



**Code of Practice for  
Research Degree Programmes**

**2016-17**

## Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes

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## Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes

### Introduction and scope

1. This Code of Practice (the Code) provides a framework of procedures and practices to support research students and their supervisors. It outlines the commitment made between Queen Mary University of London (QMUL) and research students for the provision of programmes leading to the award of a research degree (such as MPhil, PhD, MD (Res)) and professional doctorates. This edition of the Code of Practice takes precedence over previous versions.
2. Compliance with the Code of Practice is mandatory. The Code should be read in conjunction with the Academic Regulations for Research Degree Programmes, available at [http://www.arcs.qmul.ac.uk/policy\\_zone/index.html](http://www.arcs.qmul.ac.uk/policy_zone/index.html) and with related procedures approved by Senate or its delegated authority. In any issues of interpretation of the Code, the Academic Regulations always take precedence.
3. The Code takes into account the recommendations of the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), the UK Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) and Research Councils UK (RCUK). It incorporates the precepts outlined in the QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education, chapter B11: Research degrees. (<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code/quality-code-part-b>). It is a requirement of the UK Quality Code that “higher education providers make available codes of practice for research degrees to all students and staff involved in research degrees”.
4. The QAA is a member of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), the umbrella organization for quality assurance bodies in the European Higher Education Area. The QAA UK Quality Code is compliant with the guidelines of the ENQA. UK Higher Education Providers are required by HEFCE to comply with the Quality Code. HEFCE monitors compliance through annual accountability returns from higher education providers.

### Framework for governance and quality assurance of research degrees

5. This section sets out the responsibilities for research degree programmes at QMUL. It identifies the roles and committees involved in making decisions about research degree programmes and those responsible for assuring the quality of the provision to research students and the academic standards of research degrees.
6. The Vice-Principal (Research) is responsible for providing strategic leadership on postgraduate research programmes and all research student matters. The Vice-Principal is the Executive Chair of the Queen Mary Doctoral College. The Vice-Principal (Research) represents research student related matters at the Queen Mary Senior Executive (QMSE) and at the Senate. QMSE is the academic senior management team and comprises the Principal and Vice-Principals. QMSE advises the Principal on the management of day-to-day business as well as the institution’s

long-term future, and is responsible for the development and implementation of the QMUL Strategic Plan.

7. The Director of the Doctoral College is responsible for the operational activities of the Doctoral College and reports to the Vice-Principal (Research). The Director is supported by the Doctoral College Team and the Research Degrees Office. The Doctoral College oversees recruitment and admissions strategy, doctoral training, and the student experience. The Doctoral College works with the Research Degrees Office to assure the quality of research degree programmes and the examination of QMUL research students. The Doctoral College also works in partnership with academic schools and institutes, the Queen Mary Students' Union and Professional Services departments. The Doctoral College Management Group (DCMG) monitors and advises on this work, and reports regularly to the Vice-Principal's Research Advisory Group. Doctoral College Management Group meetings are chaired by the Director of the Doctoral College.
8. There are three academic faculties: Humanities and Social Sciences; Science and Engineering; and the School of Medicine and Dentistry. There are also a number of interdisciplinary institutes. Academic schools and institutes are organised within the three faculties. Each faculty has a Dean for Research, responsible for the oversight and co-ordination of research activity in their respective faculties. The Dean for Research delegates authority for research degrees to the Deputy Dean for Research (Postgraduate Research). The delegation cannot be transferred further to another individual. The Deputy Dean has specific responsibility for research degree students and programmes in their faculty, and provides training and advice to academic staff. One of the Deputy Deans acts as Director of the Doctoral College on a two-year rotating basis.
9. Senate is the QMUL committee responsible for the academic standards of awards and the approval of the Academic Regulations for research degree programmes. The Research Degree Programmes and Examinations Board has delegated authority from Senate to approve the appointment of examiners and the award of degrees following the completion of the procedures for these processes, and applications for the interruption of studies and extension of registration. The Board also considers proposals for new research degree programmes, and reviews annually the Academic Regulations for research degrees and this Code of Practice. The Board is chaired by the Director of the Doctoral College, supported by staff in the Research Degrees Office. The members are the faculty Deputy Deans for Research and a second representative from each faculty from amongst the Directors of Graduate Studies.
10. At School/Institute level, the Head of School/Director of Institute is responsible for the quality of the student experience. Each School/Institute has a designated individual who takes responsibility for research and research student matters, typically a Director of Research. The responsibilities of the Director of Research for research student matters and decision-making are usually delegated to one or more School/Institute Directors of Graduate Studies. A School/Institute may appoint a Deputy Director of Graduate Studies to lead on a specific aspect of research degree matters, who reports to the Director of Graduate Studies. Delegated responsibilities cannot be transferred further to another individual without the approval of the Head of School/Institute.
11. Policy matters and day-to-day issues, including management of the examination process, are handled by the Research Degrees Office in conjunction with the Director of the Doctoral College, the Deputy Deans for Research, and the Vice-

Principal (Research). Policy documents, guidelines and other information can be found at [www.arcs.qmul.ac.uk/research\\_degrees](http://www.arcs.qmul.ac.uk/research_degrees).

12. Research studies programmes that involve collaboration with other institutions or organisations are governed by any additional requirements set out in the agreements for such collaborative provision.

### **Research environment**

13. Schools/Institutes are responsible for providing their students with a sufficiently supportive and active research environment. Schools/Institutes wishing to accept research students must satisfy the following criteria:
  - [a] at least five research-active staff (academic staff and Principal Investigators);
  - [b] a target of a 4-year thesis submission rate (and equivalent for part-time students) in line with the QMUL Strategy.
14. New research studies programmes should be initiated and developed within Schools/Institutes that fulfill the above criteria.
15. The Deputy Deans for Research work with School/Institute Directors of Graduate Studies within their faculty to ensure the provision and enhancement of an appropriate research environment for research students.

### **Selection and admission of students**

16. The Academic Regulations for Research Degrees specify the broad admissions requirements for research degrees, including the required level of competency in English. Schools and Institutes must adhere to the QMUL minimum entry requirements. Schools and Institutes may define specific admissions requirements for individual research degree programmes with the approval of the Research Degree Programmes and Examinations Board, and with advice from the Marketing, Recruitment and Admissions Group.
17. Admissions procedures for research degree programmes are also governed by QMUL's general admissions policies.
18. Schools/Institutes are responsible for selecting students for admission to research studies programmes, with reference to the requirements outlined in the Academic Regulations. Normally two academic references or references demonstrating equivalent professional experience are required. Decisions to offer places to students shall be made on the recommendation of at least two research-active academic staff, with appropriate expertise and experience. Decisions must be approved by the Director of Graduate Studies or the designated school-lead for graduate admissions. If the Director of Graduate Studies or other lead for graduate admissions is the candidate's potential supervisor, the decision is referred to the Director of Research to approve.
19. All short-listed applicants for funding administered wholly or in part by QMUL must be interviewed. Interviews will normally be conducted either face-to-face or remotely. It is recommended that academic staff who interview candidates should undertake the QMUL fair selection training course. Interview panels should be mixed gender whenever possible.

20. Normally, one member of the decision/interview team should not be a potential member of the candidate's supervisory team.
21. The School/Institute Director of Graduate Studies or designated lead for graduate admissions will ensure before recommending an offer that the topic identified is appropriate for a research degree, that the necessary research facilities and research training can be provided, and that appropriate supervision is in place for the expected duration of the programme.
22. Formal offers of admission can only be made by QMUL's central Research Admissions Office.

### **Enrolment and induction**

23. A student is required to enrol with QMUL at the start of his/her research degree programme and to register for the research studies programme. Students are required to re-enrol each academic year for the duration of the programme of studies (including during the period of writing-up) regardless of the mode of attendance and until their degree is awarded. Failure to re-enrol results in termination of registration. Research students will be directed to review the Academic Regulations for Research Degrees and the Code of Practice at the point of enrolment.
24. Responsibility for student induction is shared between the School/Institute and the Doctoral College. Both the Doctoral College and Schools/Institutes should provide induction to their students.
25. The Doctoral College induction will cover:
  - [a] introduction to the overarching governance of research degree programmes at QMUL;
  - [b] introduction to the Doctoral College and its activities and support for students;
  - [c] introduction to the general structure of research degree programmes and arrangements for the monitoring of progression;
  - [d] introduction to the support available from the Research Degrees Office;
  - [e] introduction to research and professional/technical support services;
  - [f] details about opportunities and requirements for research and transferable skills development;
  - [g] expectations on attendance, hours of work and holiday arrangements;
  - [h] arrangements in the event of inadequate progress;
  - [i] who to contact in the event of a problem or complaint;
  - [j] introduction to policies and procedures on research integrity and ethics, plagiarism and research misconduct; and
  - [k] advice on QMUL services including central library and computing services, and support services such as Advice and Counselling, the Disability and Dyslexia Service, and the Careers Service.
26. Schools and Institutes must also provide appropriate and complementary induction activities for research degree students, including:
  - [a] introduction to the structure and research portfolio of the School/Institute;
  - [b] introduction to research and professional/technical support services in the School/Institute;

- [c] introduction to the School/Institute structure of the research studies programme and arrangements for supervision and the monitoring of progression;
  - [d] wider academic opportunities (seminars, journal clubs, research networks) including opportunities for meeting other research students and staff and opportunities to present research to peers;
  - [e] teaching opportunities;
  - [f] skills training available within and outside the School/Institute;
  - [g] mechanisms for providing feedback to the School/Institute, including opportunities for representation on relevant committees such as Staff Student Liaison Committees.
  - [h] health and safety procedures;
  - [i] advice on personal safety and security;
  - [j] how to raise concerns and/or make a complaint within the School/Institute.
27. It is the School/Institute's responsibility to provide a handbook or guidance notes for research students and to review the handbook each year to ensure that it reflects any changes in regulations or policies relating to research degrees. Information related to induction must be included in the handbook for research students.
28. Students will have an initial meeting with their primary supervisor as soon as possible following the beginning of their programme. This meeting will cover:
- [a] the nature of the supervisory relationship and composition of the supervisory team, including responsibilities and expectations;
  - [b] discussion of the research topic proposed, initial routes of enquiry and objectives;
  - [c] identification of initial training needs and formulation of a training plan;
  - [d] recording supervision meetings using the Supervision Log on MySIS; and
  - [e] how the student's progress will be assessed.

## **Attendance**

29. Full-time students are expected to undertake a full study week of 35 hours on their research studies.
30. Part-time students should reach an agreement with their supervisors at the start of their registration as to the proportion of time they will spend on their research degree programme to enable them to submit within the prescribed period. The Academic Regulations for Research Degrees state that the workload of a part-time student is deemed to be 50% of that of a full-time student. It is recognised that the time a part-time student may spend on their studies may vary through the course of the programme. Any arrangement agreed should not compromise submission time within the prescribed period.
31. Requests from students to transfer between full-time and part-time status are approved by the Director of Graduate Studies.
32. All students should agree their holiday periods with their primary supervisor. For full-time students the annual holiday entitlement is 30 working days plus the eight UK public holidays and the four QMUL closure days. Holiday entitlement is pro rata for part-time students and for parts of a year. Students working in collaboration with non-academic partners are expected to bear in mind their obligations to those



partners in planning leave. Excessive absences must be reported to the Head of School/Institute and the Director of Graduate Studies via normal progress report procedures.

33. Students may not be absent without permission from their supervisor. In cases of illness or injury, the student should inform their supervisor(s) and the School/Institute of absence from studies. On the eighth day of the student's sickness (including non-working days) the student should supply a doctor's certificate for any further absence and provide this to the School/Institute research student administrator. Where a student is expected to be absent for more than one month, whether consecutively or cumulatively, the student must apply to interrupt their studies (see 63-72 below).
34. If a student is experiencing difficulties in his/her general attendance or their submission of work does not meet the School/Institute requirements, this should be discussed with the supervisory team, and the Director of Graduate Studies if appropriate, to see what support might be offered to the student to resolve any study difficulties.
35. If a student consistently misses supervision meetings or other School/Institute activities that they are expected to attend and/or does not submit work or misses deadlines as agreed with their supervisory team then a student's registration with QMUL may be reviewed by the School/Institute. QMUL may terminate the registration of a student who fails to meet the progression requirements for the research studies programme or where his/her general attendance or submission of work and/or completion of required activities fails to meet the stated requirements.
36. International students with Tier 4 immigration permission sponsored by QMUL may be at risk of having their visa curtailed if they do not engage regularly and consistently with their research studies programme. The Advice and Counselling Service provides support to international students on immigration matters. Please see <https://www.welfare.qmul.ac.uk/international> for further information.

## **Supervision**

37. The School/Institute's Director of Graduate Studies is responsible for establishing supervision arrangements for each student that conform to this Code, and may be required to report on these arrangements to the faculty Deputy Dean for Research.

### **The Supervisory Team**

38. Each research student will have an identified primary supervisor, who is their main point of contact with the School/Institute and must be a research-active member of academic staff at QMUL, as part of their supervisory team.
39. Each supervisory team must normally include at least two research-active members of academic staff from QMUL. The primary and second supervisors' contract periods will normally extend to cover at least the expected duration of the student's research programme. Additional members of the supervisory team can include members of post-doctoral research staff, industrial partners or other external collaborators. The division of roles and responsibilities between members of the supervisory team will be clearly set out and agreed with the student at the start of the research programme.

40. If the primary supervisor identified for a student has not previously been part of a successful supervisory team (supervising a student to a timely completion) then co-supervision arrangements must be put in place and the other academic supervisor must have experience of supervising a research student through to timely completion. Together the co-supervisors will jointly undertake to ensure that the responsibilities of supervisors are met.
41. Supervisors will normally have a maximum of 8 research students for whom they act as primary supervisor. Allocation of supervisory responsibilities will take into account other duties and professional commitments. Supervisors should have sufficient time for adequate contact with each of their research students to carry out their responsibilities effectively.
42. If the primary supervisor leaves QMUL the School/Institute must appoint a suitable replacement, normally the existing second supervisor. A departing primary supervisor may continue as an external member of the student's supervisory team, but in all cases a replacement primary supervisor must be appointed to act as the main point of contact with QMUL as well as a new second supervisor if appropriate. Temporary arrangements will be made by the Director of Graduate Studies to cover periods of sabbatical leave or other prolonged absence on the part of supervisors.
43. Any problems with the operation of the supervisory team or the supervisory relationship in general should be reported to the Director of Graduate Studies in the first instance. If the student does not wish to discuss the matter with the Director of Graduate Studies, the student may report the matter to the Head of School/Institute or the faculty Deputy Dean for Research.

### **Supervision meetings and the Supervision Log**

44. For the purposes of paras. 44-46 a supervision is defined as a sustained conversation between supervisor(s) and a student about the student's research and research training. The nature of different disciplines means that supervisory practice will take a variety of forms. Supervision may include for example, one-to-one meetings, telephone conversations or video-link/skype meetings. Opportunities are also made available for research students and supervisors to meet informally. Research group meetings, lab meetings and email conversations are not supervision meetings.
45. There should be a minimum of ten supervisory meetings per academic year for full-time students (pro rata for part-time students) held at regular intervals up to submission of the thesis for examination. This is broadly equivalent to one meeting per month for full-time students and one meeting every two months for part-time students, taking into account holiday periods. Supervision meetings may be held with any member of the supervisory team. Meetings should normally take place in person, but may take place via other means as described in para. 44 if all participants are in agreement.
46. Keeping a record of supervisions which students and supervisors may refer to quickly and easily is key to successful supervision. Under the requirements of the UK Quality Assurance Agency, and for international students, UK Visas and Immigration, QMUL must also be able to demonstrate that students are receiving sufficient supervision and that they are engaged in their studies. To fulfil both of these responsibilities, students and supervisors must use the on-line Supervision Log, accessed through MySIS. Students must record supervision reports on the log.

It is the responsibility of both students and supervisors that supervisions are recorded on the log at: <https://mysis.qmul.ac.uk> in the Research Student Data area (guidance notes are available in MySIS).

47. Full-time research students should enter a minimum of ten reports on the Supervision Log per academic year. Part-time students should enter a minimum of five reports on the log per academic year. Reports should also be recorded on the Supervision Log during a period of making corrections to the thesis identified by the examiners. Failure to use the log in line with the recommendations in the Code may be taken as evidence of lack of engagement with studies when reviewing a student's academic progress.

## **Responsibilities of supervisors**

48. Primary supervisors will:

- [a] be sufficiently knowledgeable in the student's area of research to provide advice;
- [b] meet the student according to a mutually-agreed schedule, to monitor progress and review the programme for future work;
- [c] respond to student reports on supervision meetings with the primary supervisor through the Supervision Log, ideally within one week of the student logging a report. This responsibility is shared with other members of the supervisory team. Any member of the supervisory team may respond to a report;
- [d] advise the student to be aware of, and that they should comply with, QMUL policies on health and safety applying to their research, and provide information on any School/Institute policies and guidance;
- [e] give advice on scheduling work and longer-term planning towards timely submission of the research thesis and completion, and to provide advice and help when difficulties occur;
- [f] request written work as appropriate according to an agreed timetable, and provide honest and constructive criticism, either orally or in writing. Written work should normally be returned according to a mutually agreed timetable, and students should be advised at the time of submission if other responsibilities will prevent this being achieved;
- [g] assist the student in identifying research and other training needs at the beginning of the research programme, and in reviewing these needs over the course of the programme's duration;
- [h] arrange supervision and access to facilities during a period of revision when a student has been required to make corrections to their thesis after the examination;
- [i] advise the student on QMUL policies on research integrity, including the necessity of obtaining research ethics approval or undertaking a risk assessment before the research in question is undertaken. Information about

QMUL research policies is available from the QMUL policy zone at <http://www.arcs.qmul.ac.uk/policy/index.html>;

- [j] advise the student on discussing work with third parties (bearing in mind the need to maintain confidentiality), and introduce them to other scholars in the field;
  - [k] monitor the student’s progress and inform them if it is not satisfactory, and report issues on student progress to the Director of Graduate Studies if appropriate;
  - [l] inform the School/Institute Director of Graduate Studies, the Research Degrees Office, and any funding body if the student ceases to attend regularly, or fails to progress over a prolonged period;
  - [m] nominate potential internal and external examiners for the student’s final examination and arrange a mutually convenient date and place for the oral examination;
  - [n] respect and adhere to the QMUL Charter “Our Community” and QMUL Staff Codes of Practice, behaving honestly and with integrity at all times.
49. All new supervisors must undertake the training for this role provided by the Doctoral College. All supervisors must undertake ‘refresher’ training, which may be provided at faculty or School/Institute level, every four years. Attendance at supervisor training is recorded on HR staff records.

### **Responsibilities of students**

50. Students will:

- [a] work diligently on the programme of research and aim to complete the programme and submit the thesis within the agreed time frame. For example

<b>Programme length</b>	<b>Thesis submission deadline from initial date of enrolment</b>
Four years full-time	3 years 364 days
Five years full-time	4 years 364 days
Seven years part-time	6 years 364 days

- [b] take overall responsibility for their research and the work produced;
- [c] carry out research in compliance with QMUL and School/Institute health and safety policies;
- [d] take a pro-active role in discussing with the supervisory team the type of guidance and comment that is most helpful at different points in the progress of the research;
- [e] agree a schedule of meetings with the supervisory team, and attend these promptly;

- [f] full-time research students must submit a minimum of ten reports on the Supervision Log per academic year. Part-time students must submit a minimum of five reports on the log per academic year. Reports should cover topics discussed at supervisory meetings and include any relevant training undertaken/courses attended;
- [g] submit written material as required to a timetable agreed with the supervisor for comment and discussion, and respond honestly and constructively to comments and suggestions (although this does not alter the student's overall responsibility for the work);
- [h] attend any programme(s) of researcher development and research skills training, taught classes and research seminars as agreed with the supervisory team, or required by the School/Institute and the student's funding body;
- [i] record evidence of engagement with research and skills training on the Skills Points System. Students who complete 210 points of training by the submission of their thesis for examination will receive the QMUL Diploma in Researcher Development (see [http://www.doctoralcollege.qmul.ac.uk/?page\\_id=55](http://www.doctoralcollege.qmul.ac.uk/?page_id=55));
- [j] conform to all QMUL policies on research integrity, and associated processes, including submitting an application for ethical approval for their research where necessary. Information about QMUL research policies is available from the QMUL policy zone at <http://www.arcs.qmul.ac.uk/policy/index.html>;
- [k] inform the supervisory team of any problems or difficulties when they arise;
- [l] submit reports for assessment and other work to inform decisions about their progress as required;
- [m] enrol as a student of QMUL at the beginning of the programme of study, and re-enrol subsequently at the start of each academic year until the degree is awarded;
- [n] monitor their @qmul.ac.uk email address issued to them at enrolment to ensure they are receiving all formal communications from QMUL. Official emails relating to periods of re-enrolment, progression or status transfers etc. will only be sent to this address, regardless of whether the student subsequently receives an additional departmental email address. It is the student's responsibility to set up forwarding from their official account to other addresses as needed / appropriate;
- [o] respect and adhere to the QMUL Charter "Our Community" behaving honestly and with integrity at all times.

## **Responsibilities of Directors of Graduate Studies**

51. The Head of School/Director of Institute delegates responsibility for research student matters through the Director of Research usually to the Director(s) of Graduate Studies to carry out the following duties as appropriate:

### **Oversee and monitor provision within the School/Institute**

- [a] Oversee the admissions process for research degrees and ensure that students are admitted for a research degree only where suitable supervision and research resources are available. The DGS or other designated lead for research student admissions should approve all admissions offers.
- [b] Directors of Graduate Studies are responsible for all research students with primary registration in their School/Institute. In cases of co-supervision across schools, both DGSs approve decisions.
- [c] Ensure that an appropriate primary and second supervisor or supervisory team is appointed for each student.
- [d] Ensure that all staff appointed as supervisors are appropriately trained for their role.
- [e] Monitor levels of supervision and reports on the use made of the Supervision Log.
- [f] Attend appropriate Faculty and School/Institute committees, for example the Graduate Studies Committee and/or Directors of Graduate Studies Forums, and disseminate information back to Schools/Institutes.
- [g] Carry out an annual review of research degree programmes for their School/Institute, meeting with the Faculty Deputy Dean for Research.

### **Develop and review School/Institute policy on progression requirements**

- [h] Oversee the monitoring of student progress in accordance with the Academic Regulations and the Code of Practice.
- [i] Liaise with the Research Degree Programmes and Examination Board, via their Deputy Dean for Research, as appropriate, with regard to interruptions of study, extensions of thesis submission dates and withdrawal and de-registration from QMUL.
- [j] Approve formal progress and status reviews on behalf of the School/Institute.

### **Develop and review School/Institute policy regarding student feedback and complaints**

- [k] Receive and deal with student complaints and problems in the first instance.
- [l] Ensure suitable alternative supervision arrangements in the case of breakdown of relations between a supervisor and the student or where a change of supervisor is desirable. In case of absence or the departure of the primary supervisor or secondary supervisor, ensure that adequate arrangements are made for the student's continuing supervision.
- [m] Ensure that appropriate student feedback mechanisms are in place within the School/Institute, for example research student representation on the Student Staff Liaison Committee and/or Research Committee and encourage engagement with, and review results of, student surveys.

- [n] Ensure that each School/Institute has, as a minimum, at least one research student Course Representative to attend Student-Staff Liaison Committees or equivalent.

### **Oversee and monitor research training and skills development**

- [o] Oversee and encourage student engagement with School/Institute research training programmes, and all other research and professional development training.
- [p] Ensure that all students receive appropriate training before commencing any teaching.
- [q] Encourage students to use the Skills Points System to record training and research activities.

### **Progression and review**

52. The supervisor is responsible for regular reviews of student progress and will inform the student and Director of Graduate Studies if progress is not satisfactory.
53. The Academic Regulations for Research Degrees outline the parameters for each of the progression points and outcomes, including transfer to writing-up status. It is the responsibility of the Director of Graduate Studies to ensure that students' progression is assessed in accordance with the Regulations and published procedures.
54. The requirements for progression are set by each School/Institute. These may include the submission of written work by the student, the submission of a written report by the primary supervisor and/or supervisory team, and an oral examination. Other requirements for certain programmes may be specified in School/Institute guidance. Progression decisions are made by the Director of Graduate Studies following a report on the student's progress.
55. First year progression is a formal process that permits a student to continue to the next stage/period of their research studies programme. For a full-time student on a PhD, MPhil or MD(Res) programme this takes place between 6 to 9 months after registration on the research studies programme. For a part-time student on a PhD, MPhil or MD(Res) programme this takes place between 12 to 18 months after registration on the research studies programme. A progression panel is set up to discuss and review progress with the student. The panel must include at least two people. At least one member of the progression panel should be independent of the student's supervisory team. Decisions on progression must be taken by members of the panel who are independent of the supervisory team. A student who fails to progress on the first assessment will be allowed a second attempt. Students may be deregistered if they have not achieved progression after two attempts.
56. Schools/Institutes also put in place arrangements for the regular monitoring and assessment of student progress after first year progression. For full-time students there should be a formal annual review of progress in each year of study following first year progression; for part-time students there should be a formal biennial review of progress (i.e. every two years). The requirements for each research degree programme are specified in School/Institute guidance. Reports on progress are made to the Director of Graduate Studies to consider and approve.

57. Progression for students on Professional Doctorate programmes (DrPS, DPsych and DClinDent programmes) is assessed as outlined in School/Institute guidance.
58. The outcomes of formal progress reviews will be reported to the Research Degrees Office through MySIS so that the student's central record may be updated appropriately.

### **Transfer to writing up status**

59. Transfer to writing up status is an academic progression point. In order to transfer to writing up status, a student is required to have completed all experimental work or collection of material related to their thesis, to have passed second year progression (or equivalent for part-time students) and, in the judgement of the supervisor, be in a position to submit the thesis within 12 months. Schools/Institutes may stipulate additional requirements for approving transfer to writing up status. A student can apply to transfer to 'writing up' status only if they have completed the minimum period of study and not exceeded the maximum period of study. A student registered for MPhil/PhD can only be transferred to writing up status if they have completed the process of being assessed from MPhil to PhD registration status. The maximum period for 'writing up' is one calendar year regardless of the mode of attendance of the student. In exceptional circumstances the writing up period may be extended. The transfer to writing up application form is available through the student MySIS portal.

### **Termination of registration**

60. The Academic Regulations outline the reasons for which a student's registration may be terminated. Schools/Institutes may recommend that a student's registration be terminated on the grounds of insufficient academic progress. This recommendation may follow a formal progress review but may also be made at other points during the programme of study. Such a recommendation should only be made after the student has been given two written warnings that they are at risk of de-registration unless specified objectives are met within a clear timeframe.
61. Recommendations for termination of registration on the grounds of insufficient academic progress must be approved by the School/Institute's Director of Graduate Studies and the Faculty Deputy Dean for Research and must be communicated to the Research Degrees Office.
62. The formal procedures for de-registration, and for appeals against decisions to de-register a student, are outlined in the Academic Regulations and related policies/procedures. These are available on the Research Degrees Office website. Information about how to make an appeal is available at <http://www.arcs.qmul.ac.uk/students/student-appeals/appeals/index.html>

### **Interruption of study**

63. The Director of Graduate Studies is responsible for receiving and considering student requests for interruption of studies. Requests should normally be supported by the supervisor and Director of Graduate Studies, and submitted to the Research Degrees Office to refer to the Research Degree Programmes and Examinations Board.



64. Interruptions may be requested at any point throughout the period of study and throughout the period of writing up. More than one application may be submitted during the research studies programme.
65. During an interruption of study a student remains registered on their programme of study but ceases to be an enrolled student of QMUL. This has consequences for student status, funding, and immigration permission for international students. Depending on the reason for the interruption, studentship funding may be suspended during this period. Interruptions to the course of study may be permitted in accordance with the Academic Regulations and approved policy for a number of reasons such as illness, personal and family reasons, pregnancy or pregnancy-related illness, paternity leave, adoption leave, financial difficulties. The Research Degree Programmes and Examination Board may also grant interruptions for other reasons it considers acceptable. Interruptions will not be granted solely on the grounds of lack of progress. Corroborating evidence must be provided to match the period of interruption being requested as set out in the guidance on the Research Degrees webpages.
66. Research degree students are permitted to interrupt their studies for whole months only and must resume their studies and re-enrol at the approved re-enrolment point.
67. Students may only interrupt for a minimum of one month at a time. Students are permitted to interrupt their research degree programme for up to one year in the first instance. The maximum permitted period of interruption is 24 months in total. Applications that would exceed the maximum total period of interruption will be granted only in exceptional circumstances with the approval of the Research Degree Programmes and Examinations Board and the Academic Registrar.
68. A student may interrupt their registration on the grounds of primary carer leave for up to one year per child. This may cover pregnancy and related illnesses, and/or caring responsibilities. Periods of interruption for primary carer leave shall not count towards the maximum of two years permitted for interruption, but in all other respects the standard interruption procedures shall apply. Secondary carers wishing to take an extended period of leave shall do so under the standard interruption procedures.
69. Students are liable for payment of tuition fees up to the date that they withdraw or interrupt their studies. Students are liable for payment of tuition fees from the date they resume their programme. For further guidance regarding fee liability please contact the Finance Office.
70. Students may continue to work personally on their research during interruptions of study and have access to the library with limited borrowing rights. Any arrangements for contact between a student and their supervisory team during a period of interruption should be agreed in advance of the period of interruption, for example to keep in touch and to plan the return to study. During a period of interruption students should not have access to laboratories or carry out fieldwork.
71. All requests for interruptions should be notified to the Research Degrees Office in advance of their commencement for referral to the Research Degree Programmes and Examination Board to consider. Interruptions cannot normally be applied retrospectively. Students may be de-registered if they do not resume studies at the end of the approved period of interruption or are absent from their studies without requesting an interruption of study or an extension to an approved period of interruption. QMUL may require a student due to return from interruption to produce

medical evidence of their fitness to study. If this evidence is not produced, or is found unsatisfactory, the student shall not be permitted to return. In such cases a student may be permitted to extend the interruption of study (where an interruption allowance remains), or else the student may be deregistered from the programme of study.

72. The Advice and Counselling Service can provide advice on interrupting study and returning to study. Please refer to the student guide on interrupting studies provided by the Advice and Counselling Service at <http://www.welfare.qmul.ac.uk/publications/studentadvice/index.html>

### **Extension of registration**

73. The Director of Graduate Studies is responsible for receiving and considering student requests for extension of study beyond the maximum registration period. Requests should normally be supported by the supervisor and Director of Graduate Studies, and submitted to the Research Degrees Office to refer to the Research Degree Programmes and Examinations Board.
74. Extension of study beyond the maximum registration period is permitted in exceptional circumstances, normally due to unforeseen circumstances beyond the student's control, which would make it extremely difficult to complete within the programme timeframe. If a student is not able to work on their research programme at all for a period of time it may be more appropriate to apply to interrupt studies.
75. Students may request an extension of their thesis submission deadline of up to one year. Extensions are normally granted in periods of whole months and on one occasion only. Extensions can normally only be authorised for students who are in their fourth year of study or have writing up status. They must normally be applied for at the latest three months before the programme end date.
76. Students must provide evidence of progress to date and the ability to submit within the requested time period.
77. All requests for extensions should be notified to the Research Degrees Office in advance of their commencement for referral to the Research Degree Programmes and Examination Board.

## Disability and Dyslexia Service

78. The Disability and Dyslexia Service (DDS) offers support for all students with disabilities, specific learning difficulties and mental health issues at Queen Mary University of London (QMUL).
79. The team offers advice, guidance and support in the following areas:
- finding out if you have a specific learning difficulty like dyslexia;
  - applying for funding through the Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA);
  - arranging DSA assessments of need;
  - accessing loaned equipment (e.g. digital recorders);
  - specialist one-to-one "study skills" tuition;
  - ensuring access to course materials in alternative formats (e.g. Braille);
  - providing educational support workers (e.g. note-takers, readers, library assistants);
  - mentoring support for students with mental health issues and conditions on the autistic spectrum;
  - advice about planning research and writing the thesis in the expected duration of the programme, including preparation for the viva;
  - advice on arrangements in examinations.
80. The DDS can advise students and their School/Institute on reasonable adjustments to studies. Students supported by the Disability and Dyslexia Service can expect to access the following reasonable adjustments:
- recommendations on examination arrangements;
  - library concessions, e.g. a waiver on some library fines;
  - a 'cover note' for students with specific learning difficulties, which advises academic colleagues on best practice when reviewing work produced by students with specific learning difficulties;
  - being allowed to make audio recordings of lectures;
  - advocacy when making requests to schools and faculties.
81. Any agreed reasonable adjustments are provided throughout the study period including during the writing-up period.
82. An extension to the thesis submission deadline is not normally granted for a declared disability. Students are encouraged to meet with the DDS team early in their studies to discuss what support they might need and to put in place mechanisms to help with drafting the thesis well in advance of the final thesis submission some 3-4 years after enrolment at QMUL. Please refer to the above sections on interruption of study and extension of registration for examples of the type of situation that would require an interruption or an extension. In cases of late diagnosis of specific learning difficulties in the final year of study, the Research Degree Programmes and Examinations Board will consider requests on a case by case basis.
83. Students may submit a disability declaration statement with their PhD thesis at the time of submission. Statements can be obtained from the QMUL Disability and Dyslexia Service.

## Research training and skills development

84. All students will have access to training in appropriate research methods and relevant researcher development skills provided by their School or Institute, the Doctoral College, Doctoral Training Centres/Partnerships, and the Centre for Academic and Professional Development. The individual programme of research training will be discussed at the student's initial meeting with the supervisory team, and reviewed regularly during the course of the programme, particularly at formal progress reviews.
85. All students must complete the training requirements of their School/Institute and funding body.
86. Every research student is encouraged to take part in at least 210 hours of development activities over the course of their studies. This is roughly equal to two weeks' training and development for each full-time year of study.
87. Students are strongly encouraged to record evidence of engagement with research and skills training and development activities on the QMUL Skills Points System at <http://capd.qmul.ac.uk/what-we-offer/researcher-development/postgraduate-research-students/>  
Points are awarded for different activities. Students who record 210 points of training by the submission of their thesis for examination will receive the QMUL Diploma in Researcher Development.
88. Students may be given the opportunity to contribute to teaching through lecturing, seminars, demonstrating practical classes, project supervision, marking and taking tutorials according to the teaching practices in the Schools/Institutes for which the teaching is being undertaken. All students must receive appropriate training before commencing any teaching.
89. Any teaching undertaken by the student must be agreed by their supervisor(s) and must be in line with the terms and conditions of a student's funding if appropriate.

## Paid work

90. All full-time students are expected to undertake a full week of study of at least 35 hours on their research degree programme and pro rata for part-time students. Students may undertake paid teaching or demonstrating work with the approval of their supervisor. For full-time students it is recommended that this is normally no more than six hours per week averaged over the year, including preparation and marking. The work must be supported by appropriate training. Students in receipt of scholarship funding must comply with any conditions concerning paid work set by their funding body.
91. In considering paid work outside QMUL, full-time students should bear in mind the need to work full-time on their research. Paid work should not delay or interfere with research training and the timely submission of the thesis. If a student is in receipt of a stipend from QMUL, stipend payments will be suspended if a student takes up full-time work during the period of the studentship, for example to undertake an external placement, internship and any other work that is not a formal requirement of the

degree programme. If a student wishes to take-up full-time work they should discuss with their supervisor making an application to interrupt their studies.

92. International students studying in the UK on a Tier 4 (General) student visa may take up limited paid work. Please see <https://www.welfare.qmul.ac.uk/international/working-during-your-studies>

### **Internships and placements**

93. In some programmes of study there may be opportunities for students to undertake an internship or placement with an external organisation or within QMUL. If the internship is linked directly to the research studies programme there is no change to the programme length. If the opportunity is not directly related to the student's research studies it may be necessary to apply for an interruption of studies. For students in receipt of external funding, the guidance on internships and placements may take precedence if they differ from QMUL guidance. Decisions will be made by the Research Degree Programmes and Examinations Board. International students with Tier 4 immigration permission should check the implications for their immigration permission with the Advice and Counselling Service.

### **Research Integrity**

94. Students must comply with QMUL policies on research integrity and ethical review of research. Students and supervisors will familiarize themselves with the QMUL's policies on research integrity and associated procedures for the ethical review of research, and consider whether the student's research requires research ethics approval from the Ethics of Research Committee. An application for approval should be submitted to the committee if necessary at the appropriate point before the research is undertaken.
95. Information about QMUL research policies is available from the QMUL policy zone at <http://www.arcs.qmul.ac.uk/policy/index.html>

### **Intellectual Property**

96. Students and supervisors must adhere to the QMUL Intellectual Property Policy at <http://www.arcs.qmul.ac.uk/policy/index.html#research>. They must ensure that they implement and adhere to this policy throughout their research and in any interactions, whether in person or through electronic media, with parties external to QMUL.

### **Collaborative arrangements**

97. Collaborative arrangements for the supervision and award of research degrees are considered and approved by the Research Degree Programmes and Examinations Board in accordance with the policy and procedures established by Senate for that purpose. The processes are described in the QMUL Collaborative Provision Framework at <http://www.arcs.qmul.ac.uk/quality/collaborative-provision/index.html>
98. Students may study at an accredited host institution in accordance with the Academic Regulations. Arrangements will be put in place for such students to

ensure that the requirements of this Code are adhered to, particularly regarding supervision arrangements and progression monitoring.

### **Feedback mechanisms**

99. All Schools/Institutes must offer opportunities for research students to provide feedback to them. Students must be advised during the induction period of the mechanisms for providing feedback to the School/Institute, including opportunities for representation on relevant committees such as Student-Staff Liaison Committees.

### **Examinations**

100. The Research Degree Programmes and Examinations Board is responsible for the examination of research degrees and approves the award of research degrees.
101. The criteria for assessment of research degrees are outlined in the Academic Regulations and the Guidelines for Research Degree Examinations.
102. The procedures for examination entry, appointment of examiners and the examination process are outlined in the Procedures for Research Degree Examinations at <http://www.arcs.qmul.ac.uk/research-degrees/index.html>
103. The Research Degree Programmes and Examinations Board will monitor issues arising from reports from research degree examiners and recommend appropriate action.

### **Complaints and appeals**

104. Students are encouraged to raise any concerns they may have about their research studies with their supervisor or Director of Graduate Studies in the first instance. If a student has a problem regarding their supervision or other research support or QMUL services they should address their concerns to their supervisor first and keep a clear record of this. If the situation is not resolved or concerns remain regarding supervision then students are expected to raise their concerns with their School/Institute Director of Graduate Studies. Raising concerns promptly will provide staff with the opportunity to address these matters, and to reduce the impact on students as much as possible. Try to seek informal resolution of concerns where possible. Many problems can be solved informally, without the need for a formal complaint.
105. The Student Complaints Policy provides guidance on raising concerns or complaints about both academic and non-academic services provided by QMUL. Students who wish to make a complaint about any aspect of their research programme should refer to the Student Complaints Policy (available on the Academic Registry and Council Secretariat website at <http://www.arcs.qmul.ac.uk/students/student-appeals/complaints/index.html>), which outlines the procedures to be followed.
106. Students who wish to appeal against the outcome of the recommendation of examiners or the outcome of a progression review should refer to the Appeal Regulations (available on the Academic Registry and Council Secretariat website at <http://www.arcs.qmul.ac.uk/students/student-appeals/appeals/index.html>), which outline the procedures to be followed. Students are advised to talk to their

supervisor or another member of staff in their department before submitting an appeal. Please note that an appeal against the academic judgment of the examiners is not valid grounds for an appeal.

107. A formal concern about the conduct of another student (for example bullying, harassment and discrimination) would be investigated under the Code of Student Discipline.

108. Further information is available at <http://www.arcs.qmul.ac.uk/students/student-appeals/index.html>

## **Contacts**

### **109. Research Degrees Office**

The names and phone numbers of useful contacts can be found at:  
<http://www.arcs.qmul.ac.uk/research-degrees/contacts/index.html>

### **110. Doctoral College**

The Doctoral College team can be contacted at  
[doctoralcollege@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:doctoralcollege@qmul.ac.uk)

For further information please see  
<http://www.doctoralcollege.qmul.ac.uk/>

Research Degrees Office  
Queen Mary, University of London  
Graduate Centre, room 2.13  
Mile End Road  
London  
E1 4NS  
[researchdegrees@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:researchdegrees@qmul.ac.uk)