



**UNIVERSITY OF ST ANDREWS  
CODE OF PRACTICE FOR SUPERVISORS AND STUDENTS  
IN RESEARCH POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES  
(2008/9 session)**

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14 August 2008

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This Code has been compiled for the guidance of all research postgraduate students of the University of St Andrews and those concerned with the teaching, supervision and assessment of postgraduate students.

The Code is based on the Report of the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals *Academic Standards in Universities (1986)*, as subsequently amended; the QAA *Code of Practice for Assurance of Academic Quality and Standards in Higher Education (2000)*, with subsequent amendments; and the document *Improving Standards in Postgraduate Research Degree Programmes*, issued by the Funding Councils in 2004. While the Code does not have the force of regulation and should be read in conjunction with the published postgraduate ordinances, resolutions and regulations, it does embody University policy on good supervisory practice and has been accepted by the Senate.

Research Postgraduate Programmes refer to the PhD degree, (including the PhD in Creative Writing), direct entry into the second year of the MPhil degree, and other doctoral-level degrees (other than honorary degrees) such as the MD.

### Notes:

1. The Code will be revised regularly to take account of any changes. Enquiries concerning the Code of Practice, or suggestions of changes to be made, should be sent in writing to Registry (email: [pgoffice@st-andrews.ac.uk](mailto:pgoffice@st-andrews.ac.uk)).
2. Throughout this document references to the Head of School refer to the Head of School or his/her appointed deputy. References to the Dean of the relevant Faculty refer to the Dean or his/her Pro-Dean.
3. A further point of reference for postgraduate students is the Postgraduate Handbook: <http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/publications/pghandbook/>

## 2. ADMISSIONS

For general enquiries email: [pgadmissions@st-andrews.ac.uk](mailto:pgadmissions@st-andrews.ac.uk)

### i. Procedures for Application

Admission to the University for postgraduate study is organised centrally by the University Admissions Service. Prospective students should consult the relevant School concerning details of programmes and for answers to any specific enquiries they may have. For general information on admissions, contact Postgraduate Admissions, St Katharine's West, The Scores, St Andrews, Fife, KY16 9AX or email: [pgadmissions@st-andrews.ac.uk](mailto:pgadmissions@st-andrews.ac.uk). Further information may be obtained from the University website for Admissions.

### ii. Principles of Admission

Decisions regarding admission are based upon a recommendation by the Head(s) of the relevant School. Students may not be admitted to a Centre or Institute, although they may

be associated with one from admission, but a student must be regarded as belonging to a single School and its regulations for the purposes of progress review, grading, appeals and any other process.

The following principles apply:

- a. Admission procedures should be clear and consistently applied.
- b. Admission decisions must involve the judgement of more than one member of the School's staff (at least one of whom must be research active) for postgraduate programmes.
- c. Staff with experience of the research area or with experience of postgraduate research supervision should be involved in the selection process of candidates for postgraduate research degrees.
- d. Interviews with candidates may be used as part of the admissions process, although other arrangements may be made to assess the suitability of candidates from abroad. Applicants should be clearly informed whether and when an interview and/or some other form of assessment may be required.
- e. Admission to Doctoral level programmes is normally on the basis of a first degree at 2(i) level or higher (or the overseas equivalent) in the relevant subject, or a relevant postgraduate qualification. However, where a prospective student lacks a suitable first degree, alternative mechanisms for assessing qualifications and preparedness, reflecting professional or other work experience, may be used. Increasingly the UK research councils in several disciplines require that funded students on Doctoral programmes have first completed an approved Masters programme that prepares the student for Doctoral work.
- f. Confidential references and the submission of relevant written work (where appropriate), should be used to assess the suitability of a candidate to undertake postgraduate study.
- g. The prospective student must be able to show that s/he has, or is likely to secure, the necessary financial support to undertake his/her studies.
- h. All students whose first language is not English must satisfy the University's English language proficiency requirements. Language training can be provided by the University English Language Teaching Centre and may be required by a School as a condition of admission.
- i. Confidentiality must be maintained as appropriate throughout the admissions process.
- j. All students applying for Doctoral level programmes should be subject to a needs analysis with regard to skills and training that may need to be acquired in order to

successfully pursue their studies. The result of this assessment may also influence admission decisions.

k. Students with special needs (particularly in relation to disabilities) should arrange for an assessment prior to taking up studies, although they may be assured that the implications of any disability will be considered only after a judgement has been made based upon academic merit. If the University has not been made fully aware of the requirements of a student with a disability prior to an offer of a place being made, it cannot guarantee that suitable resources will be available on the student's arrival in St Andrews - although of course, every reasonable attempt shall be made. (Section 15: Help and Advice).

**iii. The Recommendation to Admit should take account of the following factors:**

a. Whether the applicant has appropriate qualifications and/or the relevant experience for his/her proposed programme of study or research.

b. Whether the proposed programme will involve study at a level appropriate to the degree for which the applicant wishes to register.

c. Whether it might reasonably be expected that the applicant's programme of study can be completed within the period designated for it (see Section 3.iii).

d. Whether the appropriate resources (e.g. library, computing, laboratory, technical) will be available. For programmes involving industrial placements, whether suitable placement opportunities exist.

e. Whether proper supervision can be maintained throughout the research period (for Postgraduate Research degrees), including during any periods of research leave for the supervisor or time spent away from St Andrews by the student.

f. In cases when a student is being admitted to a programme that involves participation by more than one School, approval for admission must be obtained from all relevant Heads of School or according to protocols established with the relevant Deans for the co-ordination of the programme.

g. In cases where a student is being admitted to a cotutelle or collaborative PhD, an agreement signed by the relevant authorities in both Universities must already be in place before the commencement of the degree.

### **3. REGISTRATION AND PERIODS OF STUDY**

#### **i. Registration and Matriculation**

No student can be registered for a postgraduate degree without submitting a formal application, and receiving a formal letter of acceptance.

Students who have been accepted for admission to a postgraduate programme are required to matriculate at the commencement of their studies and at the beginning of each academic year until the requirements for the award of their degrees have been fulfilled, or their studies discontinued. Postgraduate students must re-register in September each year, regardless of their original start date. Where a student is away from St Andrews for academic reasons, it is the responsibility of the student and the School to make alternative arrangements with Registry. The matriculation schedule is a signed contract between the student and the University, which mutually binds both parties to abide by the University's rules and regulations.

#### *Registration under the General Research Ordinance*

Research students expecting to complete a PhD are normally admitted under Research Ordinance 12 (unless exceptionally they have transferred as research students in mid-course from another university or have had their registration changed from MLitt, MSc, MRes or MPhil to that of PhD student on the basis of a School recommendation). This initial period of registration provides the opportunity to assess the research aptitude of the candidate before registration for a particular degree is decided.

Students who have satisfactorily completed between six and twelve months of study under Research Ordinance 12, may be re-registered for a higher degree and may count towards the requirement of that degree such months of full-time or part-time study as have been completed since their date of first registration.

#### **ii. Fees**

The schedule of fees is to be found on the University website. Fees are payable on initial registration and at the beginning of each academic year or semester thereafter. All fees are subject to annual revision, and the revised fees will apply to all students. Failure to pay fees on matriculation may lead to discontinuation of studies.

#### **iii. Periods of Study**

Students are registered to study on either a full-time or part-time basis. The permitted periods of study are as follows:

MPhil: - 24 months full-time or 36 months part-time (with full-time Postgraduate Diploma) or 48 months part-time (with part-time Postgraduate Diploma). A continuation period of 6 months is normally allowed without a formal request having to be made. The Faculty Business Committee may also admit students with appropriate qualifications directly to the second full-time (or full-time equivalent) year of the MPhil.

PhD: - The period of study depends on the sponsor. Students who have an external sponsor will follow the rules of the sponsor for their degree. Non-sponsored students are charged full fees for 36 months full-time or 72 months part-time. A continuation period of 12 months for both full-time and part-time students is normally allowed. A further extension will only be allowed in exceptional circumstances (see below, Section 9.ii).

Supervisors should make research students who are supported by such studentships aware of the deadline for submissions in completing reports to Research Councils and

encourage them to work towards this date as a deadline for submissions each year. Failure to achieve appropriate submission rates can jeopardise external funding for future students.

Students for the PhD degree are not permitted to submit a thesis for examination prior to completion of two years of full-time study, or its equivalent.

EngD: - normally 48 months full-time only, of which coursework and attendance at colloquia normally comprise 25% and supervised research culminating in the submission of a thesis or a research portfolio comprises 75%. The research work is carried out both in the University and in the laboratories of the sponsoring industrial organisation.

MD (by thesis): - 24 months full-time or 48 months part-time study. The work may be carried out entirely at the University, in a recognised research laboratory or hospital, or in a combination of the above locations. Alternatively, suitably qualified candidates may apply to submit for the degree by portfolio (see below).

#### **4. INDUCTION**

The University offers a special induction programme for all research postgraduate students at the beginning of the academic year, at which many of the basic issues concerned with postgraduate study are addressed. These issues include an introduction to postgraduate skills training. All postgraduate students are strongly encouraged to attend this event. Individual Schools will also have induction programmes that will address issues specific to the programmes they offer.

#### **5. SUPERVISION OF POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH STUDENTS**

Supervision of postgraduate research students varies enormously, depending on the subject area, the background and needs of the student, and the work patterns and personalities of the student and supervisors. Nevertheless, both students and supervisors have certain responsibilities that must be fulfilled. The responsibilities described below should be seen not as comprehensive but indicative.

##### **i. Definitions and requirements**

Each research student will have a minimum of one main supervisor. He or she will normally be part of a supervisory team. There must always be one clearly identified point of contact for the student.

At least one member of the supervisory team will be currently engaged in research in the relevant discipline(s), so as to ensure that the direction and monitoring of the student's progress is informed by up to date subject knowledge and research developments. Breadth of experience and knowledge across the supervisory team will mean that the student always has access to someone with experience of supporting research student(s) through to successful completion of their programme.

### **Principal Supervisor**

A member of the academic staff of the University appointed to supervise a Research Degree student. The Principal Supervisor normally will have relevant research expertise in the proposed study area.

### **Second Supervisor**

A member of the academic staff who primarily acts as a mentor to the student. They will provide advice and support independent from the Principal Supervisor as necessary and may also provide pastoral support. The Second Supervisor may also provide appropriate specialist subject expertise in the research area; provide continuity of support when the Principal Supervisor is absent and/or act as a mentor to the Principal Supervisor when the Principal Supervisor does not have the required experience of supporting a Research degree student through to graduation.

### **Joint Supervisor**

May be appointed when the research expertise required to support the student spans two or more research areas and therefore the supervision of the student is shared between two members of academic staff. The proportions of supervision are normally agreed at the start of the arrangement, 50:50 ; 70:30 etc.

### **Industrial Supervisor**

An individual who is responsible for the local supervision of a student whilst they are on an industrial placement. This individual will not normally be the Principal Supervisor.

## **ii. The Appointment of Research Supervisors**

a. Supervisors for postgraduate research students are appointed by the relevant School usually at the time an applicant for admission to postgraduate study is formally accepted. Supervisors are normally full-time members of academic staff, although alternative arrangements may be allowed by agreement with the Dean of the relevant Faculty.

b. The University cannot guarantee continuity with a particular supervisor throughout the duration of any postgraduate degree. In exceptional circumstances, alternative supervisory arrangements may be necessary.

c. It is the responsibility of the Head of School to ensure that new supervisors are introduced to the content of this Code of Practice, either by University induction courses or by School-arranged procedures. New supervisors should be knowledgeable about supervisory procedures required by the University and by the School and any other related matters deemed appropriate by the Head of School. Experienced supervisors should be briefed about new policies and procedures in a timely and effective way.

d. Supervision of research degree students should involve at least two supervisors. The School should designate one supervisor as “principal supervisor.”

e. The number of research students assigned to any one principal supervisor must be closely monitored by the relevant Head of School, who must take into account the overall

workload distribution of the supervisor. In cases where a supervisor has primary responsibility for more than six full-time equivalent research students, the Head of School must be able to provide satisfactory assurance to the relevant Dean that such supervision does not impose a level of responsibility upon the member of staff that may be detrimental to the progress of the research students concerned.

f. On occasion the mentoring role of the second supervisor may raise the prospect of dealing with difficulties in the student's relationship with the principal supervisor. If there are any circumstances that might make it awkward for the student to discuss such difficulties with the second supervisor, the Convener of the School Postgraduate Committee should ensure that the student is put in touch with another member of staff, or the appropriate ProDean who can fulfill this pastoral role.

g. For the EngD, the Head of School shall appoint an academic principal supervisor and an industrial supervisor. The latter shall be a member of staff of the industrial organisation that is sponsoring the student. The organisation will be a participant in the Engineering Doctorate Scheme. External supervision may also be needed for CASE PhD students, periods of fieldwork or placement, and external PhD students. In all such cases, however, an academic member of staff at St Andrews should be designated as principal supervisor.

### **iii. The Main Responsibilities of Research Supervisors**

a. Supervisors should meet with research students at least three times each semester for substantive discussions of the student's work. Supervisors and students should keep a record of such meetings, if appropriate. In circumstances where it has not proved possible to hold three substantive meetings in a semester (or where this is anticipated), the principal supervisor is responsible for notifying the relevant Head of School as soon as possible and informing him/her of the circumstances.

b. All research in all Schools of the University that involves data collection from (questionnaires etc...), interviews of, interactive investigation of, experimentation upon or demonstrations involving living human subjects, tissues and / or other samples requires formal approval from the University Teaching and Research Ethics Committee (UTREC). It is University policy that any research involving children under 18 should be reviewed by the UTREC Child Panel and that the researcher should hold an 'Enhanced Disclosure Scotland' (EDS) certificate. The principal supervisor is responsible for ensuring that the student has received the appropriate ethical clearance from UTREC and the Child Panel prior to research commencing.

c. Because the success of a student's research may depend on the degree of contact and discussion between supervisor and student in the early stages of the work, it is likely that meetings during this early period between student and supervisor will need to be much more frequent than the minimum of three times per semester. Weekly meetings during the first semester may be advisable, although their frequency will vary from discipline to discipline, and in some disciplines daily contact is common.

d. Supervisors should give particular attention to overseas students in the early stages. Students whose first language is not English may be required to attend, prior to matriculation, a specified English language course in the University. It is the responsibility of the Head of School, in consultation with the supervisor, to ensure that when necessary the student attends this course and that the student's knowledge of English is sufficient to enable the research to proceed satisfactorily.

e. Part-time students may also require special attention from supervisors. They may find it difficult to meet regularly with supervisors and devote enough time to research. The supervisor should be aware of these problems and deal with them sympathetically, while still ensuring that the student gets launched on the project without undue delay and maintains good progress.

f. Principal supervisors are responsible for providing guidance to research students in the choice of a suitable field for research or topic for a dissertation, bearing in mind that the research must be capable of completion within the period of study allocated to the degree. Supervisors should seek to encourage choice of a research topic as early as possible in the student's period of research.

g. Principal supervisors are responsible for providing guidance about the nature and techniques of research, about the standard expected for the degree, about the planning of the research programme, about literature and sources and about required attendance at taught classes.

h. Principal supervisors in consultation with the student at the beginning of each session must draw up a schedule of research skills needs, which must be agreed with the School Postgraduate Convener and/or Head of School. Schools have an obligation to provide research students with training in techniques and methods of research appropriate to the academic discipline and individual needs. Research Councils place considerable emphasis on such training and may have minimum requirements for the training necessary in certain subjects. The research student is responsible for adhering to the training schedule and should be supported in this respect by the supervisors. The principal supervisor has responsibility for monitoring progress and should report on whether the research skills training has been satisfactorily completed as part of the annual progress review process. Research students are required to keep a log of all research skills training and career development that they undertake throughout their programme.

i. Research students and their supervisors should establish mutually agreed means of communication and contact with one another. Supervisors are expected to be accessible to research students at appropriate times when advice may be needed. The University regulations permit a case to be made for supervision of a student who is not resident in St Andrews. This requires prior permission from the Dean, as well as the approval of the Head of School, and will only be granted where mechanisms of supervision can be shown to be securely in place.

j. It is important that students should have a space (bench, desk) in the School, or elsewhere in the University, where they can work. Where this is not possible or where the research is carried out away from the School, the supervisor has a particularly crucial rôle in ensuring that adequate facilities exist for the student and that the student has adequate access to all the required and appropriate University and School facilities.

k. In cases where a research student is pursuing research or fieldwork outwith St Andrews, the principal supervisor is responsible for ensuring that a risk assessment is undertaken, as appropriate, and that the student is fully aware of the risks and precautions that apply to the conduct of such research. Risk assessments also need to account for disabilities, where relevant.

l. Principal supervisors are responsible for providing detailed advice on the necessary completion dates for successive stages of the work so that the whole thesis may be submitted within the scheduled period. They should help research students plan their submissions of work or the advancement of their projects in accordance with these schedules.

m. Supervisors should give written as well as oral feedback on any submitted work within a reasonable period of time after submission. This written feedback should contain constructive criticism so that students are aware of potential problems.

n. Supervisors should make a point of introducing their research students to other academic staff and students. Supervisors should encourage students to play a full part in the intellectual and social life of the School, the University and the wider community in order to promote the intellectual development of the student. Supervisors should arrange, as appropriate, for research students to talk about their work to internal staff/postgraduate seminars.

o. Supervisors should encourage research students to attend and to present their work at appropriate external meetings and conferences and should advise on the publication and/or patenting of work.

p. Supervisors should inform Heads of School if they intend to be absent for any length of time so that alternative supervision may be arranged.

q. Supervisors should discuss with research students their career intentions, assist them (as appropriate) to acquire skills relevant to their intended career development, and make referrals to the Careers Advisory Service, SALTIRE, or programmes offered by professional societies as appropriate.

r. The Postgraduate Convener is responsible for completion of an annual report on the performance of their research students to be submitted to Registry by June each year.

s. Supervisors are expected to attend at least one of the two annual supervision update sessions per year.

#### **iv. The Main Responsibilities of Research Students**

a. The primary responsibility of research students is to pursue their research with diligence and according to the highest standards of their discipline, taking due account of the advice and criticism offered by their supervisors and other scholars in their field(s).

b. Students are responsible for completing the University's 'Ethical Application Form' in order to gain formal approval from the University Teaching and Research Ethics Committee (UTREC) where their research involves data collection from (questionnaires etc...), interviews of, interactive investigation of, experimentation upon or demonstrations involving living human subjects, tissues and / or other samples. Also where the research involves children under 18 the student is responsible for making sure their application has been reviewed and approved by the UTREC Child Panel and for applying for an 'Enhanced Disclosure Scotland' (EDS) check.

c. Research students should discuss with their supervisors the type of guidance and comment they find most helpful and agree a schedule of meetings. Substantive discussions with a supervisor should be scheduled at least three times per semester.

d. Students should agree with their supervisors a mutually satisfactory means of communication and contact. Students who intend to be absent, on fieldwork, or who are not resident have a particular obligation to inform and maintain contact with their supervisor.

e. If a research student is required by the principal supervisor to attend taught classes, then it is the responsibility of the student to fulfill this requirement.

f. Students in consultation with the principal supervisor should agree a schedule for obtaining research skills training in the areas identified by the supervisor. It is the responsibility of research students to adhere to this schedule for training, and they should inform the principal supervisor without delay regarding any difficulties in doing so. Some Schools have formal courses in research skills training, and research students may be required to attend or pass such courses. Students are required to maintain a record of the research skills and career development training received during their programme.

g. Students are responsible for keeping appointments punctually and are expected to be diligent in meeting deadlines for submitted work or the advancement of their projects.

h. Students are responsible for adhering to health, safety and security guidelines operative within their place of study or research. If working away from St Andrews, students must take due precautions appropriate to their place of study or research.

i. Students should take the initiative in raising problems or difficulties, with either the principal supervisor or another supervisor. If more appropriate, the School Postgraduate Convener or the relevant Pro-Dean may be approached.

j. Students should take note of and respond to criticism of submitted work and all advice concerning the progress of their work made by supervisors.

k. Students should discuss with their supervisors opportunities for presenting their work within and outwith the University in order to obtain feedback from a wide range of scholars and in order to gain experience of making research presentations.

l. Students should submit annually (on the form provided) a personal progress report to Registry.

m. Just as students have ultimate responsibility for the form and content of the thesis that they submit, so also students have ultimate responsibility for deciding the appropriate time for thesis submission, having taken due account of the principal supervisor's opinion and regulations governing duration of study.

**v. Difficulties in Research Supervision or Research Student Progression**

a. One of the most important functions of the supervisor is to provide constructive criticism of the student's work. Students also should not hesitate to make known their concerns to supervisors. Open and frank discussion between supervisor and research student from the outset is encouraged in order to avert potential future difficulties or growing misunderstandings.

b. Where a student has failed to make satisfactory progress, or to reach an acceptable standard of work, or to cause concern which is not quickly resolved, the supervisor must discuss this with the research student. If problems persist, the principal supervisor should discuss the issues with the other supervisor(s) of the student, and a statement should be made in writing both to the student and to the Head of School. If the student's performance does not improve, the Head of School, after consultation with the principal supervisor and postgraduate convener, will recommend appropriate action to the relevant Dean (see below, Section 8.ii).

c. Occasionally the relationship between a student and the principal supervisor will break down. If the second supervisor is unable to resolve problems, then the student and/or supervisor should report difficulties in writing to the Head of School in the first instance, who may refer the matter, if necessary, to the appropriate Dean. Prompt action must be taken to resolve the conflict. Where necessary, a student or a supervisor may request from the Head of School a change of supervisor. All such changes must be notified to Registry to be agreed by the Dean through the Faculty Business Committee. (see Section 9.vii).

d. Students are entitled to reasonable periods of absence and holiday, provided that these are properly agreed in advance with the principal supervisor and conform to the stipulations of the funding body (if applicable).

e. If a student falls ill for an extended period of time, s/he (or the supervisor where the student is incapable of acting on their own behalf) should submit relevant documentation to Registry requesting leave of absence (see Section 9.iii).

f. On occasion, it may be necessary to engage an external supervisor for an extended time. This is for cases where no other alternative is possible (e.g. departure of a supervisor prior to completion of a student's PhD). The Head of School should propose the name of an external supervisor to the relevant Dean after consultation with the student. The Head of School must authorise payment by the School of any necessary traveling expenses, etc. for supervisors or students. The level of fee for an external supervisor should be calculated on a range related to external examiner fees. External supervisors are expected to meet the student at least three times per semester.

## **6. RESEARCH SKILLS TRAINING**

a. The University places great importance on improving each research student's depth of knowledge and on developing their research skills. The latter include skills specific to the subject of research and other more generic transferable skills. They also include employment-related skills and time management in order to help students to complete theses or dissertations successfully within the allocated time.

b. In order to develop the relevant skills, the student and principal supervisor (or programme co-ordinator in the case of postgraduate Masters degrees designed to lead to advanced research) will identify and agree a training programme, including generic skills and any other skills deemed necessary for the satisfactory completion of the degree, as part of the student's induction process.

c. The School and the University will provide the student with an appropriate skills training programme as agreed by the student, the principal supervisor (or programme co-ordinator) and the School. In the case of postgraduate Masters degrees that are designed to lead to doctoral research (such as the MRes), the skills training programme will be largely integrated into the modules and options offered by the degree programme itself. In some Schools doctoral students may be able to obtain parts of their skills training programmes as a set of non-credit bearing modules. If these are formally approved modules, the University will be able to provide a transcript of these units in response to requests.

d. An initial induction programme will be offered by the University at the beginning of every academic session in which provision for research skills training and career development training will be introduced.

e. Each research student's training needs will be reviewed annually. The annual School report on each research student will indicate the areas where training has been given and identify future areas for skills training or career development. The student and the School must confirm in detail in their annual reports that the training provided has been undertaken and is meeting the student's needs.

f. Students are required to maintain a record of the skills training and career development that they have received. This record should be shown to and agreed by the principal supervisor (or programme co-ordinator).

g. Students may be required to attend and participate in internal courses, seminars, presentations, demonstrations, teaching and discussion groups as agreed with the principal supervisor (or programme co-ordinator) and the School postgraduate convener. Students may also be expected, as appropriate, to attend and participate in external seminars, conferences and discussion forums.

For some students, participation in a module delivered to other students may be an appropriate way of gaining skills. In these instances, permission must be granted by the School which is delivering the module, usually via the module co-ordinator. The level of participation should be agreed by the student, the student's supervisor, and the module co-ordinator. The agreement may be suspended or withdrawn if the student fails to abide by the agreement. If the student, the student's supervisor, and the module co-ordinator agree that the level of work undertaken is commensurate with that of other students, this may be reported to Faculty and a grade of 0A (Audit) will be applied and visible on the student's transcript.

h. Failure by a student to meet training requirements agreed with the School must be reported to the appropriate Pro-Dean, who may refer the matter to the Faculty Business Committee for action.

## **7. RESEARCH STUDENTS AS TEACHERS**

a. The opportunity to participate in teaching can be a valuable experience for research students, allowing them to develop additional skills that will be useful in their careers.

b. Schools should select teachers from among their research students on the basis of their knowledge of the subject to be taught, their perceived degree of commitment and their communication skills. A School must also ensure that teaching responsibilities will not endanger the prospect of a student completing a degree programme within the time set by the University and the funding agencies. Teaching and demonstrating undertaken by a

research student is subject to the approval of the supervisor. For a full-time student such commitments should not normally exceed an average of six hours per week.

c. The University has a requirement that research students employed as teachers should receive appropriate training for the purpose. This relates to their involvement in such activities as:

- Occasional lecturing
- Seminars and tutorials

- Workshops
- Laboratory and other practical classes
- Projects
- Assessment and marking

All Schools should therefore arrange for research students contracted as teachers to receive formal, documented training either by SALTIRE unless they have appropriate prior accreditation. These requirements for formal training should only be waived where an individual's previous competence in teaching can be clearly demonstrated. In addition, the School should offer appropriate training, and support through the period of teaching.

d. To support them in their teaching role, research students must be assigned a mentor by their School:

- to provide a recognised point of contact in the School
- to advise on subject-specific aspects of teaching and learning
- to observe and comment constructively upon the student's performance
- to introduce them to the policies and procedures of the School

e. Schools should formally review the teaching performance of research students at regular intervals throughout a module. In many Schools this is undertaken by the module co-ordinator.

f. As part of their teaching duties, research students may be required to mark work that counts towards a final assessment. In such instances, the marking should always be moderated by an experienced member of the Board of Examiners. Research students who are not members of staff are not normally be members of Boards of Examiners, but may be nominated by application to Faculty Business Committee.

g. Research students who are contracted for such duties must be paid the standard hourly rate. Any contract for such work should be agreed with the Head of School in advance of the performance of the duties.

h. Schools may advertise that, in appropriate cases, they may offer paid teaching opportunities to postgraduates undertaking research.

## **8. PROGRESS MONITORING**

### **i. Procedures for Research Students**

a. Every research student will undergo a progress review at least once in each year of registration, normally in May. For this review, Schools should have in place a Postgraduate Committee, with a Convener appointed by the Head of School.

b. As the first step in the annual progress review process, the School Postgraduate Committee will request the research student and the student's principal supervisor to submit confidential reports on progress during the academic year. All confidential material held by the University on a particular student is available to the student under the University's Data Protection Act Subject Access procedures.

c. Following submission of these reports, a meeting will be held between the candidate and at least two members of the School designated by the Postgraduate Convener. The panel should not include the research student's principal supervisor, nor should it include anyone who might inhibit the student speaking frankly about his/her supervisor. The panel will of course have the principal supervisor's report and in some cases may wish separately to meet with the supervisor. These meetings are held to ascertain:

- i. whether the research student has progressed satisfactorily in his/her programme of study;
- ii. whether the research student is on track to complete his/her degree within the appropriate time;
- iii. whether any decision is required concerning the re-registration of a student for a higher or a lower degree than the one for which they are registered, or concerning leave of absence, extension or termination of their studies;
- iv. whether the research student is satisfied with his/her supervision and the general provision of facilities and support within the School and the University.

d. When a research student is supervised in two different Schools, the Postgraduate Committee Conveners should agree to follow the processes of the lead School.

e. The results of the annual progress review must be recorded by the review committee and summarised on the Postgraduate Progress Report Form (see Appendix 1), which must normally be returned to Registry no later than the middle of June.

f. Any specific decisions or recommendations that arise from the progress review should be forwarded to the Head of School and the relevant Dean, and reported in writing to the student.

g. Research students will also be asked to submit a report on their progress directly to Registry once a year, and they may come at any time to Registry to make an appointment with the relevant Faculty Officer.

h. The first annual review often takes on particular importance for research students who have been initially admitted under the General Research Ordinance. At this time the Head

of School will recommend either registration under the PhD or registration under the MPhil. For students undertaking the EngD, the recommendation is either for continuance of registration as an EngD student or transfer of registration to that of an MEng student.

## **ii. Termination of Studies**

a. If serious problems regarding student progress are identified, it may prove necessary to discontinue the student's studies after due warnings have been issued.

b. If a principal supervisor wishes to recommend to the Head of School that studies be discontinued for a research student, s/he must first discuss the matter with the second supervisor and then warn the student in writing, with full reasons for the recommendation. The letter should be copied to the Head of School and the relevant Dean. The student will then normally be given two months to address the problems that have been identified. If problems persist, then the Head of School (after taking appropriate advice) may recommend termination of studies in writing to the relevant Pro-Dean, with a copy to the student.

c. Any decision on termination of studies is taken by the Faculty Business Committee normally within 6 weeks of receipt of the recommendation and is subject to the procedures set out in the University Code of Practice on Complaints, Appeals and Discipline.

d. The student must be given clear guidance as to the procedures for appeal against such a decision (see the Code of Practice on Student Complaints, Appeals and Discipline).

## **9. REQUESTS FOR CHANGES TO TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF STUDY**

This section gives guidance on student requests for:

- Continuation period for research students
- Extension of time limit for postgraduate students
- Leave of absence for postgraduate students
- Fieldwork status for postgraduate students
- Change of registration
- Withdrawal from a postgraduate programme
- Transfer of Programme for Taught Students
- Change of supervisor for research students

- Variation of word limit
- Variation of format of thesis submission

The University believes that the periods allowed under the regulations are sufficient in most circumstances for students to complete their degrees or programmes. Research students and supervisors should be aware that some research councils impose heavy penalties on Schools where theses are submitted late.

There is a distinction between an extension and a leave of absence. Students who are *within* their prescribed period of study can obtain leave of absence for personal reasons. A student who applies for leave of absence must be unable to work on the thesis for a significant period of time. On the other hand, extensions are appropriate *after* completion of the prescribed period of study where thesis completion has been delayed due to unforeseen difficulties.

Written application for leaves of absence or extensions are normally made to the appropriate Faculty Business Committee by the student but may be made by a principal supervisor or programme co-ordinator on behalf of a student in exceptional circumstances where, for example, a student is physically or mentally incapable of doing so.

The University currently expects that within each School at least 70% of submissions for PhD degrees should be made within four years for full-time students, or seven years for part-time students. These periods exclude any leave of absence granted by Faculty Business Committees, and may be altered in line with specific research council guidelines. Records of submission rates will be reviewed annually by the relevant Faculty Business Committee, TLAC Postgraduate Sub-committee, and by the Academic Audit Committee of the University.

#### **i. Progress Review and thesis completion for Research Students**

a. Research Councils vary in the amount of time allowed for a PhD and in the way in which that is funded and identified. The University of St Andrews takes the position that all students should be near to completion at the end of three years of full-time equivalent study. It is the responsibility of Schools through progress review to ensure that the move from the third year to the fourth year of full-time equivalent study is monitored carefully. At the start of the fourth full-time-equivalent year, regardless of sponsor, the student should formulate with the principal supervisor a plan for completion within twelve months. The period of time after the end of Research Council funding is regarded as a continuation period, and does not vary according to full or part time status.

b. If a thesis is not submitted within two years for a full-time MPhil (or four years for a part-time MPhil), a continuation period of 6 months for both full-time and part-time students is normally allowed without a formal request having to be made.

## **ii. Extension of time limit for Postgraduate Students**

a. If a thesis (in the case of research students) is not submitted within the time limit (including the continuation period, if applicable), an extension may be granted by the Faculty Business Committee in **exceptional** circumstances. The student should discuss the matter with his/her supervisor and should make a request to the Pro-Dean in writing well in advance of the beginning of the period of extension sought. The maximum periods of extension are normally (i) 12 months for PhD students, (ii) 6 months for M.Phil. students.

b. When applying for an extension, the student must supply the following information:

- The duration of the extension period requested, including initial and final dates. (The initial date should be the day after the end of the current registration period.)
- The grounds for requesting an extension, e.g. medical or personal, giving brief details of the circumstances.
- Documentary support for the request, if appropriate. This should always be provided if the request is on medical grounds. A form is available from Registry, which must be used if evidence is to be requested from a doctor. It is the student's responsibility to request, obtain and pay for (if needed) any medical reports.
- A realistic and full plan for completion by the end of the extension period, which has been approved by the principal supervisor, and will include specific details and timings.
- A letter of support from the School Postgraduate Convener.

c. If the request is granted the student must re-register in September and pay the appropriate annual extension fee, details of which are available from the University web site.

Further extensions will rarely be granted; the student will be required instead to withdraw, and if s/he wishes subsequently to submit a thesis, they will have to apply to the Faculty to request to re-matriculate, and will incur fees at that stage.

## **iii. Leave of Absence for Postgraduate Students**

a. Leave of absence involves deletion of a period for which a student would otherwise have been studying for a degree. The deleted period is then discounted when calculating time limits for a degree or programme. Leave of absence is most commonly granted to cover a period of illness when a research student is unable to study, or if a research student has to take a period of full-time paid employment that is unrelated to their studies.

b. Application for leave of absence should be made to the appropriate Pro-Dean, and the following information may be required:

- The duration of the period of leave of absence requested, including initial and final dates.
- The grounds for leave of absence, e.g. medical or personal, giving brief details of the circumstances.
- Documentary support for the request if appropriate. This should always be provided if the request is on medical grounds. It is the responsibility of the student to obtain such medical evidence, e.g. in the form of a certificate from his/her doctor.
- A realistic and full plan for completion by the end of the recalculated period, which has been approved by the principal supervisor, and will include specific details and timings.
- A supporting letter from the principal supervisor or programme co-ordinator.
- If notification to a research council is required, then all information required by the research council should be submitted with the request.

c. The request should be made as soon as possible. If, for example, there is a possibility that an illness may be long term, then a reasonable initial period of leave should be requested, and further periods requested as appropriate. Under certain circumstances, evidence of fitness to resume a course may be required after a period of leave. Leave of absence cannot be granted retrospectively except in very exceptional circumstances. In the case of doubt about fitness to return to full time study Student Support Services should be consulted.

d. If leave of absence is approved, Registry will send a notice stating the dates for which leave has been granted. If a student is sponsored by a UK research council or similar body, it is important that these dates are adhered to in correspondence with the research councils or sponsoring bodies. In such cases, the supervisor or programme co-ordinator is also responsible for ensuring that the sponsor has been notified of the period of absence. The sponsor will wish to discuss arrangements for suspension or deferment of the grant; general provisions are summarised in the guidelines produced by individual research councils or sponsors.

#### **iv. Fieldwork for Postgraduate Students**

a) Fieldwork for the purposes of fees and duration of study is defined as study primarily conducted for the purpose of gathering data in a place outside St Andrews for a period of not less than three months, where no other arrangement or collaborative agreement is in place, and where at least 75% of the time is spent outside St Andrews, and could only be conducted outside St Andrews. In these instances, and all other instances covered by the University's guidelines at <http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/staff/policy/Healthandsafety/Publications/Fieldwork/> there will be careful consideration by the School and the student of risk assessment, the setting up of the project, a reliable local contact, defined goals which can be monitored through

progress review, and there will be an expectation that the student will return to the University at the conclusion of the fieldwork element.

b) Fieldwork for the purposes of fee and part-time status will be considered as normal in the disciplines of Social Anthropology, Biology and Psychology, and exceptional in all other disciplines. Industrial placements are not covered by these regulations.

c) Postgraduate students away from the University on approved fieldwork may be charged at a lower rate, and may be considered as part-time for the period away, provided that:

- (a) the absence is for three months or greater;
- (b) the absence is in line with the definition of fieldwork as given above;
- (c) the fieldwork fee is requested by the School;
- (d) part-time status is requested by the School;
- (e) approval is granted by the relevant Dean.

d) The fieldwork rate of fee is the relevant part-time fee. The maximum period of time for which the lower fee and the part-time status may normally be granted is twelve months. If the fieldwork involves special circumstances (such as learning a language) and permission has been granted by the FBC/Dean the fieldwork fee will apply until the end of fieldwork.

e) A student may continue their study outside St Andrews after the conclusion of the fieldwork period, but only with permission of the School and Faculty, and at full fee.

#### **v. Change of Registration**

a. To change degree registration (e.g. from MPhil to PhD, or full-time to part-time) a student should submit a request to Registry. The following information is required:

- The current degree programme and new programme for which the student wants to register;
- The reason for the change;
- A supporting letter from the principal supervisor or programme co-ordinator, as appropriate.

b. Alternatively the above information may be communicated through the Progress Review form to be completed as part of the School annual progress review.

Where a student is permitted to re-register to the PhD from M.Litt. or M.Phil., and chooses to count the M.Litt. or M.Phil. year(s) towards their PhD period for fee purposes, it is the responsibility of the student, the supervisor and the school to ensure that the PhD can be completed within the normal period of study. Requests for extensions where a student has counted a previous period of study towards the PhD will be granted only in exceptional circumstances.

Schools may re-register students for lower degrees providing due notice has been given and due process followed.

c. There may be fee implications for changes in registration. Registry will be able to provide information on this, with reference to the student's particular circumstances.

**vi. Withdrawal from a postgraduate programme**

a. A student wishing to withdraw from a postgraduate programme should write to the relevant Pro-Dean, stating the effective date of withdrawal. Before formally withdrawing students are advised to discuss the implications of withdrawal with their supervisor or programme co-ordinator and with the appropriate Pro-Dean. The supervisor or programme co-ordinator should confirm the date of withdrawal. Students are also advised to discuss the financial implications with Registry.

b. Registry will send a notice stating the date of withdrawal. In the case of students sponsored by UK research councils or similar bodies, this date should be adhered to in correspondence with the research councils or other bodies. In such cases the principal supervisor is also responsible for ensuring that the sponsor has been informed of the withdrawal.

c. Students may be deemed to have withdrawn from a programme of study if, in a taught programme, they are absent without legitimate excuse from essential course work, examinations, or supervisory sessions, or if in a research degree, all contact has been lost with the student for a period of over 12 months.

d. Candidates who allow their registration to lapse without having obtained leave of absence and who subsequently apply for reinstatement will be reinstated only with the approval of the Dean of the Faculty following a positive recommendation from the relevant Head of School. If a reinstatement is granted, a student will be required to pay the appropriate fee for the period of renewal (e.g. full-time, part-time tuition fee, continuation fee, extension fee, etc).

**vii. Change of Supervisor for Research Students**

a. Where necessary, a student or a supervisor may request from the Head of School a change of supervisor.

b. If a Head of School agrees to or proposes a change of supervisor, whether permanently or temporarily, a letter must be sent by the Head of School to the relevant Dean, stating:

- Name of current supervisor;
- Name of new supervisor, with contact and email address;
- The date of changeover (and period of change if temporary);
- The reason for the change.

### **viii. Variation of Word Limit**

It is expected that word limits will be strictly observed and that theses in excess of the prescribed word limits will not be accepted for examination. Nevertheless, exceptionally a student may seek permission to submit for examination a thesis, dissertation or portfolio that exceeds the prescribed word limits (see Section 10 (i) below). For example, an extension to the word limit may be sought if the extension includes a substantial piece of text on which the thesis is a commentary. In such cases the student must present a request in writing to the Pro-Dean of the relevant Faculty for consideration by the Faculty Business Committee. Reasons for the request should be fully stated, and a letter of support from the principal supervisor must accompany the request.

### **ix. Variation of Format of Thesis Submission**

Where appropriate, research students may apply to the Pro-Dean of the relevant Faculty, for consideration by the Faculty Business Committee, for a PhD thesis to be submitted (a) in a language other than English and/or (b) in a medium other than a bound typescript and/or without a corresponding electronic copy. Reasons for the request should be fully stated, and a letter of support from the principal supervisor must accompany the request.

### **x. Submission of a PhD thesis in a foreign language**

a. The languages other than English which may normally be permitted for the submission of a PhD are those inextricably associated with a particular academic discipline taught in the University, in which (in addition to the usual scholarly qualities) native or near-native proficiency in the language is expected of PhD graduates. These languages are, at the present time: French, German, Italian, Russian and Spanish.

b. Submission in a language other than English will be considered for the Degree of PhD. It is expected that the MPhil thesis will normally be written in English, even for Degrees in the Modern Languages. Only in circumstances where a PhD thesis was written with permission in a foreign language, and was not deemed satisfactory, may a thesis be submitted for the degree of MPhil in a language other than English.

c. Special permission to submit the thesis in a language other than English must be sought from the appropriate FBC, in a reasoned case presented by the School's Director of Postgraduate Studies, accompanied by written statements by the candidate and the supervisor. The reasoning should normally refer to the following points, as a minimum:

- confirmation that the candidate is enrolled for doctoral study in the School of Modern Languages, and that the request has the support of the School;
- an evaluation of the candidate's competence to complete the thesis in the language proposed;
- confirmation that the thesis will contain very substantial references to cultural material (film, text, speech, etc) generated in the language of study;
- confirmation that submission in the language of study will enhance the international accessibility of the research to other scholars within the discipline of study as a whole;
- confirmation of the availability of appropriately qualified supervisors and internal/external examiners.

d. No argument will be accepted that is based on a candidate's relative inability to write in English.

e. Permission must be sought as early as possible and at all events by the end of the first year of study.

f. Permission to change languages will not normally be granted after more than 1 year of full-time study.

g. In addition to the thesis itself, a thesis written in a language other than English must be accompanied by a summary of 2,000 to 3,000 words in English as well as the usual 300-word abstract.

h. The *viva voce* part of the examination will be conducted in English, and the candidate must demonstrate an ability to hold a linguistically accurate discussion of the research in an appropriately academic register.

i. In addition to the title in a language other than English, the thesis must bear an English translation of the title. Both titles will appear in all official documentation.

j. External examiners will be notified of the language of the thesis before they are appointed.

k. The linguistic accuracy, stylistic qualities and scholarly presentation of a thesis in a language other than English will be judged in the same way as they would be in English.

l. If a candidate who is not writing in her/his native language receives assistance in writing the thesis, such assistance must be confined to matters of style, idiom, grammar, syntax and spelling. Any assistance must be explicitly acknowledged in the following signed declaration at the front of the submitted thesis:

'I, [INSERT CANDIDATE'S NAME], received particular assistance in the writing of this thesis in respect of matters of style, idiom, grammar, syntax or spelling, which was provided by [INSERT NAME]'.

m. None of the above points should hinder co-tutelle arrangements in any Faculty which stipulate that a thesis may be submitted in the language of a partner institution.

## **10. RULES FOR SUBMISSION OF DISSERTATIONS / THESES / PORTFOLIOS**

### **i. Form and presentation of Masters and Doctoral submissions**

a. Research students must submit three bound copies of their thesis / portfolio for use by the examining committee, except where two or more external examiners are appointed.

Appendix 2 contains rules for the presentation of the dissertation/thesis/portfolio.

b. *MPhil Theses*

MPhil theses should normally be specially-composed accounts of research of no more than 40,000 words, or equivalent, excluding bibliography and appendices. An abstract must be provided, and three bound copies must be submitted.

c. *PhD/DLang/EngD/MD (by research thesis)*

i. PhD/DLang/EngD/MD (by research thesis), are normally specially-composed accounts of research of no more than 80,000 words, or equivalent, excluding bibliography and appendices. An abstract must be provided, and three or more bound copies must be submitted, as described above.

ii. Alternatively permission may be granted by the relevant Faculty Business Committee for a portfolio of published work (such as books and refereed journal articles) to be presented for these degrees. In these cases, a critical discussion should be composed that summarises the aims, methods and results of the work in the portfolio; how these publications form a coherent body of work; the extent of the contribution of the candidate; and the significance of the submission for the expansion of knowledge. This critical discussion should be between 10,000 and 25,000 words in length. An abstract must be provided, and three bound copies must be submitted.

iii. The opportunity to submit for the PhD by portfolio is only available to members of academic staff of at least three years standing or to matriculated students. Prior approval must be sought from the Faculty Business Committee, which shall seek the comments of the School and supervisors concerned. Requests to submit by portfolio must be accompanied by a summary of the portfolio and a list of the works to be included in the portfolio. In the event of the inclusion of works by multiple authors, a statement should be provided from the senior author(s) indicating the candidate's contribution to the work in the three critical areas of conception, execution and writing.

iv. For the MD (by portfolio), candidates who are graduates of St Andrews of at least 10 years standing with a suitable, qualifying degree or who are members of academic staff of at least three years standing may submit a portfolio of published work at the discretion of the Faculty of Medicine Business Committee. Such a submission shall follow the same procedures similar to the DSc/Dlitt degree (see below).

v. For the EngD, submission of a portfolio of published work shall follow the same rules and procedures as laid down for the submission of a PhD portfolio, with the exception that only registered EngD students are eligible. In addition to pursuing a course of research resulting in submission of a thesis or research portfolio, EngD students pursue a course of special study amounting to approximately 25% of the time spent during the degree course. This course of study includes assessed coursework.

d. *PhD in Creative Writing*

i. Candidates for the PhD in Creative Writing are examined on the basis of a portfolio of specially-composed original work. A precise description of the work, the applicable word

limits and the accompanying introductions is found in the Regulations. An abstract must be provided, and three bound copies must be submitted.

ii. Alternatively permission may be granted by the relevant Faculty Business Committee for a portfolio of published work (such as novels, collections of short stories or poems) to be presented for the PhD in Creative Writing. A precise description of the work, the applicable word limits and the accompanying introductions is found in the Regulations. An abstract must be provided, and three bound copies must be submitted.

*e. DLitt*

Candidates submit two copies of a portfolio of published material (in print for at least one year), representing high distinction and an original and substantial contribution to the advancement of knowledge on a subject. This material must not normally replicate material already successfully submitted for a higher degree.

*f. DSc*

Candidates submit two copies of either a specially-composed thesis or a portfolio of published work or a combination of these. The submission must represent a coherent body of material of high distinction and authoritative status, being an original and substantial contribution to the advancement of scientific knowledge. The submission must be accompanied by a declaration of the extent of the candidate's own contribution, especially in the case of collaborative work, and collaborators must be named. This material must not replicate material already successfully submitted for a higher degree.

**ii. Submission of theses and electronic publication of theses**

It is the University's intention to store all MPhil. and PhD theses in electronic as well as print format. A copy of the approved thesis in electronic format must therefore be lodged in the Library along with one hard bound copy of the thesis.

It is also the University's intention to support the appropriate dissemination of research material by electronic means.

Supervisors and students should therefore think carefully about the copyright and IPR consequences of their work from the outset, and the Library and GRADskills will offer advice and training.

At the point of the submission of a thesis for examination, the candidate and supervisor must fill in the section of the declaration (Appendix 2) which relates to embargoes of work where publication would have commercial, professional, legal or ethical consequences.

Embargoes of all or part of the print and/or electronic copy of the thesis must be accompanied by a brief justification.

## **11. EXAMINATION**

Note also the Code of Practice for external examiners for taught courses, and the University policy on academic misconduct, both on the University website.

### **A. THE NATURE OF ASSESSMENT**

#### **i. MPhil**

a. Candidates for the MPhil degree initially follow a programme equivalent to that of the corresponding Postgraduate Diploma, consisting in modules worth 120 credits, after which (if they meet the necessary threshold for progression, described in the Code of Practice for Taught Postgraduate Students) they submit a thesis for examination. The exception are MPhil candidates who are admitted directly to the second year of the programme, who are examined solely by thesis. The maximum word limit for the thesis is 40,000 words, excluding bibliography and appendices. An oral examination may be required by the examination committee. Note that within a programme approved by the Faculty Business Committee, the dissertation may be replaced by a form of assessment which has equivalent academic standing.

b. The thesis, in order to qualify for the degree, is expected to be a specially-composed monograph that gives evidence of the candidate's capacity for independent research. It is expected to be an original contribution to knowledge consistent with what may reasonably be expected of a diligent student after one year of full-time research. It should be clearly written, well argued and should indicate a satisfactory knowledge of the field of study.

#### **ii. PhD/DLang/EngD/MD (by research thesis)**

a. The requirements for submission by thesis or portfolio are provided in Section 10.i.c above. The thesis or portfolio shall constitute a significant and original contribution to knowledge or understanding consistent with what may reasonably be expected of a diligent student after three years of full-time study (in the case of the PhD), four years of full-time special study and research (in the case of the EngD) or two years of full-time research (in the case of the MD). Submissions should be clearly written, well argued and should indicate a satisfactory knowledge of the field of study. Submissions should contain material worthy of publication in some form. Submissions by portfolio that involve co-authored work must include a clear declaration of the contributions made by the candidate in the conception, execution and writing of the work.

b. An oral examination of the thesis or portfolio is normally compulsory. It may only be waived by the relevant Faculty Business Committee in very exceptional circumstances and where the award of the degree for which the thesis was submitted is not in question.

c. The degree of Doctor of Medicine (MD) may be awarded without classification, or it may be awarded 'with distinction' on the recommendation of the examiners when the thesis of published work gives evidence of original work of outstanding quality that constitutes a significant contribution to the subject.

d. The examination of the thesis or portfolio by the examining committee should normally be completed within 3 months from the date of submission.

**iii. DSc/DLitt/MD (by submission)**

The nature of the submissions relevant to the DSc, the DLitt and the MD by portfolio are described in Sections 10.i.f, 10.i.e and 10.i.c(iv). After submission, an examining committee is appointed by the Senatus Academicus, which reports its recommendation to the Senatus. An oral examination is not prescribed.

**B. EXAMINING COMMITTEES & THEIR OPERATION: RESEARCH DEGREES**

*i. The Appointment of the Examining Committees.*

a. In the case of the MPhil / PhD/DLang/EngD/MD (by research thesis), the relevant Head of School after consultation with supervisors must nominate an Examination Committee at least 6 weeks prior to submission of the thesis. Unless the Examination Committee has been nominated by the School and agreed by the Faculty Business Committee by the time the thesis is submitted, there may be delays in the examination process. Nomination forms for an Examination Committee should be signed either by the Head of School or by the Convener of the School's Postgraduate committee under the authority of the Head of School. Candidates should be given the opportunity to comment on the composition of the Examination Committee. Candidates do not have a right of veto, but may appeal to the relevant pro-Dean if there is no resolution of a dispute at School level.

b. The Committee should consist of at least two examiners, typically a permanent member of staff of the University who acts as the Convener, and an external examiner. Only persons of seniority and experience who are able to command authority in the relevant field of study should be appointed. Appointees should normally hold, or have recently held, an academic appointment in a University in the British Isles. Former St Andrews members of staff or research students should not be invited to become external examiners before at least four years have elapsed. Members of other Universities who are part of pooling arrangements which relate to the candidate's area of study may not normally act as External Examiners. In certain circumstances, however, it may be appropriate to appoint from outside the higher education system, e.g. from industry or the professions, or from the higher education systems of other countries. Conveners of Examination Committees should be academic or academic related members of staff of the University who will not be retiring or departing the University up to 6 months after the expected date of submission.

c. In some cases, e.g. if a member of staff knowledgeable in the subject area is not available, two external examiners should be appointed with an internal convener to administer the examination process. For the MD (by research thesis), the examining committee shall be a convener and two external examiners.

d. Where a member of university staff is submitting for any higher degree by thesis or dissertation the examining committee should contain two external examiners and an internal examiner who should act as Convener.

e. A supervisor may not be appointed to an Examination Committee, and a supervisor may only attend an oral examination at the express wish of the examiners and of the candidate, and only as an observer. As an internal examiner, the Convener should be sufficiently distant from the candidate and supervisor, both academically and personally, to ensure an impartial and objective opinion of the thesis. It is accepted, however, that in small departments there will inevitably have been some academic interaction between the Convener and candidate.

f. If the student has carried out all or part of the research elsewhere than in the University, the supervisor from the other place of study may be appointed as an Additional Examiner.

g. The purpose of the viva is for: ensuring the candidate's authorship of the thesis; discussion of points arising from the examiners' reading; discussion with the candidate of the wider context of the specific area of research; clarification of areas of uncertainty or doubt.

h. The University expects work at MPhil and PhD level to be scholarly, substantial, significant and lucid.

*ii. Procedures followed by the Examining Committee*

a. Conveners are responsible for arranging the date of the oral examination and informing Registry and the School Postgraduate Convener. (In the case of the MPhil, the examining committee shall have to decide whether an oral examination is needed.) Conveners are usually the internal examiner, though where there are two external examiners a convener must also be appointed; within an examination, the convener is responsible for assuring that the viva takes place in an appropriate setting, that the candidate is given the opportunity to answer reasonable questions, and that on conclusion all appropriate forms are completed.

b. The examination of a thesis should normally be completed within three months of the date of submission. If the examining committee is unable to convene within three months, then the Dean of the Faculty may either authorise a short extension or advise the Senatus Academicus that a new committee should be appointed.

c. The principal supervisor should inform the examining committee, on form MPhil1b or PhD1b, of any special circumstances that may have affected the student's performance during the period of study.

d. In appropriate circumstances and subject to the agreement of the candidate and the internal examiner the oral examination may be held by video conferencing.

e. Examiners are expected to prepare independent written reports on the thesis prior to the oral examination, and they should express a provisional judgement on the thesis on these reports. These reports should be submitted at least 5 working days before the oral examination to Registry, which will make them available to the Convener of the examining committee only when all reports have been received. In order to maintain independence, examiners should not confer with one another about the thesis or their judgements prior to all reports having been submitted. These reports will remain confidential unless requested as part of a freedom of information request or appeal.

iii. *The Recommendations of the Examining Committee*

a. For the MPhil the following recommendations may be given by the Examining Committee:

- that the thesis be approved and the degree of MPhil. be awarded, save for the making of any purely typographical corrections and revisions; or
- that the thesis be not accepted in its present form but that the candidate be given the opportunity to make minor corrections to the thesis within a period of three months of the date of the examination, and that upon the Convener of the committee being satisfied that these minor corrections have been effected, the thesis be approved and the degree of MPhil. be awarded; or
- that the thesis be not accepted in its present form but that the candidate be given the opportunity to revise the thesis and resubmit it for re-examination within six months from the date of intimation to the candidate of the decision of the Faculty Business Committee—this recommendation meaning that the candidate must resubmit a corrected thesis, pay a resubmission fee, and be re-examined, though the examiners have the right to waive a further oral examination; or
- that the thesis being of sufficient merit, the candidate be awarded the degree of MLitt, or MSc.; or
- that the thesis be rejected, and that the candidate be awarded the Postgraduate Diploma where so qualified; or
- that no award be made. This may not be the recommendation at the first presentation of the thesis.

b. For the PhD/DLang/EngD, the following recommendations may be given by the Examining Committee:

- i. that the thesis be approved and the degree of PhD/ DLang/EngD be awarded without corrections; or
- ii. that the thesis be approved and the degree of PhD/ DLang/EngD be awarded, subject to the making of any purely typographical corrections and revisions; or

- iii. that the thesis be not accepted in its present form but that the candidate be given the opportunity to make minor corrections within a period of three months of the date of the examination and that, upon the convener of the committee being satisfied that these minor corrections have been effected, the thesis be approved and the degree of PhD/ DLang/EngD be awarded; or
- iv. that the thesis be not accepted in its present form but that the candidate be given the opportunity to revise the thesis or portfolio and resubmit it within twelve months from the date of intimation to the candidate of the decision of the Examining Committee—this recommendation meaning that the candidate must resubmit a corrected thesis, pay a re-examination fee, and be re-examined, though the examiners have the right to waive a further oral examination; or
- v. that the thesis not being of sufficient merit, the candidate may resubmit the thesis within twelve months for a further examination for the award of PhD/ DLang/EngD - this recommendation meaning that the candidate must resubmit a corrected thesis, pay a re-examination fee, and be re-examined, with a further oral examination; or
- vi. that the thesis not being of sufficient merit, the candidate may resubmit the thesis within twelve months for a further examination for the award of MPhil. - this recommendation meaning that the candidate must resubmit a corrected thesis under the regulations for the degree of MPhil., pay a re-examination fee, and be re-examined, though the examiners have the right to waive a further oral examination; this recommendation may be offered to the candidate at the same time as recommendation v. as an alternative option, but may not be the only recommendation at the first presentation of the thesis; or
- vii. that the thesis be rejected and no award made. This may not be the recommendation at the first presentation of the thesis.

c. For the MD (by research thesis) the same recommendations are available as for the PhD/DLang/EngD (above). If, in the opinion of the examining committee, the thesis is not of sufficient merit to justify the award of the MD, an opportunity to resubmit the thesis may be given, subject to compliance with any recommendations which the examining committee may make. In addition, the MD with Distinction may only be awarded on the recommendation of all examiners.

d. The examiners may tell the candidate their recommendation informally during or after the oral examination, but the candidate will be notified officially of the result of the examination only after the Faculty Business Committee has approved the recommendation of the examining committee.

e. The examiners must prepare an agreed final report which will be made available by the convener to the candidate within two weeks of the examination regardless of the result, containing any recommendations for changes before resubmission, reasons for referral, and commentary on the future direction of successful theses.

f. The award of a lower degree for the PhD/DLang/EngD may only be made where the examiners are convinced that the thesis fulfils completely the requirements for that degree, and may not be recommended purely as a compensatory award.

g. In the case either of a thesis which is rejected or recommended for a lower degree, the convener of the examining committee must provide the candidate with a detailed written statement of the reasons why the thesis has not been accepted for the original degree.

h. If there are minor revisions to be made to the thesis, these will be conveyed to the candidate in writing by the Convener. Note that the supervisor's role does not end after the examination and that the supervisor should offer guidance to the candidate on achieving the required revisions. The revised thesis should then be examined by the internal examiner within 2 weeks of receipt of the revised thesis. The Convener is responsible for reporting to Registry on the Minor Corrections Report Form that the corrections or revisions have been successfully completed.

i. Where the thesis is more seriously flawed and the examining committee has recommended a resubmission for the same degree after major revision, the candidate will obtain a clear and detailed statement in writing of the aspects of the thesis requiring amendment from the Convener. In such cases, the supervisor's role has not ended after the examination. The supervisor should offer guidance to the candidate, in consultation with the Convener or where necessary the other members of the examining committee, on achieving the required changes.

j. When the examiners have recommended that the degree should be awarded, one copy of the thesis in the correct binding must be deposited in the University Library before the student is able to graduate. The thesis has to be bound in blue, black or red covers, with the title of the thesis and the name of the candidate printed on the front cover and the name of the candidate and the degree awarded on the spine unless Faculty has given permission for another format to be used. At the same time, the student must also provide an electronic copy of their work to the library in an agreed format.

k. A candidate who is dissatisfied with the result of an examination has the right of appeal and details of the appeals procedure can be obtained from the Academic Registrar see the Code of Practice on Student Complaints, Appeals and Discipline.

## **12. GRADUATION**

a. After the successful completion of a degree or diploma, a candidate has the right to graduate in person or in absentia.

b. Advice on graduation may be obtained from Registry, 79 North Street, email: [registry@st-andrews.ac.uk](mailto:registry@st-andrews.ac.uk).

### **13. CONFIDENTIALITY AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS**

The University of St Andrews operates agreements between matriculated students and the institution with regard to confidentiality and intellectual property rights, which are designed to protect both the institution and postgraduate students from malpractice or exploitation. The agreements are appended as Appendix 3, and further details may be had from the Knowledge Transfer Centre. Please note that, where relevant, principal supervisors should inform Research and Enterprise Services of IPR issues arising from work undertaken by their research students.

### **14. ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT**

The University has a policy on Academic Misconduct which covers all matters of this nature relating to both undergraduate and postgraduate students. This policy can be found on the University website

<http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/students/academic/>

### **15. HELP AND ADVICE**

During your studies there may be times when you need help and advice and Student Support Services offer an extensive range of support to ensure that your experience as a Postgraduate Student is successful and fulfilling.

The Service is made up of a team of Advisers who are there to assist you on any issue from Financial hardship, Disability and health matters, Immigration advice, Academic concerns as well as more personal matters such as relationship difficulties.

You can get in touch with Student Support Services at [sss@st-andrews.ac.uk](mailto:sss@st-andrews.ac.uk) or calling 01334 462720 or calling in to our offices on the first floor of the Student Union Building.

## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1: Forms and Guidance Information

Forms and guidance information may be downloaded from the University of St Andrews University website. These include the following:

Notes for use of postgraduate forms  
Nomination of Examiners' Committees - research degree final examinations  
Nomination of External Examiners - taught postgraduate programmes  
Nomination of External Examiners (fourth year extension) - taught postgraduate programmes  
Postgraduate Progress Report Form  
Taught postgraduate programmes –  
Examiners' report on completion of taught component (June):  
MLitt / MSc / MRes Examiners' Report Form  
Examiners' report on completion of dissertation (September):  
MLitt / MSc / MRes Examiners' Final Report Form  
Taught Examiners' Final Report Form  
MPhil1a - M.Phil Faculty Officer's Report form  
MPhil1b - M.Phil Supervisor's Report form  
MPhil2 - M.Phil External Examiner's Report form  
MPhil3 - M.Phil. Internal Examiner's Report form  
MPhil4 - M.Phil. Final Report of Examiners' form  
MPhil5 - M.Phil. Minor Corrections Report form  
MPhil resubmission form - Examiners' Final Report for full re-submissions  
PhD1a - Faculty Officer's Report form  
PhD1b - Supervisor's Report form  
PhD2 - External Examiner's Report form  
PhD3 - Internal Examiner's Report form  
PhD4 - Examiners' Report form  
PhD5 - Minor Corrections Report form  
PhD resubmission form - Examiners' Final Report for full re-submissions  
Taught postgraduate annual report form (student copy)  
Research postgraduate annual report form (student copy)  
External examiner fee payments (research oral examinations): personal details and fee request form

## **Appendix 2: Guidance on Submission of Research Theses or Portfolios (PhD and MPhil)**

The following information is issued for the benefit of candidates for higher degrees (PhD and MPhil):

- a. The thesis must be written in English unless, in the case of the PhD and according to guidance above, the Faculty Business Committee has given special permission for another language to be used.
- b. Unless the Faculty Business Committee has given permission for another format to be used, every thesis shall be word-processed in single, 1 1/2 or double line spacing. Double-sided submission is encouraged. The margins may be no narrower than 30 mm.
- c. A thesis for the degree of PhD shall normally not exceed 80,000 words (excluding bibliography and appendices) and for the degree of MPhil 40,000 words (excluding bibliography). This includes footnotes and edited original documents and texts. Permission to exceed these word limits must be obtained from the Faculty well in advance of submission.
- d. Students may submit supplementary data in the form of a CD. The CD should be placed in a protective envelope and housed in a wallet that is firmly attached to the rear inside cover of each copy of the thesis or portfolio. The data may be presented in any suitable modern package, but students are also advised to present their data as a text file in which individual items of numeric data are separated by commas. The latter format is readable by all data analysis packages.
- e. Students may present graphic data in coloured form (e.g graphs, photographs, chemical structures etc) provided that archival quality paper and inks are used. Reprographic services can provide suitable archival prints. If prints are made by candidates themselves they should refer to and follow the instructions given by the printer manufacturer concerning archival papers and inks.
- f. The thesis or portfolio should be presented for examination in loose-leaf binding; an appropriate binding can be produced quickly and inexpensively by the Bindery in the University Library. Three copies of the thesis or portfolio must be submitted; in the event of a successful submission one copy is returned to the candidate.
- g. Each copy of a thesis presented for examination AND a thesis presented for deposit must contain the following:
  - (i) A title page with the title of the thesis, the name of the candidate, the name of the degree and the date of submission.

(ii) An abstract of the thesis, not more than 300 words. In the case of a thesis written in a foreign language a summary in English of between 2,000 and 3,000 words is required as well as the abstract.

(iii) The following declarations:

I, ....., hereby certify that this thesis, which is approximately ..... words in length, has been written by me, that it is the record of work carried out by me and that it has not been submitted in any previous application for a higher degree.

I was admitted as a research student in [month, year] and as a candidate for the degree of ..... in [month, year]; the higher study for which this is a record was carried out in the University of St Andrews between [year] and [year].

date ..... signature of candidate .....

I hereby certify that the candidate has fulfilled the conditions of the Resolution and Regulations appropriate for the degree of ..... in the University of St Andrews and that the candidate is qualified to submit this thesis in application for that degree.

date ..... signature of supervisor .....

In submitting this thesis to the University of St Andrews we understand that we are giving permission for it to be made available for use in accordance with the regulations of the University Library for the time being in force, subject to any copyright vested in the work not being affected thereby. We also understand that the title and the abstract will be published, and that a copy of the work may be made and supplied to any bona fide library or research worker, that my thesis will be electronically accessible for personal or research use unless exempt by award of an embargo as requested below, and that the library has the right to migrate my thesis into new electronic forms as required to ensure continued access to the thesis. We have obtained any third-party copyright permissions that may be required in order to allow such access and migration, or have requested the appropriate embargo below.

The following is an agreed request by candidate and supervisor regarding the electronic publication of this thesis:

Access to Printed copy and electronic publication of thesis through the University of St Andrews.

Access to all or part of printed copy but embargo of all or part of electronic publication of thesis for a period of ... years (maximum five) on the following ground:

- publication would be commercially damaging to the researcher, or to the supervisor, or the University;
- publication would preclude future publication;
- publication would be in breach of law or ethics

Embargo on both all or part of printed copy and electronic copy for the same fixed period of ... years (maximum five) on the following ground:

- publication would be commercially damaging to the researcher, or to the supervisor, or the University;
- publication would preclude future publication;

publication would be in breach of law or ethics

Permanent embargo of all or part of print and electronic copies of thesis (permission will be granted only in highly exceptional circumstances).

[Where part of a thesis is embargoed, please specify the part and the reasons. Evidence for a request for an embargo must be included with the submission of the draft copy of the thesis]

date ..... signature of candidate ..... signature of supervisor .....

h. In the case of submission of a portfolio, three copies must be delivered to Registry, and they must contain the following preliminaries:

(i) A title page with the title of the portfolio, the name of the candidate, the name of the degree and the date of submission.

(ii) An abstract of the portfolio, not more than 300 words.

(iii) The following declarations:

I, ....., hereby certify that none of the work contained in the books or papers in this portfolio, which record work substantially carried out by me, has been submitted by me for a higher degree in any other university.

date ..... signature of candidate .....

I was admitted as a research student in [month, year] and as a candidate for the degree of ..... in [month, year]; the higher study for which this is a record was carried out between [year] and [year].

date ..... signature of candidate .....

I hereby certify that the candidate has fulfilled the conditions of the Resolution and Regulations appropriate for the degree of ..... in the University of St Andrews and that the candidate is qualified to submit this portfolio in application for that degree.

date ..... signature of supervisor .....

Candidates must also attach to each copy of the portfolio a signed declaration as follows:

In submitting this portfolio to the University of St Andrews I understand that I am giving permission for it to be made available for use in accordance with the regulations of the University Library for the time being in force, subject to any copyright vested in the work not being affected thereby. I certify that I have obtained permission of all copyright holders for this action. I also understand that the title and abstract will be published, and that a copy of the work may be made and supplied to any bona fide library or research worker.

date ..... signature of candidate .....

### **Appendix 3: Confidentiality and Intellectual Property Rights**

By signing the matriculation form, each research student agrees to the following policy on confidentiality and intellectual property rights, which forms part of the rules and regulations of the University as laid down by Senate.

This policy is designed to give postgraduate students the same rights and opportunities over the commercial exploitation of innovation as members of academic and academic-related staff, as well as register the obligations of the University in line with the policies of research funders and sponsors, particularly the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) and the UK Research Councils (RC) on the exploitation of innovation. This policy therefore acts to protect a student's rights over their work and as a defence against exploitation of intellectual property rights by others without permission.

As described below, students are required to advise their supervisors of any work that may be commercially exploitable. Supervisors are then required to notify the Knowledge Transfer Centre of such opportunities, not least for the protection of the interests of the student concerned. Students may of course contact the Knowledge Transfer Centre directly with details of their innovations, but this will not usually exclude the supervisor from any subsequent discussions on commercial exploitation. It must be noted that the Knowledge Transfer Centre is the recognised vehicle in the University for advice on commercial exploitation.

#### **1. Confidentiality**

Through its funding arrangements with research sponsors, including SFC, the RCs, charities, UK government, European Commission, industry and a variety of other sponsors the University is obligated under contractual terms and conditions to maintain certain information confidential. The purpose of this confidentiality is (1) to ensure that an appropriate level of non-disclosure is maintained in line with arrangements with research sponsors (2) to facilitate scientific and study group discussions and promote the beneficial exchange of data and results (3) to facilitate steps to protect potentially valuable research outputs and (4) to protect certain University information which may be made available to postgraduate research students.

In this Paragraph 1, "Information" means University information and any research results and data from work carried out at the University and/or services and/or trials as provided by or carried out at the University or relating to research work carried out by third parties with whom the University contracts which I, the Student, have created or have obtained access to or been given during the course of my studies or research work at the University, and in whatever form such information and data exists.

- i. As a matriculated student of the University, I acknowledge that I may have access to Information and I undertake to keep strictly confidential, not to disclose to any person (orally or in writing) other than staff at the University, and not to use, except in the course of my research work as a student of the University, any Information.
- ii. I shall keep all records, whether held in paper or electronic form, containing any Information in a safe and secure place.

- iii. This obligation of confidentiality shall not apply to any Information which is in the public domain through no fault of mine, or in respect of which I have obtained the prior written consent of the Director of the Knowledge Transfer Centre to disclose (which consent shall not be unreasonably withheld or delayed).
- iv. If the University is requested by a third party to obtain a confidentiality undertaking from its students on particular projects or research work, I agree that, if requested I shall enter into a further confidentiality agreement with the University and/or that third party confirming these obligations of confidentiality in relation to information on that particular project and/or research work.

## 2. Intellectual Property

In this Paragraph 2 "Intellectual Property" means patents, registered designs, design rights, copyright, database rights, rights in confidential information and any other similar industrial or intellectual property rights arising anywhere in the world and applications for any of the foregoing and the right to apply for any of the foregoing anywhere in the world which arise from a students research work.

- i. I undertake to advise my University Supervisor of all research work carried out by me at the University and to disclose to him/her any inventions, discoveries or ideas developed or created by me in the course of that research work.
- ii. Subject to (v) below, and with the exception of copyright in books, papers, articles, musical scores, poems, and dramatic works, written or created by me, I assign to the University, with immediate effect on the creation of such rights, all rights which I may have and may acquire in any inventions, discoveries or ideas as may arise in research work undertaken by me, either alone or jointly, as a matriculated student of the University including all Intellectual Property Rights therein. I make this assignment on the condition that:-
  - a. The University will evaluate any such Intellectual Property assigned by me as to its technical feasibility, patentability and marketability and taking into account that assessment, take reasonable steps to protect and exploit that Intellectual Property; and
  - b. The University will share the income after deduction of tax and all costs incurred by the University in connection with protection and maintenance of the Intellectual Property ("Net Royalty Income") received by it from exploitation of such Intellectual Property with the inventors of that Intellectual Property (which may be me alone if I am the sole inventor of the Intellectual Property, or me and other staff and/or students at the University, if the Intellectual Property is jointly invented) on the following basis:-

Net Receipts	Inventor(s)	School	University
First £20K	75%	16.7%	8.3%
Sums between £20K and £500K	50%	16.7%	33.3%
Sums between £500K and £2M	33.3%	16.7%	50%
Sums between £2M and £10M	25%	20%	55%
Sums in excess of £10M	20%	20%	60%

iii. I agree that, the Inventors share of Net Royalty Income referred to above, shall be divided in proportion to each inventor's contribution to the development of the Intellectual Property, and such proportion shall be agreed between the inventors.

iv. The University agrees that, if it has no commercial interest in any Intellectual Property assigned to it by me pursuant to this paragraph 2, within 6 months of determining that it has no such commercial interest, it will advise me in writing and will re-assign to me such rights in the Intellectual Property as I assigned to it at my request without undue delay.

v. Paragraphs 2 (i-iv) do not cover any Intellectual Property which I have already assigned by written agreement to a third party involved as a sponsor or otherwise in research work carried out by me as a student at the University. This exclusion applies only to the extent that the University has given its prior approval to such agreement with that third party.

vi. If the University agrees to assign to a third party, Intellectual Property assigned to the University pursuant to this paragraph 2, the University will consult and advise me of the terms of any agreement before it is concluded.

vii. I agree to sign such further documents as may be required by the University, and to provide such reasonable assistance as may be requested by the University and as may be reasonably necessary for the University, to fully acquire or protect the Intellectual Property assigned hereunder. I appoint the Director of the Knowledge Transfer Centre from time to time as my attorney to sign such documents on my behalf.

### 3. Proper Law

It is agreed that the law of Scotland shall govern these provisions and that the Scottish Courts shall have exclusive jurisdiction over disputes arising out of or connected to these provisions.