University of St Andrews
Postgraduate Research Committee

Please find attached the agenda and papers for the Postgraduate Research Committee meeting which will be held on Tuesday 3 May 2016 at 2pm in Parliament Hall with tea and coffee available from 1:30pm. The meeting will start with a presentation from Rhona Frood, Space Planning Manager, on the relocation of some of the Professional Services to Guardbridge.

AGENDA

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<td>1. Apologies for Absence</td>
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<td>2. Minutes of 13 April 2016 &amp; Matters Arising</td>
<td>For formal approval: • minutes and actions arising from previous meeting</td>
<td>Paper A</td>
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<td>3. Research Integrity Concordat</td>
<td>To receive an oral update on the Research Integrity Concordat and discuss minor updates to the Policy for Supervisors and Student in Postgraduate Research Programmes</td>
<td>Paper B</td>
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<td>4. PGR Progress Review</td>
<td>To receive an oral update from the Convenor of the PGR Progress Review Working Group and discuss the proposed new forms and guidance note</td>
<td>Paper C</td>
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<td>5. PGR Student Representation and Community</td>
<td>To discuss the effectiveness of the current structures for PG student representation and the sense of PGR community at St Andrews</td>
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<td>6. Policies and Regulations</td>
<td>To discuss the following papers: • Independent Learning Week</td>
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<td>7. Papers for Information</td>
<td>For information: • URLT Schedule 2016-21 • PGRC meeting dates: 2016-17</td>
<td>Paper E Paper F</td>
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<td>8. Communities of Practice in Pedagogic Research</td>
<td>To receive details of three initiatives being led by the Dean of Arts &amp; Divinity</td>
<td>Oral Report</td>
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<td>9. Next meeting: Wed 12 October 2016, 2pm-4pm, Parliament Hall</td>
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Emily Feamster
Postgraduate Administrative Officer
Proctor’s Office

21 April 2016
1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were noted and the Proctor took the opportunity to welcome new PGRC members Jack Carr, the DoRep elect, and Bhavya Rao, who is replacing Paul Brown as the representative for the Careers Centre. DoPGs were reminded that the PTES survey opens on 18 April and were asked to remind PGT students to complete the survey. PGRC members were also reminded of the Teaching Excellence Ceremony on 19 April and invited to attend.

2. Minutes of 25 November 2015 and Matters arising

The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as a correct record. The following updates on matters arising were given:

- It was confirmed that Academic Council approved all policy papers put forth by PGRC at the March 2016 meeting.
- Colleagues at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland confirmed that students on the collaborative programme will follow all St Andrews regulations. The Royal Conservatoire includes their own coversheet to highlight any differences.
- The Proctor confirmed that the PGR Parental Leave Policy was amended to allow students to take their leave outside of St Andrews. The policy will go to the June Academic Council for final approval.

3. Policies and Regulations

The three papers presented in this section represent the culmination of the Postgraduate Change of Registration Working Group. Following discussion, papers B and D were approved as written. Clarification was requested for paper C regarding the requirements for upgrading from a Postgraduate Diploma to a MLitt. It was agreed that this wording would be updated to reflect the same requirements as moving from a MLitt to a MPhil. Paper C was approved pending this change.

4. Working Group Reports
Oral Updates were received from the Progress Reviews Working Group and the PGR Tutoring Working Group.

**Progress Reviews**

The working group has amended the documents in line with the discussion at the last PGRC. Students and supervisors will now have the opportunity to assign a colour code as part of the review. It was decided that the progress review process should be as transparent as possible so guidance on information sharing was updated to reflect that student self assessments and supervisor’s reports will be shared.

**PGR Tutoring**

The group is working to bring all the policies related to PGR tutoring together in to one comprehensive document which will include a list of core requirements schools must meet. The group will produce a series of template documents for use in standardising the procedures for offering PGR students teaching, selecting tutors, giving feedback, and highlighting the professional development benefits of tutoring. Preliminary drafts of these documents are scheduled to come to the first PGRC meeting of 2016/17.

5. **Papers for Information**

Papers for information were received without comment.

6. **Discussion Topic**

The Dean of Science led discussion on the use of plagiarism detection on PGR theses and the possibility of requiring only electronic submission of the final thesis, rather than hard copy. PGRC members discussed both issues at length, expressing mixed opinions. Further consideration will be given to these issues and they may be added to the schedule of business for a future academic year.

7. **Date of Next Meeting**

It was noted that the next meeting would be held on Tuesday 3 May 2016 in Parliament Hall from 2-4 pm (tea/coffee available from 1:30pm).
### POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH COMMITTEE

**ACTIONS ARISING FROM MEETING HELD ON 10 FEBRUARY 2016**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agenda Items: (10 Feb 16)</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Policy on Postgraduate Change of Registration</td>
<td>• Amend requirements for upgrading from a Postgraduate Diploma to a Taught Masters. Wording should mirror that used in section on re-registration from Taught Masters to MPhil</td>
<td>Clare Peddie</td>
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<tr>
<th>Agenda Items: (10 Feb 16)</th>
<th>Actions (still pending)</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Risk Assessment Procedures</td>
<td>• Send any feedback on risk assessment procedures to Emmy at ef54@</td>
<td>All PGRC members</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Agenda Items: (25 Nov 15)</th>
<th>Actions (still pending)</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Topic – Marking training for PGR Tutors</td>
<td>• Share examples of good practice with the Dean of Arts via email to deanarts@</td>
<td>All DoPGs</td>
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<tr>
<th>Agenda Items: (14 Oct 15)</th>
<th>Actions (still pending)</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion Topic – Supervisor Training</td>
<td>• Establish more guidance for internal and external Viva examiners</td>
<td>PGR Pro Dean</td>
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Emily Feamster  
Postgraduate Administrative Officer  
20 April 2016
The Concordat to Support Research Integrity was published by Universities UK in July 2012.¹ The Scottish Funding Council (SFC) and Research Councils UK (RCUK) now both require the research organisations that they fund, such as universities, to annually demonstrate compliance with the principles of the concordat, or that relevant efforts are underway. St Andrews will need to report to SFC in summer 2016.

Beyond existing commonplace requirements to comply with ethical, professional and legal requirements, researchers themselves must comply by:

- Understanding the expected (high) level of rigour and integrity placed upon them, and maintain it at all times
- Acting in good faith in making and handling allegations of research misconduct

As an employer of researchers, the University must comply by:

- Having policies and procedures in place that clearly and publicly define:
  - Standards and expectations of researchers, covering good research practice and integrity; and
  - Procedures for dealing with allegations of behaviour that does not meet these standards.
- Developing a culture and environment that supports the above policies and procedures, including providing guidance and advice to researchers.

The Research Policy Office (RPO) has convened a working group focused on ensuring institutional compliance with the Concordat, comprising staff-level representatives of: RPO; the Centre for Academic, Professional and Organisational Development (CAPOD); the University Teaching and Research Ethics Committee (UTREC); and the Animal Welfare and Ethics Committee (AWEC).

The Working Group is currently:

- Constructing a web ‘portal’ containing information on standards, expectations, guidance, and procedures for dealing with allegations of research misconduct, to be used as a resource for the University’s researchers; and
- Developing a workshop on Research Integrity for staff and students.

The Working Group proposes that the ‘Policy for supervisors and students in research postgraduate programmes’ should be updated to reflect the requirements of the Concordat. We are aware that this policy is in the process of being refreshed, and have been provided with the draft of the revised Policy. This draft is annexed, with the proposed amendments marked in track. PGRC members are invited to comment on the proposed amendments.

We hope that the revised policy will be passed to Academic Council in June.

Richard Malham, Research Policy Officer
22 April 2016

¹ http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/aboutus/AssociatedOrganisations/Partnerships/Pages/ResearchIntegrity.aspx
SUPERVISION OF RESEARCH POSTGRADUATE 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.

1. Definitions and requirements

There must always be one clearly identified point of contact for the student, this will generally be the Principal (or main) supervisor who will be part of the supervisory team. Supervision of research degree students should involve at least two people.

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. Principal Supervisors are normally full-time members of academic staff in the post of Lecturer and above. Exceptional arrangements for other academic staff may be allowed by agreement with the Pro Dean.

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.

2. Appointment of research supervisors

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.

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.

It is the responsibility of the Head of School to ensure that new supervisors are introduced to the content of this Policy by University induction courses, School-arranged procedures and by directing them to relevant web resources. 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.

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 Pro 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.

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 School Director of Postgraduate Studies should ensure that the student is put in touch with another member of staff, or the Pro Dean who can fulfil this pastoral role.

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.

3. Frequency of Supervision

Supervisors have contact with research students at least 10 times per session for substantive discussions of the student’s work (contact can be both in person and/or email). Supervisors and students should keep a record of such contacts. In circumstances where it has not proved possible to have contact 10 times per session (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. Contact may be more frequent than 10 times per session in the early stages of work, depending on the discipline.

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 monitor that the student attends this course and that the student’s knowledge of English is sufficient to enable the research to proceed satisfactorily. If a student requires further language support, the student should be referred to English Language Teaching, ideally as early as possible in his or her studies.

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.
4. Responsibilities of Supervisor

Principal supervisors should support a culture of research integrity through the following actions:

- establish mutually agreed means of communication and contact with the student. Supervisors are expected to be accessible to research students at appropriate times when advice may be needed.
- 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.
- ensure that the student has obtained Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) clearance and ethical approval from UTREC, as appropriate, prior to research commencing (see also student responsibilities).
- ensure that the student has received the appropriate ethical clearance, training and/or licencing prior to research commencing with animals.
- ensure 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.
- work with the student to ensure that they are taking an appropriate course of research skills training, to be reported at the annual progress review.
- ensure that students have adequate space (bench, desk) in the School, or elsewhere in the University, where they can work.
- inform Heads of School if they intend to be absent for any length of time so that alternative supervision may be arranged.
- attend at least one of the two annual supervision update sessions per year.

Principal supervisors are responsible for providing guidance about:

- defining a suitable research topic that can be completed in a timely fashion
- the nature and techniques of research
- the standard expected for the degree
- the requirement that students must ensure their own research activity embodies a culture of research integrity, according to the principles of good research practice, and with knowledge of the definition of research misconduct. To this end, supervisors should direct their students to, and discuss with them, relevant professional and institutional guidelines, policies, processes and training opportunities.
- the planning of the research programme
- literature and sources
- required attendance at taught classes
- copyright implications of working on certain subject areas, in particular given the requirement for the electronic publication of theses, and about the embargo of work where publication would have commercial, professional, legal or ethical consequences again in particular given the requirement for the electronic publication of theses.
- presenting work at appropriate conferences, and publishing papers and patents
- career intentions, and assist them (as appropriate) to acquire skills relevant to their intended career development, and make referrals to the Careers Centre, CAPOD, or programmes offered by professional societies as appropriate.

The Director of Postgraduate Studies is responsible for completion of an annual report on the performance of their research students to be submitted to Registry by month nine (for full-time students).
5. Responsibilities of Research Students

The primary responsibility of research students is to pursue their research with integrity, 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).

Students should:

- Live in accordance with the University’s Location of Study Policy.
- 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.
- establish mutually agreed means of communication and contact with the supervisor. 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.
- Be responsible for keeping appointments punctually and are expected to be diligent in meeting deadlines for submitted work or the advancement of their projects.
- Be responsible for adhering to health, safety and security guidelines operative within their place of study or research.
- Ensure that their research activity embodies a culture of integrity, according to the principles of good research practice, and with knowledge of the definition of research misconduct. To fulfil this responsibility, students must appraise themselves of, and discuss with their supervisors, relevant professional and institutional guidelines, policies, processes and training opportunities.
- Obtain any necessary ethics approval for their research, when this involves animals, human participants or human tissue.
- 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.
- take note of and respond to criticism of submitted work and all advice concerning the progress of their work made by supervisors.
- discuss with their supervisors opportunities for presenting their work within and outside the University in order to obtain feedback from a wide range of scholars and in order to gain experience of making research presentations.
- submit annually (on the form provided) a personal progress report to Registry.
- have ultimate responsibility for the form and content of the thesis that they submit.
- 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.

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).

6. Problems with Supervision

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.

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 Dean of the relevant Faculty or Department.
necessary, to the Pro 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 Pro Dean. (see Change of Supervisor form (link)).

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 9.3 Leave of absence).

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 Pro Dean after consultation with the student. The Head of School must authorise payment by the School of any necessary travelling 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.
UNIVERSITY OF ST ANDREWS

POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH COMMITTEE

PGR PROGRESS REVIEWS WORKING GROUP UPDATE

At the February meeting of PGRC the PGR Progress Reviews Working Group presented two documents for discussion – a revised policy on PGR progress reviews and a guidance document for those involved in the process. The group has amended the documents following the discussion at PGRC. These documents are now re-submitted for approval with the following changes:

• Students are reminded to flag up any concerns or problems that might be hindering their progress, and advised of the appropriate resolution routes
• Both student and supervisor are given the opportunity to assess the student’s progress and assign an outcome code. These codes will not replace the final outcome code decided upon by reviewers
• Academic Business Committee took that decision that the progress review should be an open and transparent as possible. Guidance on information sharing and confidentiality was updated accordingly

Additionally, the group was asked to prepare drafts of the supervisor’s report form, student self assessment form, and the reviewers report form. These templates are now presented to PGRC for discussion and approval.

Emily Feamster
Postgraduate Administrative Officer
Proctor’s Office

15 April 2016
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy Title</th>
<th>Policy on Progress Reviews for Postgraduate Research Students</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scope</td>
<td>Applies to all Postgraduate Research students</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relationship with other policies</td>
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<td>Owner</td>
<td>Proctor’s Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>Approving Committee</td>
<td>Postgraduate Research Committee (PGRC) &amp; Academic Council</td>
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<td>Policy approved date</td>
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<td>Policy effective from date</td>
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<tr>
<td>Policy review date</td>
<td>Session 2016/17</td>
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UNIVERSITY OF ST ANDREWS

POLICY ON PROGRESS REVIEWS FOR RESEARCH POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS

Principles

The QAA Quality Code for Research Postgraduate degrees stipulates that universities must “put in place clearly defined mechanisms for monitoring and supporting research student progress, including formal and explicit reviews of progress at different stages”. “The main purpose of the monitoring process is to provide overall support for the research student to maximize his or her likelihood of completing the research programme successfully within an appropriate timescale.” The purpose and frequency of progress reviews, as well as the relevant arrangements for the reviews, must be “made clear from the outset, so that both the research student and the supervisor can plan adequately for them, prepare relevant documents, and consult other individuals as appropriate.”¹

Purpose

The annual progress review should:

• Ascertain whether the research student has progressed satisfactorily in their programme of study.
• Be a useful feedback exercise.
• Give the student formal practice in talking about their work (the subject of their dissertation, its importance to the field, and its methodological approach) to an interested audience that may include a non-specialist.
• Promote the timely and successful completion of postgraduate research degrees.
• Identify problems early, and help resolve problems where possible.
• Ascertain 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, withdrawal, or termination of studies.
• Serve as an opportunity for the student or supervisor to raise any concerns, and as a checkpoint to ensure school and supervisory provisions are satisfactory.

Procedure

Every postgraduate research student, including part-time students, will undergo a formal progress review at least once in each year of registration, normally by month nine. The school must make the requirements, timing, style, assessment criteria and potential outcomes of these reviews clear to students from the beginning of their programme.

Schools are responsible for assigning a review panel for each student. Review panels will normally include at least two members of the School designated by the Director of Postgraduate Studies (DoPG). If supervision duties for a student are shared between two schools, then both schools should normally be represented on the review panel. The panel should not include any member of the research student’s academic supervisory team, but

¹ UK Quality Code for Higher Education, Chapter B11: Research Degrees, Indicator 13 (p. 21).
may include the second supervisor if this role is restricted to the provision of pastoral care. In case of a re-review, at least one member of the review panel should be an experienced member of staff.

While each school is responsible for setting its own requirements for progress review submissions, the following documents must be included [further questions may be added to the forms as necessary]:

- A supervisor’s report [Link to relevant form]
- A student self-assessment form (including a detailed completion plan — compulsory from year 2 onwards, recommended from year 1) [Link to relevant form]
- Reviewers’ reports from any previous reviews.

Students are to be assessed on both the quality and quantity of their work. They should not be judged based on the review panel’s own preferences in regards to topic, method or findings, so long as the work produced is of an appropriate level.

Each student’s work will be classified according to one of four categories:

- Green – Satisfactory
- Yellow – Satisfactory with minor concerns
- Amber – Satisfactory with major concerns
- Red – Unsatisfactory.

After the review meeting, the reviewers complete a feedback form [Link to relevant form] (again, further questions may be added to the form as necessary) and recommend one of the outcomes above. The DoPG is responsible for approving the feedback and submitting it to Registry, as well as to the student and the supervisor as appropriate. Students should always receive written feedback regarding the outcome of their review, preferably within one month of the review meeting. The DoPG may consult the PGR Pro Dean on any reviews of particular concern.

In situations where a re-review is recommended, the DoPG is responsible for approving and overseeing the arrangements for the re-review. Reviewers’ comments from the initial review must be made available for the re-review. Any re-reviews should normally take place between two and five months after an initial review. In a situation where an unsatisfactory progress review serves as the first indication of a possible termination of studies, the period between the initial review and the re-review must be at least two months. This will serve as the probationary warning period. If the student’s progress is deemed to be unsatisfactory at the re-review, then their case will be referred to the PGR Pro Dean to begin the termination of studies process, unless the student decides to withdraw from the programme.

First-year reviews take on particular importance, as they determine whether students will be upgraded from a probationary status to full status of the relevant research degree. If third- or fourth-year reviews raise significant doubts about timely completion, the next review should take place within six months. If students are within three months of the submission of their thesis, they may be excused from the review, provided they have the support of their supervisor. In case an extension is granted, students in their fifth year should be regularly monitored and actively supported, but will not normally undergo a full review. Completion plans should include clear milestones with an indication of the quantity, nature and envisioned stage of readiness of work to be undertaken.

The DoPG should recuse themselves for any cases where they are also the supervisor and refer these back to the Head of School for approval and oversight.
## Progress Review Outcome Codes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Colour coding</th>
<th>Review Outcome</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Resulting actions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Green</td>
<td>Satisfactory.</td>
<td>The student demonstrates a clear understanding of the context and aims of the project, and has demonstrated a capacity to complete it in a timely fashion. In a first year review they can describe an achievable concrete goal, situate the work in the context of previous literature, and have produced work that displays the skills necessary to complete the relevant research degree in their discipline. Where relevant they will have clearly established research questions and begun to develop an appropriate methodology. Where required, they have also completed taught courses as required in their department. In later-year reviews they have completed work over the preceding year that is proportional with timely completion. Their plans for completion are practical and well thought-out. Where relevant they will have a developed and nuanced sense of the argument or arguments of their thesis. This category does not preclude reviewers from having advice or suggestions which may aid the student.</td>
<td>The result of the review, including any suggestions for improvement from the reviewers, is to be shared with the student and their supervisor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>Satisfactory with minor concerns.</td>
<td>The project is realistic and the student has demonstrated that they have the capacity to complete it. However, the reviewers have noted some areas of potential improvement which might further enable timely completion. For example, they may have failed to complete required taught courses, or their research questions may be either too broad or too narrow. This category may also be used in cases where the reviewers think that the student would benefit significantly from further skills training, reviewing further literature, developing their analysis more deeply, considering alternative methodologies, or undertaking further practice in presenting their work.</td>
<td>A re-review is unlikely. The DoPG will, at their discretion, correspond with the student and/or their supervisor regarding the recommendations made by the review panel, and any specific actions the student may need to take.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Amber</td>
<td>Satisfactory with major concerns.</td>
<td>The reviewers have concerns regarding the viability of the project and/or of the student’s ability to complete on time. In a first-year review, they may lack important skills, demonstrate poor understanding of the context of their work, or have a limited view of the direction of the research. Research questions may be ill-defined. The piece of work produced for review is incomplete or does not demonstrate the level of skills necessary to the relevant research degree in their discipline. In a later-year review the quantity of work completed over the preceding year does not seem to be in line with timely completion, and they have no clear sense of the argument or purpose of their research. Their plans for completion may also be impractical or unrealistic.</td>
<td>A re-review is likely, with the possibility of a re-registration to a lower degree path should problems continue to be evident. Even if a full re-review (including interview) is not scheduled, a new submission by the student is required, which needs to be assessed by both the supervisor and the initial reviewer team. If an amber outcome is returned regarding a student in their third-year then a re-review should take place within six months in order to strongly support timely completion.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Unsatisfactory.</td>
<td>The reviewers have significant doubts regarding the project and/or the student’s ability to complete it. In a first-year review, expected aspects (basic research skills, understanding of context and a sense of direction) may be lacking entirely. The piece of work produced for review is partial and demonstrates none or few of the skills necessary to complete the relevant research degree in their discipline. In a later-year review the student appears to have done little work over the preceding year, and plans for completion are either vague or highly unrealistic.</td>
<td>Pending approval from the DoPG, a re-review is scheduled, with the possibility either of re-registration to a lower degree path or termination of studies should the result be unsuccessful.</td>
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UNIVERSITY OF ST ANDREWS
ANNUAL PROGRESS REVIEWS GUIDANCE DOCUMENT

GUIDANCE FOR SCHOOLS, SUPERVISORS, REVIEWERS, AND STUDENTS

General Guidance
University policy regarding the annual progress review can be found here [insert link]. The guidance provided in this document may (and should) be supplemented but not superseded or contradicted by School-Specific guidance for staff and students.

The annual progress review serves to ensure that all research postgraduates are successfully progressing towards timely completion. It enables both Schools and the wider university to offer advice and assistance to any students who may be struggling, whilst also providing valuable intellectual feedback to those with few or no problems with their progress. Finally, it serves as an important opportunity for students to reflect upon their progress and to raise any concerns which they might have.

The expectations of all participants in the review process are discussed below and are summarised in the diagram at appendix 2 of this document. Although this guidance contains specific sections designed for Schools, supervisors, reviewers, and students, all participants in the progress review process may benefit from familiarising themselves with the guidance given to all groups. The appendices are of potential relevance to all individuals involved.

Guidance for Schools
Schools are responsible for administering the annual progress review and for ensuring that the process is managed smoothly and in a timely fashion for all involved. The process will generally be overseen by the Director of Postgraduates.

Every research student (MPhil and PhD) will undergo a formal progress review at least once in each year of registration, normally by their ninth month of study. The School should ensure that the timings and assessment criteria of the progress review are made clear to incoming students when they begin their course of study. Schools should ensure that all participating staff and students are aware of University-wide regulations and guidance in addition to producing School-specific guidance documents. For example, Schools should set a consistent length of time for progress review interviews to take to ensure all students are treated fairly.

The Director of Postgraduates is responsible for allocating an appropriate review panel to each student being reviewed. In addition to referring to the policy regulations regarding the allocation of reviewers, Directors of Postgraduates are encouraged to use their discretion and familiarity with the relationships within their own School to ensure that there can be no conflicts of interest in the case of reviewers chosen. The Director of Postgraduates, in
correspondence with reviewers and other appropriate members of university staff, will also confirm the final outcome of all progress reviews, and will oversee the smooth running of any ensuing processes, such as re-reviews. Any required re-reviews should take place between two and five months after the initial review, although where School guidelines allow for it students can request an earlier re-review.

The timeline at appendix 3 indicates the manner in which the review process should operate from the perspective of the School’s role in organising it.

Guidance for Supervisors
Supervisors should be familiar with the quality and quantity of their students’ work, and should read the entire review submission where possible. Supervisors should give guidance on preparing for the yearly review, including preparing the required documents, and complete the supervisor report form.

Following the review, supervisors should discuss the feedback from reviews with their students and agree a plan of action based on the outcome. Advising students on reassessing their approach is particularly important in cases where the student’s work is deemed less than satisfactory.

If a situation arises where it becomes clear that a student is not making adequate progress, the supervisor should be proactive in discussing alternative options with their students, including Leave of Absence, extension, re-registration for a lower degree, or withdrawal from study. Where necessary, supervisors should direct students to other sources of support and advice, for example the Registry Student Support Officer, CAPOD and Student Services.

Guidance for Reviewers
The progress review is, first and foremost, intended to track the progress of research students and to ensure that they both have the capacity and are receiving the necessary support to complete the relevant research degree in a timely fashion. Within the broad spectrum of students that reviewers will encounter during the progress review process, their most serious responsibility is to those who may be seriously struggling with the demands of research. In these cases, the reviewers’ feedback can begin a process in which students are given as much support as possible to enable them to continue or, where necessary, are guided through the process of transferring to an alternative degree or terminating their studies.

However, the vast majority of students going through the review process will not be in this situation. For these students, the review process serves a variety of purposes that reviewers should be sensitive to. It provides an opportunity for them to garner new perspectives on their work, outside of their supervisory team. It is also an opportunity for them to discuss, in confidence, any concerns they may have, for example with their supervisory arrangements.

The structure of the progress review
For a broader picture of the review process, please see appendix 3.
In first year, PhD students will submit a piece of work (the form of which is set by the School) alongside a self-assessment form. (Depending upon the structure of their programme this may also apply to other research students, although this is left to the discretion of the School). In later years, students will submit a self-assessment form plus any other materials required by the School (for example a calendar of anticipated completion). Reviewers will read this material and then conduct an interview with the student. After the interview reviewers will complete a report and will allocate one of four outcomes to the student under review:
satisfactory, satisfactory with minor concerns, satisfactory with major concerns, and unsatisfactory.

The interview
Some Schools utilise the interview as an opportunity to provide students with a ‘practice viva’. Reviewers should only treat an interview as a viva if this is explicitly suggested by the School and is made clear to students in advance. They should also ensure that such an approach still leaves time for students to raise any concerns they may have. The interview should be a constructive experience for the student. Whilst reviewers may communicate a general sense of how well the interview has gone, they should not communicate their intended classification to the student during the course of the interview, as it is subject to confirmation by the Director of Postgraduates.

4-tier outcomes
The 4-tier outcome system (see appendix 5) is intended to enable reviewers to respond with sufficient nuance to students across the spectrum. The two lower tiers (‘unsatisfactory’ and ‘satisfactory with major concerns’) indicate a strong recommendation from the reviewer that the student undergo the re-review process, and are to be used when the reviewer has major concerns regarding their capacity to finish in a timely fashion. The two upper tiers (‘satisfactory’ and ‘satisfactory with minor concerns’) allow for reviewers to provide feedback and suggestions to students who seem to be reasonably well on track to complete. Awarding a ‘satisfactory’ outcome does not preclude a reviewer from having comments or advice in their feedback to a student who is clearly doing well. ‘Satisfactory with minor concerns’ may be used to give more weight, where it is felt necessary, to advice that might be of significant benefit to a student’s project and their timely completion. Should the review process reveal significant methodological differences between a reviewer and a student, but these do not impact upon a student’s capacity to complete, ‘satisfactory’ and ‘satisfactory with minor concerns’ are appropriate outcomes to use. Should a reviewer award an outcome of ‘unsatisfactory’ or ‘satisfactory with major concerns’, further decisions on the student’s status will be taken by the Director of Postgraduates in their School, in discussion with other appropriate individuals.

Expectations of reviewers
Reviewers are expected to read work and conduct interviews with students in a timely fashion. They should be responsive to the fact that different students may have a variety of needs and may respond best to a variety of different approaches in terms of the interview and feedback provided. They should provide conscientious advice on a student’s project within their expertise to do so, and should treat seriously any concerns that individual students may raise. Reviewers should be sensitive to the dynamics of the student-supervisor relationship, and be aware of the need for discretion when discussing any potential supervisory concerns. At the same time, if issues of School and/or supervisory provision are identified, they should raise these with the DoPG or the PGR Pro Dean.

Guidance for Students
Students should make themselves aware of the requirements for each annual review from the beginning of their programme of study, and should work towards being well prepared for each review.

Students should approach the progress review as a valuable opportunity in a number of different ways. Firstly, it encourages students to reflect upon their own progress and to proactively manage their research in order to write the best thesis possible within the time allotted. It is also an opportunity for students to receive feedback on their work from academics outside of their supervisory team, and provides students with experience of discussing their
project with interviewers who have read material relating to it but have not been closely acquainted with its development.

The annual progress review is also an opportunity for students to report how they feel things have been going – how their research, from their point of view, is progressing, and whether they are happy with the supervisory and other support arrangements provided by the School. Students should note that material submitted during the progress review does not confer credit, and as such does not fall under the university policy regarding multiple submission. As such, any relevant material (e.g. literature reviews, methodological discussions) may be incorporated into their dissertation should they so wish. Of course, the usual rules of Good Academic Practice still apply.

Following the progress review students will receive an outcome (see appendix 5) and a reviewers’ report. The review outcome and report may provide advice or recommend specific actions that the student might take to improve the progress of their research. Students should be proactive in taking any such suggestions on board and in discussing them with their supervisors. If a re-review is necessary, students will receive advice and guidance on the process from the Director of Postgraduates, their supervisor, and other members of staff where appropriate.

If students have any concerns or problems, and if there is anything they feel that is hindering their progress, they should, at any point, feel free to contact the DoPG, the Registry Student Support Officer (reg-support-pgr@st-andrews.ac.uk), or the PGR Pro Dean (prodean-pgr@st-andrews.ac.uk).
Appendix 1: Accommodating Different Circumstances

Although the guidance given above should apply to the vast majority of research students, certain circumstances may require adaptations to the process described above and flexibility on the part of the School and Director of Postgraduates. The notes below aim to clarify some of the circumstances in which this may be the case, but are by no means exhaustive. Schools should contact Registry for further advice if situations remain unclear.

Clarification regarding part-time students:
Part-time students should undergo a progress review in every year of enrolment, rather than in every year of FTE study. Therefore, assuming no leaves of absence, they should undergo review once every calendar year. Reviewers should, however, be sensitive to the different time-scales and expected progress rates involved.

Research degrees with a taught element:
Some research degree programmes — such as the EngD, or PhD programmes as part of Centres of Doctoral training — now contain significant taught components, and these are often concentrated in the first two years of the programme. In these cases, annual reviews in the first two years should make allowance for the time available for research, and assess progress on that basis. E.g., a taught course component equivalent to 60 undergraduate credits is estimated to require 16 weeks of 37.5 hours, and so at a nine month assessment, such a student would only have had at most five months to dedicate to research.

In cases where the first year of such a programme contains only full-time taught courses (and no research component), where it is not appropriate to review research progress, the annual review process may instead take the form of checking the student has attained the required grades in the taught courses. In such cases it may also be appropriate to hold additional assessments after 15 or 18 months to check the transition from taught to research components. Where this is the case, students should be made aware of the full arrangements well in advance. See also discussion under joint programmes below.

Cross-School supervision:
In circumstances in which a student is supervised by academics in more than one School, they should undergo one progress review each year (i.e. they should not be reviewed separately by each School). Directors of Postgraduates from different Schools should correspond regarding which School it would be most appropriate for students to be reviewed in. All relevant Schools should normally be represented on the review panel.

Co-tutelles and other joint programmes:
In case of co-tutelles, the process for progress reviews must be clearly laid out in the individual co-tutelle agreement. This agreement should be consistent with University Policy. Normally, the lead institution is responsible for carrying out the review process. If St Andrews is not the lead institution, the School Postgraduate Committee should request a copy of the annual progress reports. In addition to co-tutelles, some PhD or EngD programmes involve consortia of UK universities which impose their own annual review procedures, as required by funding bodies. If these reviews are consistent with the annual review policy, it may be possible for the DoPG to review the feedback from this review process and submit it to Registry. In cases where it is unclear whether the review procedure is consistent with University Policy, the DoPG should consult with the Pro Dean, who has authority to vary University Policy in such circumstances as necessary, in the interests of the student and the spirit of the Policy.

Re-reviews and government funding:
If a student in receipt of government funding receives an amber or red result in a progress review, any re-review should be completed by month 11 of that student’s academic cycle in order for re-registration or withdrawal to take place without financial ramifications. However, the period between the initial review and the re-review must be at least two months.

Extension period:
In case an extension is granted, students in their fifth year should be regularly monitored and actively supported, but will not normally undergo a full review. Students should submit updates on their work every three months, which will be monitored by both the supervisor and the DoPG. If there are doubts about timely completion, the DoPG may schedule a full progress review.
### Appendix 2: Expectations

#### Students should...
- Familiarise themselves with relevant rules, regulations, and guidelines.
- Establish a successful working pattern.
- Produce the agreed amount of work.
- Complete the student self-assessment form.
- Contact, at any time, their DoPG, the PGR Registry Student Support Officer, or the PGR Pro Dean if they wish to discuss any concerns or problems.

#### Supervisors should...
- Familiarise themselves with relevant rules, regulations, and guidelines, and be equipped to answer student questions about them, and to provide guidance throughout the review process.
- Be available for, and encourage, regular supervision meetings.
- Be familiar with the quantity and quality of their student's work.
- Provide realistic, constructive feedback on their student's progress.
- Complete the supervisor report form.

#### The Director of Postgraduates should...
- Assign reviewers, with reference to subject coverage and any potential conflicts of interest.
- Ensure that reviews happen in a timely fashion.
- Review all outcomes and agree and communicate follow-up actions where necessary.
- Address any issues relating to supervisory arrangements that may have come to light during the review process.

#### Reviewers should...
- Read all submissions and conduct interviews with students in a timely fashion.
- Identify any areas for concern, including minor and non-academic concerns.
- Identify any additional training or supervisory needs.
- Provide constructive feedback for student and supervisor, and fill in the reviewers' report with reference to appendix 5 (outcome codes).
Appendix 3: Process

School, DoPG and supervisor make student aware of annual review requirements from matriculation

DoPG makes student aware of upcoming review approximately 6 weeks in advance

DoPG assigns reviewers, copied to student and supervisor for info, and circulates guidance and expectations

Student and reviewers confirm a review date

Student submits requested work samples and completes self-assessment at least one week in advance of the review, or by school deadline

Supervisor submits supervisor’s report at least one week in advance of the review

DoPG may consult PGR Pro Dean on any reviews of particular concern

DoPG arranges re-review for red reviews, and ambers as necessary

Student is informed in writing of any changes to registration and their right to appeal. Any stipend is suspended only after student has exhausted their route of appeal or the initial appeal deadline has passed

DoPG escalates any failed re-reviews to the PGR Pro Dean for termination of studies or re-registration (in case of withdrawal, the student is asked to write to the PGR Pro Dean)

DoPG approves or amends the report if no re-review is necessary and sends feedback to student and supervisor

Reviewers agree feedback and submit report to DoPG, via MMS, within one week of the review.

Review takes place, ideally as a face to face meeting. Reviewers use guidance provided to fairly assess the student

ANNUAL REVIEW CYCLE
**Appendix 4: Information Sharing**

The progress review is essentially an information-sharing exercise, ensuring that students, their supervisors, and the School are all working towards the same expectations and standards. However, it also involves the creation and distribution of material and information that may be of a sensitive nature. The process, therefore, also creates an opportunity for the student to share some information confidentially with the DoPG.

This table indicates what information or documents should be shared with the different individuals involved at each stage of the review process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Before / during progress review, has access to or receives:</th>
<th>Director of Postgraduates</th>
<th>Reviewers</th>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Supervisor</th>
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<tr>
<td>- Outcomes of and all documents relating to a student’s previous reviews.</td>
<td>- Outcomes of student’s previous reviews, and reviewer’s reports.</td>
<td>- Their own documents.</td>
<td>- Should see any supporting material submitted by the student (e.g. a draft introduction, or sample chapter), including the student’s report, but should not see comments regarding any supervision-related concerns, which the student only wishes to share with the DoPG in the first instance.</td>
<td>- The supervisor’s report.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The documents submitted in the current review by the student and supervisor.</td>
<td>- The student’s review documents.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- The supervisor’s report.</td>
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<tr>
<th>After progress review, has access to or receives:</th>
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<th>Reviewers</th>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Supervisor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>- Any supervision-related concerns, which the student only wishes to share with the DoPG in the first instance.</td>
<td>- DoPG may correspond directly with the student regarding supervisory concerns and how they might best be addressed before taking action (which is likely to involve discussing issues with the supervisor).</td>
<td></td>
<td>- DoPG may correspond privately and directly with supervisor regarding a potential re-review or any other action a student may need to undertake.</td>
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Appendix 5: Outcomes Please note that the table below is incorporated into university policy for annual progress reviews.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Colour coding</th>
<th>Review Outcome</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Resulting actions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Green</td>
<td>Satisfactory.</td>
<td>The student demonstrates a clear understanding of the context and aims of the project, and has demonstrated a capacity to complete it in a timely fashion. In a first year review they can describe an achievable concrete goal, situate the work in the context of previous literature, and have produced work that displays the skills necessary to complete the relevant research degree in their discipline. Where relevant they will have clearly established research questions and begun to develop an appropriate methodology. Where required, they have also completed taught courses as required in their department. In later-year reviews they have completed work over the preceding year that is proportional with timely completion. Their plans for completion are practical and well thought-out. Where relevant they will have a developed and nuanced sense of the argument or arguments of their thesis. This category does not preclude reviewers from having advice or suggestions which may aid the student.</td>
<td>The result of the review, including any suggestions for improvement from the reviewers, is to be shared with the PhD student and their supervisor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>Satisfactory with minor concerns.</td>
<td>The project is realistic and the student has demonstrated that they have the capacity to complete it. However, the reviewers have noted some areas of potential improvement which might further enable timely completion. For example, they may have failed to complete required taught courses, or their research questions may be either too broad or too narrow. This category may also be used in cases where the reviewers think that the student would benefit significantly from further skills training, reviewing further literature, developing their analysis more deeply, considering alternative methodologies, or undertaking further practice in presenting their work.</td>
<td>A re-review is unlikely. The DoPG will, at their discretion, correspond with the student and/or their supervisor regarding the recommendations made by the review panel, and any specific actions the student may need to take.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Amber</td>
<td>Satisfactory with major concerns.</td>
<td>The reviewers have concerns regarding the viability of the project and/or of the student’s ability to complete on time. In a first-year review, they may lack important skills, demonstrate poor understanding of the context of their work, or have a limited view of the direction of the research. Research questions may be ill-defined. The piece of work produced for review is incomplete or does not demonstrate the level of skills necessary to the relevant research degree in their discipline. In a later-year review the quantity of work completed over the preceding year does not seem to be in line with timely completion, and they have no clear sense of the argument or purpose of their research. Their plans for completion may also be impractical or unrealistic.</td>
<td>A re-review is likely, with the possibility of a re-registration to a lower degree path should problems continue to be evident. Even if a full re-review (including interview) is not scheduled, a new submission by the student is required, which needs to be assessed by both the supervisor and the initial reviewer team. If an amber outcome is returned regarding a student in their third-year then a re-review should take place within six months in order to strongly support timely completion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Unsatisfactory.</td>
<td>The reviewers have significant doubts regarding the project and/or the student’s ability to complete it. In a first-year review, expected aspects (basic research skills, understanding of context and a sense of direction) may be lacking entirely. The piece of work produced for review is partial and demonstrates none or few of the skills necessary to complete the relevant research degree in their discipline. In a later-year review the student appears to have done little work over the preceding year, and plans for completion are either vague or highly unrealistic.</td>
<td>Pending approval from the DoPG, a re-review is scheduled, with the possibility either of re-registration to a lower degree path or termination of studies should the result be unsuccessful.</td>
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PGR Progress Review
Supervisor’s Assessment Form

This form will be shared with the review panel and may also be seen by the student.

Basic information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Principal Supervisor</th>
<th>Name of 2nd and/or Joint Supervisor</th>
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<th>Name of Student</th>
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<td>Year of Study</td>
<td>FT/PT</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thesis title</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anticipated date of submission</td>
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Questions

1. How often are you in contact with the student? What forms does this contact take?

2. Has the student’s project received all necessary ethical approval and, if applicable, undergone a risk assessment?

3. How much of the dissertation has been submitted to you, and at what stage of readiness? Are you satisfied with the quality and quantity of work submitted?

4. Do you propose any particular further skills training, or other steps to advance the student’s project?

5. What advice have you given the student regarding career development and any wider training?

6. Please indicate any problems that you feel have arisen in relation to the student’s project. Have you discussed them with the student?

7. Please give your assessment of the student’s progress over the past year, with reference to the 4-tier assessment criteria.
PGR Progress Review
Student Self-Assessment Form

This form is a crucial part of your annual progress review and must be submitted alongside any other material requested by your School (e.g. draft introduction, or sample chapter). It will be used by your reviewers to inform your progress review interview, and may be seen by your supervisor. If you wish to raise concerns that you do not feel comfortable with your supervisor seeing, you should share them with the DoPG in the first instance. You should also, however, feel free to approach the Registry Student Support Officer, or the PGR Pro Dean.

Basic information

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<th>Name of Student</th>
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<td>Year of Study</td>
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<tr>
<td>Name of Supervisor(s)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thesis title</td>
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<tr>
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Questions

1. Please give a brief description of your project.

2. How often are you in contact with your supervisor? What forms does this contact take? Do the supervisory arrangements appear satisfactory to you?

3. Have you discussed any ethical or risk assessment issues related to your project with your supervisor, and taken appropriate steps where necessary (e.g. submitting UTREC forms)?

4. In addition to your research, what other academic work have you been involved in over the past year (e.g. teaching, research seminars, conference attendance, publications, grant proposals)?

5. What is your current state of completion? Please indicate how much of the thesis you have already completed and submitted to your supervisor(s), and provide a detailed completion plan.

6. Please indicate any problems which have arisen in connection with your project. Have you discussed them with your supervisory team?

7. Is there any support (academic or pastoral) currently not provided that you think would help you to complete your project in a timely manner?

8. Do you think your progress to date is satisfactory, and that you are on track to complete your thesis within the expected timeframe (3-4 years FTE)? Please be candid. If you wish you may choose to reflect upon and assess yourself against the 4-tier assessment criteria that will be used by your reviewers.
PGR Progress Review
Reviewers’ Report Form

This form will be shared with the student and supervisory team as feedback following the completion of the progress review process, and will also be available to reviewer teams in subsequent years.

Basic information

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First-Year Review only

Please comment on the nature and quality of the written submissions. Do they indicate that the student has made good progress during their first year of studies? Do they indicate that the student has a well-focused project that can realistically be completed in a further two or three years (FTE) of study?

Questions

1. How frequently is the student in contact with their supervisory team? Does the form and extent of contact seem sufficient to their needs?

2. Has the student considered whether they need to seek ethical approval, or undertake a risk assessment, in relation to their project?

3. What progress on their project has the student achieved over the past year? Does their completion plan seem realistic and indicate that completion will occur by the end of year 4 (FTE) of doctoral study?

4. Have the student and supervisory team considered the student’s training and career development needs, and are these being met? Are there any concerns regarding the balance being struck between research and non-research commitments?

5. Has the student mentioned any problems affecting their studies?

6. How do you classify the student’s progress according to the 4-tier assessment criteria? Please elaborate on the reasons for your classification.
POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH COMMITTEE

INDEPENDENT LEARNING WEEK

The attached paper, relating to the proposed introduction of an Independent Learning Week in Semester 1 was circulated to Academic Council last week and has now been approved. The proposal will come into effect next academic year. Approval was secured by circulation as an early decision on this matter was beneficial to planning for the next academic year, the date of the next meeting of Academic Council is not until 1 June.

Discussions of the principles contained in the paper have already taken place with members of Academic Council and Learning and Teaching Committee as well as Service Directors. Advice and suggestions from those groups were incorporated into the proposals.

Please note that the paper deals with Semester 1 only. The Principal’s Office is aware that concerns have been expressed by some members of staff relating to the Semester 2 calendar. However, since Semester 1 is to all intents and purposes self-contained, it was felt possible to carry out the proposed change to Semester 1 without prejudice to any separate discussion that may take place in future about Semester 2.

Discussions will now take place with Directors of Teaching about the clarifications and practical arrangements necessary to accommodate the alteration to the Semester 1 calendar. Matters raised by Academic Council members during the consultation will be taken into account as far as possible at that time.

The Learning and Teaching Committee, and Postgraduate Research Committee, are asked to note the contents of this paper.

Professor Lorna Milne
Vice-Principal (Proctor)

27 April 2016
UNIVERSITY OF ST ANDREWS

ACADEMIC COUNCIL

Proposal to Introduce an Independent Learning Week in Semester 1

When the academic year was changed in 2012-13, Semester 1 was shortened and Reading Week was abolished. This allows us to accommodate a week of revision before exams, all of which are now completed by Christmas. The start and end dates of Semester 1 are fixed and cannot be altered: for Admissions reasons, it is not possible to start earlier in September.

From the start, there was concern among staff and students that the very compressed timetable for the new Semester 1 would be both stressful and too ‘dense’ for students to catch their breath and consolidate their learning before being assessed. Although there is no evidence that students’ grades have suffered as a result of changes in the Academic Year, Semester 1 has indeed proved relentless, such that both students and staff have consistently favoured the return of some sort of ‘breather’ in the middle of the Semester.

To this end, some Schools have been scheduling their own ‘Consolidation’ Week; others have a long weekend; others still have ‘consolidation days’ in individual modules. Looked at across the University, this particular aspect of Semester 1 now appears muddled and inefficient, contrasting with our excellence in other respects. Students are getting mixed messages and different experiences. The temptation must also exist for them to skip classes in subject A if those in B and C have been cancelled in a given week. Importantly, we are all missing out on the benefits of a coordinated approach.

It is therefore proposed that an Independent Learning Week be introduced into Semester 1 with effect from Academic Year 2016-17. The following parameters will apply:

- So far as possible, ILW will be timed to coincide with the local school holidays (Week 6 for 2016-17) and will incorporate Raisin Monday.
- It will be a learning week during which students are expected to do their usual 40 hours of study.
- Schools will reinforce the message of ILW as a learning week by setting explicit tasks that feed into assessments and examinations in the second part of the semester. These might include forward reading or revision of work to date.
- Extra-curricular opportunities will be available as usual.
- ILW will not be a University vacation week. Staff will be expected to undertake their usual duties, unless on approved leave. For example, University meetings and events may be scheduled as usual throughout the semester.
- Schools should have clear mechanisms for students to contact staff during ILW about academic matters and must ensure that all are informed.
- For all Schools, normal teaching (a full regime of lectures, tutorials, seminars, labs, etc.) will otherwise take place every week from the start of week 1 to the end of week 11 in both semesters. Exceptions where particular modules require a different delivery must be approved by the Deans.
- As at present, week 12 will be Revision Week. Classes, assessments and deadlines may not be scheduled in this period unless approved by the Deans.
- Schools are strongly encouraged to make use of the Thursday and Friday of Orientation Week for academic activities.

Academic Council is asked to approve this proposal.

Lorna Milne
Proctor
18 April 2016
## University-led reviews of learning and teaching

### Schedule for 2016 - 2021

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic year</th>
<th>PSRB Reviews</th>
<th>School/Department</th>
<th>Service Unit</th>
<th>Special/collaborative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 2016-17       | Psychology & Neuroscience Careers Chemistry BSc Geoscience | 1. Social Anthropology  
2. Medicine  
3. ELT  
4. International Relations | 5. Careers |  |
| 2017-18       | BSc Geology | 1. Computer Science  
2. Divinity  
3. Geography & Geosciences  
4. Management  
5. Philosophy | 6. Library |  |
| 2018-19       | Physics & Astronomy | 1. Classics  
2. English  
3. History  
4. Physics & Astronomy | 5. Students’ Association  
6. CAPOD |  |
| 2019-2020     |  |
| ELIR?         | 1. Economics & Finance  
2. Film Studies  
3. Mathematics & Statistics  
4. Modern Languages | 5. Student Services |  |
| 2020-2021     | Mathematics & Statistics (MMath, and BSc/MA Mathematics) | 1. Psychology & Neuroscience  
2. Art History  
3. Music  
4. Biology  
5. Chemistry |  |  |
KEY DATES FOR 2016/17

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wed 7 Sept 2016</td>
<td>DoPG Lunch/Start of Year Briefing</td>
<td>1pm – 4pm</td>
<td>Gateway Boardroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wed 28 Sept 2016</td>
<td>DoPG Lunch</td>
<td>12:30pm – 2pm</td>
<td>Hebdomadar’s Room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wed 12 Oct 2016</td>
<td>Postgraduate Research Committee</td>
<td>2pm – 4pm</td>
<td>Parliament Hall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wed 16 Nov 2016</td>
<td>Postgraduate Research Committee</td>
<td>2pm – 4pm</td>
<td>Parliament Hall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon 5 Dec 2016</td>
<td>DoPG Lunch</td>
<td>12:30pm – 2pm</td>
<td>Gateway Boardroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thurs 26 Jan 2017</td>
<td>DoPG Lunch</td>
<td>12:30pm – 2pm</td>
<td>Hebdomadar’s Room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wed 8 Feb 2017</td>
<td>Postgraduate Research Committee</td>
<td>2pm – 4pm</td>
<td>Lower College Hall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wed 8 March 2017</td>
<td>DoPG Lunch</td>
<td>12:30pm – 2pm</td>
<td>Gateway Boardroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wed 12 April 2017</td>
<td>Postgraduate Research Committee</td>
<td>2pm – 4pm</td>
<td>Parliament Hall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues 2 May 2017</td>
<td>Postgraduate Research Committee</td>
<td>2pm – 4pm</td>
<td>Parliament Hall</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Emily Feamster
Postgraduate Administrative Officer
Proctor’s Office
26 April 2016