisions to its content and/or presentation and may also require further research (primary research or analysis) to be undertaken in order to meet the criteria for the degree. For example, sections may need to be rewritten, new material such as further research, data or calculations may need to be introduced, or corrections to arguments may need to be made. These revisions may affect the results/conclusions of the thesis.

The candidate is granted one year to resubmit their thesis and the potential outcomes from a resubmission are - pass, pass with corrections (minor or major), award of a lower qualification, or fail. The candidate can be withdrawn if they fail to complete the corrections to the examiners' satisfaction within the one-year time limit. The one-year resubmission time limit applies regardless of whether the student was initially registered on a full-time or part-time basis.

Resubmission entails a full re-examination of the revised thesis by both examiners, and may also require the candidate to attend another viva if the examiners require it. As such, the candidate is charged a resubmission fee.

A further viva is essential if the candidate's performance in their first viva was poor, or if there are wider concerns about whether the candidate's knowledge and understanding of the subject are of the standard expected for the award of the degree. Examiners should also consider whether an oral re-examination would help the candidate to justify the additions or alterations that are to be made to the thesis. Where the examiners' original recommendation specifies that a further oral examination is required, this should take place, regardless of the outcome of the examiners' preliminary assessment of the resubmitted thesis.

Where the examiners' recommendation is for a full resubmission, the joint report should contain detailed advice to the student on the required corrections and improvements and must indicate whether the resubmission is with or without a further oral examination. The joint and preliminary reports should be completed and returned to Research, Partnerships & Innovation within two weeks of the date of oral examination. Research, Partnerships & Innovation will formally notify the student of the requirement to resubmit by letter and will also send the student a copy of the examiners' report containing details of the corrections.

Students required to resubmit their thesis will have their time limit amended to 12 months from the date of formal notification from Research, Partnerships & Innovation and can request that their UCard is extended by SSiD in line with the new time limit on their student record.

A resubmission fee is charged for all resubmissions. For 2025-26 this will be £375 for a resubmission without oral examination and £450 for a resubmission with oral examination.

Exceptionally, the time-limit for resubmission may be extended by the faculty for a further period; however, lengthy, or repeated extensions are unlikely to be approved, as 12 months should be adequate time to resubmit. Students who need to request an extension should complete the Time Limit Extension form available from Research, Partnerships & Innovation and, if the extension is granted, will be required to pay the standard extension fee for the duration of the extension period.

At the end of the resubmission period, the revised thesis must be resubmitted directly to Research, Partnerships & Innovation, following the same procedures as apply to a first submission (see 'Thesis Submission'). The resubmitted thesis should also be uploaded to Turnitin at the same time. The resubmitted thesis must not be sent to either of the examiners prior to formal resubmission. Research, Partnerships & Innovation can only accept a resubmitted thesis once the student has been formally notified in writing of the examiners' decision on the first submission.

For resubmissions the cover page should be changed to show the date of the resubmission only, however it is not necessary for the thesis to state 'Resubmission'. It is recommended that a detailed list of the amendments that have been made following the first submission is included with the resubmitted thesis.

If a resubmission with a further oral re-examination is required, this should normally take place within 10 weeks of receipt of the thesis by the examiners.

If a resubmission without a further oral examination is required, the examiners should aim to complete the re-examination of the thesis within approximately 6-8 weeks of their receipt of the revised thesis.

The same reporting requirements apply to resubmissions as to first submissions, i.e. the examiners must each complete an independent written preliminary report and a joint report. There are fewer recommendations available to the examiners following a resubmission and, crucially, there is no option for a student to make a further resubmission at this stage. Consequently, the examiners must be confident that the thesis meets the criteria for the award of the degree, or will do so after a period of minor or major corrections, in order to recommend the award of the degree.

Following the viva, the examiners' report forms should be returned to Research, Partnerships & Innovation within two weeks of the date of the oral examination (or the date of re-examination in the case of a resubmission without oral). If additional minor or major corrections are required, the examiners should retain the minor/major corrections sheet and return it to Research, Partnerships & Innovation once all corrections have been satisfactorily completed.

Following completion of the resubmission and re-examination, students must provide a final electronic Library copy of their thesis (see 'Final Library copy').

Final Library copy

Once all required amendments have been completed and approved by the examiners, all students must submit a final Library copy of their thesis to White Rose eTheses Online (WREO), which is the University's electronic thesis repository. Students should note that their degree will not be awarded until a Library copy has been provided.

Students must ensure that they only upload files that form part of their thesis, e.g. the thesis and any supplementary appendices. Other files such as the Access to Thesis form or extended embargo form should not be uploaded to WREO, or included in the thesis files. Any documents that are included that contain signatures must be redacted for data protection prior to upload.

It is strongly recommended that the thesis is uploaded as a PDF file, rather than a Word document. Individual chapters should not be uploaded separately.

Copyright permissions & redacted eTheses

Students may choose to redact their ethesis submission to remove material that cannot be included, for example sensitive material or material for which copyright clearance has not been obtained. Typically, etheses are edited to remove content for reasons such as the following:

- Permission has not been obtained for third-party copyright material, see the Library webpages
- There is a need to maintain commercial confidentiality relating to aspects of the thesis
- Confidentiality of data needs to be maintained for further research to be undertaken

Wherever possible, students should seek permission to include third-party copyright material in the eThesis. However, it may not always be possible, either because permission is declined, no response is received or because it would be too expensive. Where this is the case, the thesis must be redacted to ensure that such material is not included in the online version.

However, the University also requires a full copy of each thesis to be deposited, even if the full version will not be made publicly available. In such cases, two versions of the eThesis are required, as follows:

1. A redacted eThesis file with any third-party copyright material redacted and replaced with a statement such as “This image has been removed by the author of this thesis for copyright reasons”. If possible, when removing material from the digital copy, a placeholder should be included to retain the pagination of the original document. This version will be made publicly available, either as soon as the degree is awarded, or at the end of any agreed period of embargo (see ‘Embargoes’).
2. A complete eThesis, comprising a single file including the final, corrected content of your thesis (as approved by the examiners). This version will not be made publicly available and will be accessible only to staff with appropriate access to White Rose eTheses Online (WREO), i.e. the Library and Research, Partnerships & Innovation.

You will be required to indicate which version is the redacted version and which is the complete version, so should ensure that uploaded files include either ‘redacted’ or ‘complete’ in the filename.

Access to Thesis form

The Access to Thesis form contains a completed declaration, signed by the student and the supervisor, concerning access to the thesis once it has been uploaded to WREO, including details of any required embargo. Students must submit a completed Access to Thesis form to Research, Partnerships & Innovation before their degree can be awarded. The Access to Thesis must clearly indicate whether an embargo is required.

Open Research

The University of Sheffield is committed to Open Research, which is the practice of making the processes and outputs of research transparent and freely accessible, whenever possible. The goals of open research are to:

- Support dissemination, interpretation, and re-use of research
- Promote research rigour, reliability, and reproducibility
- Allow others to validate and contribute to our research

Find out more about the University’s commitment from www.sheffield.ac.uk/openresearch/university-statement- open-research

Open Access refers to making publications freely available online, as soon as possible, for anyone to read, download, print, copy and reuse. The University fully endorses the principles of open access and requires all researchers to make their research open access where possible to maximise research impact and to comply with funder policies where applicable. Students are required to make their theses open access by depositing in the White Rose eTheses Online repository.

Students whose PhD, or other research degree, has been publicly funded by UK Research Councils, by the Wellcome Trust, by the European Union, and many others, are expected by the funder to make their thesis openly accessible as soon as possible after its successful completion. UKRI’s policy is available at: www.ukri.org/about-us/policies-standards-and- data/good-research-resource-hub/open-research/

For further information on points to consider before making a thesis available online (including impact on future publishing plans) please refer to Open Access and PhD theses.

Embargoes

All research degree theses are expected to be made publicly available as soon as possible following the award of the degree, for anyone to read, download, print, copy and reuse. The University fully endorses the principles of open access and requires all researchers to make their research open access where possible to maximise research impact and to comply with funder policies where applicable.

Public funders recognise that factors such as commercial, collaborative or publication arrangements may necessitate a delay in the process of making a thesis openly accessible, and where this is the case, an embargo may be necessary. The maximum length of embargo permitted is usually 12 months, other than in exceptional circumstances. Universities are expected to have in place a process for considering where exceptions can be granted to the requirement for publication within 12 months.

Reasons for requesting an embargo

Students are permitted to embargo their thesis under certain conditions, e.g. where there are commercial sensitivities or where it is necessary to delay access to a thesis until after publication of results. Students should discuss with their supervisor whether they require an embargo and, if so, for how long. This discussion should take account of the need to ensure that research is made available as soon as possible and a consideration of the benefits that early publication can bring.

Some faculties have their own additional guidance regarding the maximum length of embargo that is permitted, and this should also be taken into consideration. Students should check with their supervisors whether such guidance exists. Students are reminded that it is not good practice to delay the publication of their research without good cause.

Requests for embargoes that exceed 12 months require faculty approval and must be accompanied by a clear rationale as to why a longer period is required. A form is available to request an extended embargo.

Extended embargoes beyond five years will not normally be approved unless there are very exceptional reasons.

Examples of this may include where a contract has been signed requiring a longer embargo, or where there is a threat to personal security. Where relevant evidence is available to support a request for an extended embargo, e.g. a copy of the contract, this should be attached to the request form.

If an embargo is required, this must be indicated on the Access to Thesis form, otherwise the thesis may be made publicly available. Students are responsible for setting any embargo options at the point they upload their ethesis to White Rose eTheses Online and for requesting extensions to embargoes, if required. Failure to set or extend an embargo will result in the ethesis being made publicly available.

Award of degrees

Once the examiners have approved the award of a degree and returned their forms to Research, Partnerships & Innovation there are several steps that must be completed before Research, Partnerships & Innovation can confirm the award of the degree.

- All examiners' reports must be considered and approved by the relevant faculty before the degree can be awarded.
- By regulation, all students are debt-checked to ensure that any tuition or tuition-related fees have been paid.
- All students must upload a copy of their final awarded thesis to the University's online thesis repository and provide an Access to Thesis form specifying the terms under which access to the thesis can be granted.
- Students required to undertake the Doctoral Development Programme must have demonstrated satisfactory engagement via submission and approval of an Evidencing Development Summary.

If any of the above are outstanding, the degree will be withheld until they have been completed.

Once the above checks have been satisfactorily completed Research, Partnerships & Innovation will update the student record with the degree award and send the student an award letter and the examiners' report forms via email.

Every effort is made to minimise the time between receipt of the examiners' report, formal approval by the faculty and award of the degree; however, this process can take several weeks. Students can help expedite the process by ensuring they have completed any required tasks in good time, such as submitting a DDP Evidencing Development Summary, paying outstanding fees and providing an electronic Library copy of their thesis and Access to Thesis form. Any student who requires urgent notification of their award, e.g. for employment purposes, should alert Research, Partnerships & Innovation.

Transferring and disposing of your research data at the end of your degree

It is the responsibility of all postgraduate research students to ensure that they review and move, delete or transfer ownership of any data they have collected during their time at the University. Please read the guidance on how to do this and take the appropriate steps to manage your research data. This must be done prior to your student account being closed when you are awarded your degree.

Transferring and disposing of your research data at the end of your degree

Conferment of degrees

Following the award of a degree the Corporate Events Team will contact the student by email in due course with details of when the degree will be conferred. Enquiries concerning graduation ceremonies, conferment of degrees or receipt of degree certificates should be addressed to the Corporate Events Team using their contact form.

Candidates who are awarded their degree by the end of March will be invited to attend the July graduation ceremonies and candidates who are awarded by the end of September will be invited to attend the January graduation ceremonies.

Candidates completing after these deadlines will only be invited if space permits and may be required to wait until the next ceremony period.

Students should not presume automatic inclusion, even if schools and supervisors suggest it. Only the Corporate Events Team can confirm invitations to specific ceremonies.

Student account closure

Once your degree has been awarded, your student account will be closed. Information on when this will happen and what actions you should take is available from IT Services.

Help if issues arise

Complaints procedure

Where difficulties arise, it is important to seek to address these as early as possible. Many difficulties can be resolved at an early stage by talking informally with the individual(s) most concerned with the issue at a local level. Students should initially raise any complaints with their supervisor. If they cannot be resolved, they must report the complaint to the PGR Lead or the Head of School initially, and, if appropriate, the faculty. The school must ensure that their complaints procedures are operational and effective.

Students can also seek advice from the Student Advice Centre or from Research, Partnerships & Innovation at this stage. Impartial advice is also available from the Equality Advisory Support Service.

In the event that such difficulties cannot be resolved informally, the University has formal procedures for students to make complaints, whether about the delivery and quality of services received (i.e. non-academic matters), or about the delivery or quality of research supervision or any other matters relating to the programme of study.

Harassment and sexual misconduct

As part of its commitment to protecting students from harassment and sexual misconduct, the University has a harassment and sexual misconduct hub to provide information and support for students

Academic appeals regulations

Under these regulations and procedures, a student may apply for a recommended examination result to be re-considered in the light of new evidence.

Advice on submitting a complaint or an academic appeal is available from the Student Advice Centre in the Students' Union.

Report and Support

Students are encouraged to report any incidents of discrimination such as harassment, abuse, bullying or sexual violence via Report and Support. Reports can be made either anonymously or with personal details and can be submitted on behalf of someone else.

Additional Information

Semester dates

Start and end dates of semesters are available here.

Health and Safety

The University attaches great priority to Health & Safety for its staff and students. This requires the full engagement of everyone to ensure consistently high standards are maintained.

Staff and students are required, not only to comply with the relevant legislation and codes of practice but to maintain a positive safety culture and should be encouraged to think about how they work, ensuring to work safely and avoid taking unnecessary risks, be that when handling chemicals, lifting objects or plugging something in. A copy of the University's Health & Safety Policy Statement is available on the Health & Safety Department's website, along with a copy of the H&S Plan and Objectives and should be read by all researchers.

Postgraduate researchers and students have specific roles and responsibilities as described by the University's Health and Safety Organisational Arrangements (Role & Responsibilities) document and it is strongly recommended that everyone familiarises themselves with this document, and the expectations outlined within. Every area of the University has at least one Health and Safety Officer (HSO) You can ask your HSO about what's happening in your school or raise any queries or concerns you have with them. HSOs play a key role in keeping us safe at work. You can find out who yours is here: https://cc.sheffield.ac.uk/hs/contact-list/department-health-and-safety-officers/.

There are 11 mandatory training courses that all postgraduate research students and University staff must complete, which form an essential part of keeping us all safe and healthy at work, keeping our data secure and building a positive, supportive community for all students and staff. Find the full list of courses you need to complete: https://staff.sheffield.ac.uk/mandatory-training.

You will need to be signed in with your university login details. Staff candidates can ask IT Services to merge their staff and student training records, to avoid having to undertake mandatory training as both a staff member and a student.

Further role-specific mandatory training may be required by your school and will be discussed with your supervisor or HSO.

Supervision

The University has a legal duty to provide "such supervision as is necessary" to ensure the health and safety of all students, including researchers. Relying solely on a student's graduate status or general competence cannot discharge this duty.

The duty to supervise is delegated to the appropriate Head of School and thence to the member of staff directly responsible for the student (the supervisor). The health and safety roles and responsibilities of academic supervisors are also outlined in the Organisational Arrangements document.

School management must be able to demonstrate that they have effective supervisory measures in place. Within a school this will include risk assessment, safe systems of work and personal monitoring arrangements, appropriate to the task in hand. All research students must undergo initial training, at which the operation of such measures is explained in a practical sense.

Research projects

For research projects, effective or adequate supervision does not necessarily mean a constant direct presence. Where this is required, it may be carried out, if necessary, by another authorised member of staff, provided that they have the necessary qualifications, knowledge, and skills.

It is the responsibility of the supervisor to ensure that:

1. The project is properly assessed:
   i. for compliance with the law
   ii. for compliance with existing school procedures
   iii. for compliance with all applicable university policies and local rules (e.g. for radiation, micro-organisms, or genetic modification work)
   iv. for risks and safety precautions required (note that the law requires risk assessment to be recorded unless the risks are insignificant)
2. Identified control measures are implemented and discussed between the supervisor and the student and these should be documented.
3. Regular checks are carried out by the supervisor (or authorised nominee) to ensure that the student is following the agreed procedure.
4. It has been made clear to the student that:
   i. Any alteration to the agreed methods must be discussed with the supervisor before being put into practice. These alterations must be agreed and documented.
   ii. They also have a responsibility not to endanger themselves and others by their actions. They also have a duty to co-operate with those in authority over health and safety matters. Students should note that they have a set of responsibilities laid out in the Organisational Arrangements document.

Risk assessment and levels of supervision

A full risk assessment must be carried out and recorded for the proposed activity before any experimental or practical work is undertaken.

The University has a Risk Assessment Policy and a General Risk Assessment Techniques training course available through myDevelopment.

Appropriate controls must be in place, including any safe systems of work, necessary safety equipment and personal protective equipment (PPE). Supervisors must ensure that the student has read the assessment and understood its implications. The assessment must be signed by both the student and the supervisor, or an alternative equivalent method for recording understanding of the assessment used.

General standards for similar work must be the same throughout a school.

After a full risk assessment has been completed, the following scheme for determining the level of supervision may be adopted:

- The work may not be carried out without the direct supervision of a designated member of staff continuously present in the room where the work is being carried out.
- The work may not be started without the task supervisor's advice and approval, which may involve additional training in the procedures and, in the initial phase of work, require the direct supervision of a designated member of staff continuously present in the room where the work is being carried out.
- The work may not be started without the task supervisor's advice and approval but may be carried out without direct supervision once additional training in procedures involved has been received.
- Work where extra care must be observed but where it is considered that workers are adequately trained and competent in the procedures involved.
- Work where risks are insignificant and carry no special supervision considerations. These last three categories may be suitable for out-of-hours work, subject to a thorough risk assessment.

Remember that the concept of information, instruction and training and supervision is enshrined in both law, and University policy. There can be no defence for not applying these principles.

Bear in mind also that as a piece of work develops, safety and supervision requirements may change. The law requires risk assessments to take account of this and for them to be reviewed and revised as appropriate. In all cases it is recommended that risk assessments be reviewed at least annually as recognised good practice.

If students are required to work out of hours, they must have passed out-of-hours training within the last three years and fire training within the last 12 months. They must also have permission from their Head of School.

Where those being supervised show a disregard for matters of safety, schools must implement appropriate disciplinary procedures to ensure the safety of the person concerned and anyone else who might be adversely affected, including any emergency and service personnel.

Data Protection: implications for research

The General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018 are concerned with data relating to living, identifiable individuals; how this data can be used; to whom it may be transferred and in protecting the rights of people regarding their own data. The University's Data Protection Policy outlines the legal requirements for members of the University who process personal information for any reason.

Researchers should also familiarise themselves with the policy note and guidance paper issued by the University of Sheffield Research Ethics Committee on the principles of anonymity, confidentiality and data protection.

Freedom of Information

Any data held by the University may be subject to the Freedom of Information Act and may therefore be released under the terms of that Act.

Personal data and all data collected for research are largely exempt from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act.

For any queries on data protection or personal data matters, please contact the University Data Controller, University Secretary's Office.

Intellectual Property Rights and the exploitation of research

Creating Impact from University Research through IP Commercialisation

The University aims to generate significant, real-world ‘impact’ from the research undertaken by staff and students. In many areas, commercialisation of Intellectual Property (IP) generated through research may be used to create significant and far-reaching impact. For example, licensing a medical device design, providing research-led consultancy to an arts organisation, or establishing a new business to market a product based on research outputs can all deliver impact and benefits to the world.

PGRs are encouraged to talk to their PIs and the Commercialisation team in Research, Partnerships & Innovation about opportunities to be involved in development of commercial plans and participating in the University’s Commercialisation Journey programme.

Intellectual Property Rights (IPR)

The term ‘intellectual property’ refers to the outputs of creative endeavour in scientific, engineering, industrial, literary, and artistic fields that can be identified and protected under legislation relating to patents, trademarks, copyright, design rights and ‘know-how’. Patents for new technology are of prime interest to scientists and engineers, although copyright can also be important (for example, for the protection of computer software). Database rights and ‘know-how’ are more important IP assets for social scientists and researchers investigating Arts and Humanities subjects. Like any other form of property, intellectual property can be sold, leased, or mortgaged, so long as ownership has been established unambiguously.

By providing security and protection of knowledge, and establishing rights and rewards, intellectual property stimulates the innovation process.

The importance of undertaking research of value to the UK economy, with relevance to UK industry, is increasingly recognised. However, it must be emphasised that, in pursuing their research, students cannot and should not be aiming specifically to generate commercially relevant intellectual property. The aim of their research must be to enhance knowledge and understanding within a particular subject area. This may or may not have commercial relevance. In this sense, intellectual property does not in itself reflect the quality or importance of research.

Nevertheless, it is possible that in the course of research, results will be achieved, or conclusions reached, which have commercially exploitable consequences. The ability of the student and the supervisor to recognise potentially exploitable research as it arises, and to take appropriate action, is enormously important. Before research results are published, presented, or informally discussed with anyone who is not an employee of the University, their potential for commercial exploitation should be fully considered. If this is not done, this public disclosure may compromise future commercialisation activities, for example, it would preclude filing of an application for patent protection. This applies to all research, irrespective of whether your work is publicly funded through a grant or directly by a company or other organisation. If you are uncertain whether specific results arising from your research have potential for commercial exploitation, you should contact Research, Partnerships & Innovation for advice.

Who Owns Arising IPR?

Intellectual property rights arising from work undertaken by research students vest clearly with the University. It is a condition of registration that students agree formally to transfer or assign to the University any intellectual property rights resulting from the agreed programme of study and research. This requirement includes without limitation:

- the ownership of and the sole right to exploit any patentable invention or discovery made
- all rights (including design rights and rights which are capable of registration under the Registered Designs Act 1949) in any design produced
- copyright in (a) any computer programme and (b) any engineering drawing design capable of commercial exploitation

The University is therefore free to exploit any intellectual property as it considers to be appropriate. However, it is expected that, following from recognition of the contribution made by the student and through natural fairness and justice, the University will grant to the student a reasonable share of any benefits accruing on the same basis as to members of staff. It may be the case that the University does not wish to or is unable to exercise its rights of exploitation. In such cases, these rights may, on request, be returned to the student, either for an agreed period or on a permanent basis, for appropriate future payment.

Funded Research

Where the whole or part of a student’s programme of research is funded by, or involves the use of facilities provided by, a third party, under an agreement made with the University (such as a CASE award), the following provisions apply:

- The University may in its own name or as agent for the student transfer or assign to the third-party rights regarding intellectual property.
- Students must, in accordance with any relevant terms of the agreement between the University and the third party, keep confidential all information relating to the work or business of the third party, acquired by the student doing that programme, or part programme of study. Such information must not be used for the student’s own benefit or disclosed to any other persons except with the consent of the third party.
- These regulations apply to copyright in any work, including any report, essay, dissertation, or thesis produced by the student during or as a result of their research programme.

Again, it is intended that these rules be applied in such a way as not to disadvantage the student as generator of intellectual property, nor to deter subsequent exploitation.

Circumstances will vary between different programmes of research and no single approach will apply in all cases.

However, it is important that such arrangements provide for a suitable return to the institution and the student, that ownership reverts to the institution after an agreed period if exploitation is not pursued, and that there shall be no significant restrictions on the future research activity of individuals and that the academic freedom to publish is preserved. Whether the intellectual property rights are retained by the University or have been transferred or assigned to a third party, students must not, without consent, publish or otherwise disclose any work which might prejudice the exploitation of the rights.

Although these rules may appear very formal and restrictive, they are intended to safeguard the interests of all concerned, including students. If students or their supervisors believe there is commercially valuable/patentable property arising out of a particular research programme it must be registered. To register it is necessary to complete an Initial Commercial Enquiry form.

The University will then assess the commercial value of the concept and determine the exploitation route.

Developing Commercial Plans

Developing a new spinout company requires both technical and commercial skill. The University encourages PhD students and PDRAs to take an active role in the development of commercial opportunities and can access various government-funded schemes to support a researcher to develop their own entrepreneurship skills. If you think you could play an active role in the commercialisation of your research, then please speak to your supervisor and review the Commercialisation Journey webpages.

University Services and Facilities

Accommodation Services

The Edge, 34 Endcliffe Crescent, Sheffield, S10 3ED
Telephone: 222 4488
Email: accommodationoffice@sheffield.ac.uk
Web Site: www.sheffield.ac.uk/accommodation

Careers Service

Edgar Allen House, 241 Glossop Road, Sheffield, S10 2GW
Telephone: 222 0910
Web Site: https://students.sheffield.ac.uk/careers/ researchers

The Careers Service provides free and impartial careers information, advice, and guidance to all students, regardless of background or nationality, and to graduates for up to three years after graduation.

The Careers Service supports all students to be active participants in their own career development and enables them to achieve career success. In addition to using services available for all students, postgraduate research students also have access to specialist Careers Advisers. Specialist support includes one-to-one appointments, support for work experience and events designed to enable researchers to explore options within and beyond academia, to meet employers and succeed in the recruitment process. Many of these sessions are accredited as part of the Doctoral Development Programme.

Computing facilities

Web Site: https://students.sheffield.ac.uk/it-services

IT Services offer a wide range of computing facilities for all students. Many schools have additional facilities. IT Services facilities include:

- IT Centres and open access Student Computing Rooms (some 24-hour)
- Low-cost, high-quality laser printing
- Campus wide electronic information systems
- Email
- Short courses
- Documentation
- Helpdesk service
- Personalised internet portal service, MUSE

English Language Teaching Centre

78 Hoyle Street, Sheffield, S3 7LG
Telephone: 222 1780
Email: elt@sheffield.ac.uk
Web Site: https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/eltc

The English Language Teaching Centre (ELTC) provides students and staff at the University with a wide range of English language support.

Library

The University Library

Our Library is one of the outstanding academic research libraries in the UK. We provide a range of services to support the learning, teaching, and research of the University. This includes access to extensive information resources, a wide range of flexible learning environments, and the support you need to achieve your learning goals, enhance your research, and develop new skills.

You'll find all the information you need on the 'Your Library Essentials' guide and on the Student Researcher pages.

Finding ebooks, journals articles and more

Follow the guidance about accessing online resources whether you're on or off campus to ensure you get access to the full range of material: Access to electronic resources.

To find databases relevant to your specific discipline, use the Library guide for your subject or contact the librarian for your school.

- Library Guide
- Contact your librarian

If the Library doesn't have what you need

Research is increasingly being made freely available under open initiatives. Use Unpaywall or the Open Access button to locate freely available journal articles.

The Open Textbook Library and the Directory of Open Access Books are good for finding freely available books to support your research.

You can recommend books and other material for the Library to buy using the resource recommendation form.

You can also use the interlibrary request service to obtain books and articles from other libraries.

Data management plans

All postgraduate research students are required to submit a data management plan as part of their confirmation review. For more information and support see the Data Management webpages.

Researcher skills development

The Library can help you develop your skills in literature searching, undertaking systematic reviews, using reference management software, using citation metrics and more.

To explore online training and information visit the Student researcher page or view the Doctoral Development Programme workshops.

Contact the Library

For general enquiries, contact Library Help on:
Email: library@sheffield.ac.uk
Tel: 0114 222 7200
Live Chat and FAQs: http://libraryhelp.shef.ac.uk

You can book an online appointment or email your school librarian to help you find reading for your studies or for questions relating to library support for your research.

Find the librarian for your subject.

Modern Languages Teaching Centre

Ella Armitage Building, 40 Leavygreave Road, S3 7RD
Telephone: 222 4897
Email: mltc@sheffield.ac.uk
Web Site: https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/mltc

The Modern Languages Teaching Centre exists to enable students of the University to learn a modern foreign language. The Centre offers institution-wide accredited modules, intensive language courses, and a self-access Centre.

Print and Creative Services

Box Office, Students' Union, Western Bank, S10 2TN
Telephone: 222 1220
Email: print.enquiries@sheffield.ac.uk
Web Site: https://pcs-sheffield.co.uk/myprint

Sport Sheffield

Goodwin Sports Centre, Northumberland Road, Sheffield S10 2TY
Telephone: 222 6999
Email: info@sport-sheffield.com
Web Site: https://sport.sheffield.ac.uk/

The University of Sheffield has some of the best and most extensive sporting facilities in the UK. Whether you want to take up a new activity, or continue your favourite sport, at either recreational or competitive level, our sports scene provides something for everyone.

Student Services Information Desk (SSiD)

Students' Union Building, Western Bank, Sheffield, S10 2TG
Telephone: 222 1299
Email: https://students.sheffield.ac.uk/ssid/email
Web Site: https://students.sheffield.ac.uk/ssid/contacts/ssid

SSiD is the University's multi award-winning student information service. It provides a range of student services including change of address instructions, bank letters and council tax exemption certificates. SSiD is the first place to go if you need information, help and guidance. The friendly, professional team are trained to help deal with all your questions and concerns.

StudySkiils@Sheffield

Web Site: https://sheffield.ac.uk/study-skills

A repository of digital resources, downloadable templates, information and links to support all areas of your research, quantitative analysis, and thesis writing.

UCard

Your UCard provides proof of your student status and membership of the Union of Students. It also acts as your library card and will be needed to gain access to some buildings.

Further information can be gained from the SSiD webpages.

UCard issuing is available from the Student Services Information Desk (SSiD), Union of Students Building

Should your time limit run out once you have submitted your thesis (but before your award has been made), you are required to go to SSiD to have your UCard renewed for the interim period. You should ensure that you provide your thesis submission receipt email as proof of eligibility.

Following examination, if you are required to make minor or major amendments or to resubmit your thesis, your time limit will be changed accordingly, and you will be able to acquire a new card in line with your new time limit.

Affiliate Research Account extension

In some instances, postgraduate research students may require access to the University's IT and library functions beyond the award of their degree, for example, to allow them to complete publications. The Affiliate Research Account process provides a method for such students to maintain access to the University's IT services and library facilities for a period no longer than six months following the award of their degree.

Welfare and Advice

Researcher wellbeing networks

https://staff.sheffield.ac.uk/rpi/researcher-development/researcher-led-networks

Emotionally Demanding Research Network:

Although engaging in traumatic or sensitive research themes can be exceptionally rewarding, it is important to be mindful of how our own wellbeing may be affected. Vicarious trauma is the negative change in our thoughts, perceptions, and interpretations as a result of repeated engagement with traumatic research-related materials and experiences. We invite you to join us if you identify as someone engaged in sensitive, upsetting, or traumatic research and would like access to space, discussions, and resources to self-manage this. We work in partnership with the University Counselling Service.

Disabled & Ill Researchers' Network:

Nobody embarks on a PhD thinking it's going to be easy, but disability and illness can make researching a thesis that bit more daunting, exhausting, or isolating. Physical and mental health can interrupt academic work in unforeseen ways, and it can be difficult to know how to talk about it with supervisors or even fellow researchers. This group aims to discuss problems, share strategies, and campaign for greater awareness of researcher disability and illness and its impact on study. We work in partnership with the University Disability and Dyslexia Support Service.

Parent-PGR Network:

This group aims to bring together postgraduate researchers who are also parents, or about to be parents, or who are thinking about becoming parents. We aim to discuss issues, share strategies and resources, and campaign for greater awareness of the challenges of balancing doctoral study with parenthood. We work in partnership with the broader Parents@TUoS network.

Early Career Women's Network:

https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/womens-network/about-us/ecr-women

We represent and promote the interests of women researchers at an early career stage (such as doctoral and post-doctoral researchers). The network is coordinated by women ECRs from across the University, with support from the Women@TUoS NETwork and Think Ahead. The network aims to encourage interactions between women ECRs at the University, provide opportunities for members' personal and professional development, organise regular and one-off events relevant to women ECRs (i.e. seminars, coffee mornings, workshops, and talks) and create a supportive safe space for women ECRs to share experiences, information, and advice on issues of concern to ECR women. We work in partnership with the broader Women@TUoS network.

Thesis Mentoring:

Thesis Mentoring is a four-month mentoring programme where a PGR, either currently writing their thesis or about to start writing, is matched with an Early Career Researcher who helps to support and mentor them through the process. This confidential programme is for you if you want to be a better and more engaged writer but are struggling with getting started with thesis writing, understanding what the task involves, planning your writing or managing difficult writing behaviours such as low motivation or procrastination. The content of your 1:1 meetings will be tailored to your own personal writing goals and the mentor's role is to help you focus on writing, planning, behaviours, and blocks, not your research data - thereby complementing the role of your PhD supervisor.

Childcare

Children's Services

93 Brunswick Street, Sheffield, S10 2FL
Telephone: 273 9361
Email: Nursery@sheffield.ac.uk
Web Site: https://su.sheffield.ac.uk/advice-and-support/nursery

The Students' Union has a Nursery providing care and education for students' children between the ages of six months and five years. The Nursery also runs half-term play schemes and can offer information on child minding for older children at the end of the school day.

Student Welfare

Telephone: 222 4321
Safeguarding and Welfare queries: Enquiry Form
Web Site: https://students.sheffield.ac.uk/welfare

The Student Welfare Team supports students experiencing personal difficulties that are significantly impacting on their university experience and ability to study. Sometimes this is achieved by engaging with the student themselves, but they also provide direct support and guidance to friends, course mates and housemates of students who are causing concern.

Some of the situations that they can assist and advise on include:

- reporting an incident
- sexual violence
- harassment and bullying
- hate crimes

Mental wellbeing

Student Mental Health, Counselling and Therapies Service
31 Claremont Crescent, Sheffield, S10 2TA

Find information online at: https://students.sheffield.ac.uk/ssid/contacts/student-mental-health-counselling-and-therapies-service

General enquiries by telephone: 0114 222 3635 Email: mentalhealthcounselling@sheffield.ac.uk

Student Mental Health, Counselling and Therapies Service is the first point of contact for students to explore a broad range of mental health support needs.

Disabled students

Disability and Dyslexia Support Service
Hillsborough Centre, Alfred Denny Building Western Bank, Sheffield, S10 2TN
Telephone: 0114 222 1303
Email: disability.Info@sheffield.ac.uk
Web Site: https://students.sheffield.ac.uk/disability

The Disability and Dyslexia Support Service (DDSS) is a friendly and confidential service which provides individually-tailored academic support and advice to students with disabilities to ensure that they can participate in their studies without disadvantage and perform to the best of their abilities.

For the purposes of the service the term 'disability' is defined as any impairment that has lasted or is likely to last for more than 12 months and which has a significant impact upon an individual's ability to access an academic course and carry out normal day-to-day academic activities (reading, writing, using library services, and attending taught sessions, for example). Individuals with a wide variety of disabilities - from specific learning difficulties and sensory impairments to medical conditions and mental health difficulties – can access support through the service.

If you have a disability which is impacting upon your studies simply contact the service to arrange a meeting with a disability adviser, who will be able to offer specific advice on the support available to you. This could involve drawing up a Learning Support Plan, where required.

The DDSS website has details of the kinds of support available to disabled students at the University. It also contains detailed information on the process of applying for Disabled Students' Allowances – a source of funding often available to postgraduate students from the UK which is intended to cover any study related costs which are incurred as a direct result of a disability.

Specialist Group Mentoring for postgraduate researchers

These sessions offer PGRs with a disability the chance to meet together in person or online, access mentoring support collectively and share experiences and support.

You do not need to have declared a disability to the University, or be registered with DDSS to join these workshops.

Health matters

University Health Service
53 Gell Street, Sheffield, S3 7QP
Telephone: 222 2100 (24 hours)
Email: health.service@sheffield.ac.uk
Web Site: https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/health-service

Students (excluding staff-candidates) of the University with a Sheffield address are entitled to register with the University Health Service for NHS care (dependants can only be accepted if they live within the practice boundary). Please refer to the web site for full details of services available.

The University does not have a dental service. Emergency dental treatment may be available at the Charles Clifford Dental Hospital for people not registered with a dentist.

Personal safety and security

Web Site: https://students.sheffield.ac.uk/support-hub/safety

Sheffield is one of the UK's safest cities, but everyone should be mindful to take precautions to minimize risks to their personal safety and security. Useful information, guidance and contact details are available from the above website.

Safe Taxi Scheme and Safety Minibus

Web Site: https://su.sheffield.ac.uk/advice-and-support/health-wellbeing#

The Students Union partners with a local taxi firm to run a Safe Taxi Scheme. There is also a Safety Minibus that runs throughout term-time whenever there is a late night SU event.

Security Services

University Security Control Room
Telephone: 222 4085
Web Site: https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/security

IN AN EMERGENCY

In the University - dial 4444 (24 hours) Outside the University - dial 999

International students

Student visas are issued under the Student route of the immigration rules ('Appendix Student'), which replaced Tier 4 in 2020. If you are a Student or Tier 4 visa holder you have certain responsibilities that you must comply with.

For further Information, please see: https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/new-students/immigration/during-study/conditions-responsibilities/student-visa-responsibilities

Further information about student immigration can be found on the International Student Support, Advice and Compliance (ISSAC) webpages.

Students with questions about their Student or Tier 4 visa can contact International Student Support, Advice and Compliance.

Support for international PGRs

Information and advice for new and existing international PGR students is available at: https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/rpi/pgr/community/international

Religious matters

Belief, No Belief and Religious (BNBR) Life Centre
Email: bnbr-life@sheffield.ac.uk

The BNBR Life Centre is available to all staff and students and provides chaplains, religious advisers and pastoral support to all, irrespective of their identity, religion, belief or no belief.

Web Site: https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/bnbr-life-centre

Student Advice Centre

Telephone: 222 8660
Email: advice@sheffield.ac.uk
Web Site: https://su.sheffield.ac.uk/advice-and-support

The Centre provides a confidential, free advice and information service to all students. General advice and information are available on a wide range of welfare and related areas. Specialist advice and support are available for money, debt, housing, academic, immigration, consumer, and employment issues.

Union of Students

Western Bank, Sheffield, S10 2TG
Telephone: 222 8500 (Reception)
Email: union@sheffield.ac.uk
Web Site: https://su.sheffield.ac.uk/

The Students' Union is run by students for students and offers a full range of facilities and activities including entertainment, eating, banking, insurance, and workspace. The Union also provides club and society activities, representation, and welfare support for all students of the University.