



University of  
St Andrews

## Length of study and associated fees for postgraduate research students

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<b>Purpose</b>	This policy lays out the study periods for all postgraduate research degrees, including periods of continuation and extension. IT includes the process for requesting an extension.

<b>Version number</b>	<b>Purpose / changes</b>	<b>Document status</b>	<b>Author of changes, role and school / unit</b>	<b>Date</b>
1.3	Amendmended to clarify periods of annual leave for postgraduate research students.		Emily Feamster, Academic Policy Officer, Principal's Office	17 December 2020

## 1. Periods of study

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

### **MSc(Res) or MSt(Res)**

Students are expected to complete the MSc(Res) or MSt(Res) within 12 months of full-time study, 24 months of part-time study or 48 months via distance learning. All students are expected to pay 12 months of full-time equivalent [fees](#). In exceptional circumstances students may request an extension of up to three additional months.

### **MPhil (by research route), MPhil (including taught credits) or MFA**

Students are expected to complete the MPhil or MFA within 24 months full-time study, 48 months of part-time study or 72 months via distance learning. All students are expected to pay the full 24 months of full-time equivalent [fees](#).

A continuation period of six months for full-time students, or 12 months for students who have been part-time for at least six months prior to the continuation period, will be allowed for students who are unable to complete within the allotted time period. Students do not need to make a special request for this continuation period but they must notify Registry PGR Support and have the documented (email) support of their supervisor. In exceptional circumstances students may request an extension of up to six additional months, in three-month increments, following the continuation period.

The Associate Provost PGR may also admit students with appropriate qualifications directly to the second full-time (or full-time equivalent) year of the MPhil.

### **PhD or DPerf**

The PhD or DPerf consists of 36 months of full-time study, or equivalent part-time study (or as specified by external funding bodies, e.g. research councils). Students must pay a minimum of 36 months full-time (or part-time equivalent) [fees](#) before graduating<sup>1</sup>. The earliest a student may submit their PhD thesis is after 24 months of full-time study, or the equivalent part-time study, having already matriculated into their third year.

A continuation period of 12 months for full-time, or 24 months for students who have been part-time for at least one year prior to the continuation period, will be allowed for students who are unable to complete within the allotted time period. Students do

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<sup>1</sup> For specific exceptions, such as when a student transfers to the University after starting a PhD elsewhere, or for individual co-tutelle arrangements, see the policy on [Registration and Induction of Postgraduate Research Students](#).

not need to make a special request for this continuation period but they must notify Registry PGR Support, and have the documented (email) support of their supervisor.

Students are expected to submit their thesis for examination no later than the end of their fourth year of full-time study. In exceptional circumstances students may request an extension of up to 12 additional months. Students must complete their doctoral studies within 60 months of full-time equivalent study.

As an exception, where doctoral study has been funded by an external agency with specific funding conditions, those conditions will take precedence.

### **EngD/DEng**

Students are expected to complete the EngD/DEng within 48 months of full-time study, or part-time equivalent, 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.

A continuation period of 12 months for full-time, or 24 months for students who have been part-time for at least one year prior to the continuation period, will be allowed for students who are unable to complete within the allotted time period. Students do not need to make a special request for this continuation period but they must notify Registry PGR Support, and have the documented (email) support of their supervisor.

Students must pay a minimum of 48 months full-time (or part-time equivalent) [fees](#) before graduating. The earliest a student may submit their thesis is after 36 months of full-time study, or equivalent part-time study, having already matriculated into their fourth year.

Students are expected to submit their thesis for examination no later than the end of their fifth year of full-time study. In exceptional circumstances students may request an extension of up to 12 additional months.

As an exception, where doctoral study has been funded by an external agency with specific funding conditions, those conditions will take precedence.

### **MD (by thesis)**

Students are expected to complete an MD by thesis within 24 months of full-time or 48 months of part-time study. All students are expected to pay 24 months of full-time equivalent [fees](#). 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 [Higher Degrees Policy](#)).

A continuation period of 12 months for full-time, or 24 months for students who have been part-time for at least one year prior to the continuation period, will be allowed for students who are unable to complete within the allotted time period.

In exceptional circumstances students may request an extension of up to 12 additional months.

## **2. Annual leave**

Students are entitled to reasonable periods of holiday, provided that these are properly agreed in advance with the principal supervisor and conform to the stipulations of the funding body (if applicable). In line with UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) research council terms and conditions, postgraduate research students may take up to 37 days of annual leave per year (pro rata for part-time students) unless otherwise stipulated by their funding body. The annual leave allowance must include the five statutory bank holidays (1st and 2nd January, May Day, and the 25th and 26th of December), and the period in December and January during which the university is closed. If a period of annual leave means that a student will be away from St Andrews for a period of greater than 28 consecutive days (including weekends), or 37 days over Christmas, when University is closed, a change of location application must be completed through MySaint. Due to UKVI restrictions, students on a Student Visa cannot take more than 28 consecutive days of annual leave.

Annual Leave allowances are included in standard period of study calculations. They cannot be rolled over from one academic year to the next, and cannot be used to extend a student's end of studies date. Annual leave for research students does not need to be reported centrally and should be monitored as necessary in each School.

## **3. Continuation**

At the end of the fee-paying period of study (full-time or part-time), students are eligible for a period of continuation which is granted automatically and included within the expected end date of the programme<sup>2</sup>. A continuation fee is charged and due on the first day of the continuation period. Once the continuation period has elapsed, a student may in exceptional circumstances apply to the Associate Provost PGR for a period of extension as defined in this document.

## **4. Extensions**

Extensions are granted on a quarterly basis. Extensions differ from continuation periods in that the latter reflect the inherent variability of a substantial program of research, whereas the former are intended to make allowance for exceptional circumstances. Students may apply for one quarter initially or multiple quarters.

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<sup>2</sup> MSc(Res) and MSt(Res) students are not eligible for a continuation period.

Extension fees will be charged for each quarter requested and will be due on the first day of the extension period.

Regardless of the length of the extension, students must check in with their supervisors at least once per quarter to ensure that adequate progress is being made towards completion. If a student is unable to complete their studies by the end of their extension period they will be referred to the Associate Provost PGR and may face termination of studies.

Students seeking an extension should always discuss it with their supervisor in the first instance. Once the student has the support of their supervisor, they will apply to the Associate Provost PGR, via [MMS](#), no later than three months before their end date. The following information must be submitted with an extension request:

- The grounds for requesting an extension, eg, medical or personal, giving full details of the circumstances. As extensions are only approved in exceptional circumstances, a compelling case must be made. Academic reasons will not normally qualify as exceptional.
- Documentary support for the request where appropriate. Evidence must be provided if the request is on medical grounds. Students seeking evidence to support an extension request on medical grounds should contact a Student Services Wellbeing Adviser ([theasc@st-andrews.ac.uk](mailto:theasc@st-andrews.ac.uk)), who will be able to provide a form to request a medical letter 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 will need to be approved by the principal supervisor. This plan will need to include specific details and timings.
- Support from the School's Director of Postgraduate Studies.

<b>Version number</b>	<b>Purpose / changes</b>	<b>Document status</b>	<b>Author of changes, role and school / unit</b>	<b>Date</b>
1.0	New policy		Emily Feamster, Academic Policy Officer, Principal's Office	17 July 2019
1.1	Addition of a part-time continuation period for part-time students		Emily Feamster, Academic Policy Officer, Principal's Office	18 July 2019
1.2	Amendments to better facilitate part-time study for EngD/DEng students		Emily Feamster, Academic Policy Officer, Principal's Office	17 December 2019

1.3	Amendmended to clarify periods of annual leave for postgraduate research students.		Emily Feamster, Academic Policy Officer, Principal's Office	17 December 2020