



**Queen Margaret
University**
EDINBURGH



**QMU
PROFESSIONAL DOCTORATE
CANDIDATE HANDBOOK
2021/22**



Professional Doctorate Regulations

This Handbook complements and must be read in conjunction with the [University's Professional Doctorate Regulations](#).

The [Professional Doctorate Regulations](#) serve as the definitive reference point and take precedence over the Handbook.

It is an expectation that all Professional Doctorate candidates and supervisors read the regulations, as well as this Handbook. If you have any questions about the regulations, or the Handbook, please contact us at the [Graduate School](#).

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A1. Welcome from the Head of Graduate School



A very warm welcome to Queen Margaret University's Graduate School. We are delighted that you have chosen to undertake your programme of doctoral study with us, and we look forward to supporting you with this over the next few years.

Enrolling on a doctoral degree is one of the biggest decisions you have made regarding your education and learning in your career. Gaining a doctorate level qualification requires significant personal discipline, time and commitment to your study. The sense of achievement at the end, though, is immense, and gaining a doctorate opens up many opportunities for career advancement.

It is not uncommon for doctoral candidates to view their study as being all about their PhD or Prof Doc and consisting mainly of a 'solo' research activity, involving many extended hours of reading and/or writing papers and chapters. At QMU, however, we encourage you to see this period of study as a doctoral level learning programme that requires an intensive period of learning across a full range of research skills – after all, it can be the launch-pad for future career development and progression. The programme is about gaining that doctoral award, however, it involves so much more. For example, the Researcher Enhancement and Development (READ) programme, teaching, networking and other relevant scholarly contributions within the Research Centre or Institute and Division you are attached to that develop your doctoral level capabilities.

We also want your doctoral programme experience to be based around feeling part of a learning community. The importance and power of peer support cannot be underestimated during doctoral level study, so please make sure you engage in the community of doctoral candidates, supervisors and academics that exists at QMU. Because in the end it is the community of learning that grounds you and your study and gives you the strength to stay engaged and curious, and to design and craft your thesis.

Finally, you will find further information on the Graduate School throughout this Handbook, including details of colleagues who can support you with different queries and stages of your journey. If you are unsure, at any point, who to contact, please send a message to our generic email address: graduateschool@qmu.ac.uk. Typically, our Graduate School Officer will be your first point of contact and they can let you know whether there is anyone else you need to contact with your query.

Again, welcome to the University and the Graduate School and I look forward to meeting you at your induction and on other occasions.

Professor Jan Dewing
Head of the Graduate School
Email: jdewing@qmu.ac.uk

QMU Doctoral programmes

QMU offers a suite of doctoral degrees. These are listed below with a note of some of the key features. All of the degrees (except for the READ programme) lead to the award of Doctorate, and all of them require candidates to reach the same standard and meet similar criteria at level 12 on the Scottish Credit Qualification Framework.

| | |
|--|--|
| PhD PhD by Creative Practice | The PhD is awarded on satisfactory completion of a thesis of 70,000 to 100,000 words (30,000 to 40,000 for the PhD by Creative Practice). There are no taught modules. |
| Professional Doctorate Candidates can exit with post-nominal qualifiers, depending on the focus of their studies | The Professional Doctorate is awarded on successful completion of three modules and a thesis of approximately 45,000 words. The research is normally carried out at the candidate's place of employment. |
| PhD by Publication (Prospective) | The PhD by Publication (Prospective) shares most of the characteristics of the PhD and is normally awarded on the basis of a series of peer-reviewed academic papers, books, citations or other materials that have been published, accepted for publication, exhibited or performed. These are accompanied by a substantial commentary linking the publications. This degree is open to candidates who do not yet have a full set of publications. |
| The above programmes are usually completed within three years (full-time) or six years (part-time). Candidates on the programmes also participate in our Researcher Enhancement and Development programme (READ) . This comprises three modules, successful completion of which leads to the award of Doctoral Certificate. | |
| Phd by Publication (Retrospective) | The PhD by Publication (Retrospective) has the same final assessment requirement as the Prospective route. It is open only to candidates who have a collection of suitable publications. This means that it can be completed in a shorter time frame of a year. |

Our doctoral community includes candidates from each of the above degrees. We also have a number of candidates on joint PhDs with other universities. Through our development weeks, networking and communication channels, and partnership working with our Doctoral Candidates' Association, we strive to develop and maintain an inclusive and person-centred research culture.

We hope that this Handbook will be helpful to you as you progress through your studies.

A2. The Graduate School Structure

Graduate School Academic Board (GSAB)

Many of the processes and stages of the doctoral candidate journey are considered and approved via the University's Committee structure. The main Committee with responsibility for progressing doctoral candidate business is the Graduate School Academic Board (GSAB). The Board is convened by the Head of the Graduate School, and the Graduate School Officer is Secretary to the Board. The GSAB oversees all doctoral candidate business. All major decisions affecting your progress will be processed through the Board.

For information, the current membership and remit of the GSAB is provided in Appendix 1. All reserved business, which relates to individual candidates, is discussed outwith the main meeting, after candidate representatives have left. The Doctoral Candidates' Association (DCA) is instrumental in the candidate consultation processes and the DCA Co-Chairs are members of the Board.

The Graduate School is primarily supported by a team of individuals within the University, who will be most relevant to you as you progress through your doctoral journeys. These are the:

- Head of Graduate School
- Doctoral Research Coordinators for both Schools
- Graduate School Officer

Doctoral Research Coordinators (DRCs)

Each School (Health Sciences and Arts, Social Sciences and Management) has a dedicated Doctoral Research Coordinator (DRC).

Your current DRCs are:

- Dr Pelagia Koufaki (Health Sciences)
(PKoufaki@qmu.ac.uk)
- Professor Claire Seaman (ASSAM)
(cseaman@qmu.ac.uk)



Their main duties are to:

- Implement agreed systems for ensuring high quality doctoral education, including providing advice and guidance to both doctoral candidates and supervisors.
- Advise on and oversee the doctorate applications and admissions procedure and to allocate candidates to supervisors.
- Consider and approve doctoral candidates' requests on behalf of the GSAB.
- Work with the Head of the Graduate School to ensure appropriate training is provided to supervisors and doctoral candidates.
- Attend to matters which contribute to the quality of postgraduate learning and to satisfy the requirements of external bodies, including the [Quality Assurance Agency \(QAA\)](#).

If you need to speak with them, please feel free to email them directly to arrange a meeting.

Administration Team

All aspects of the Graduate School's administration are managed within the Governance and Quality Enhancement (GQE) Team. Your key contact is Alison Basford-Thomson, the Graduate School Officer (GSO), who is responsible for much of the day to day running of the Graduate School.

The GSO is primarily responsible for providing high quality, professional administrative and policy support to the Head of the Graduate School and GSAB in support of the Graduate School aims to maintain and enhance the quality of the doctoral candidate experience at QMU.

The GSO's primary duties are to:

- Provide expert advice and support to the Head of Graduate School, the Doctoral Research Coordinators, academic and professional services colleagues, doctoral candidates and external stakeholders, for example doctoral examiners. This includes advice on regulations, including those relating to assessment and matters of compliance.
- Provide committee secretariat to the Graduate School Academic Board and liaise with the Convener to agree the agenda, draft and produce papers and policy statements, and produce and publish minutes in line with agreed timescales, ensuring the efficient operation of business, and the effective follow-up of any action resulting.
- Monitor doctoral candidate progress and support candidates to meet progression targets in line with programme regulations. This includes a full review of Annual Progress Reports (APRs) and reporting on these to the Head of Graduate School, DRCs and the Graduate School Academic Board.
- Coordinate and organise all administration related to doctoral progression e.g. submission of reports, Assessed Seminars and viva schedules within appropriate deadlines.
- Implement and enhance policies and procedures related to stages of the doctoral candidate journey, including: registration, candidate progression, changes to pattern or duration of study and examination.

The Graduate School Officer is supported in their duties by other members of the Governance of Quality and Enhancement (GQE) team including:

- Quality Enhancement Officers; and
- Assistant Secretary, Governance and Quality Enhancement

All enquiries relating to doctoral candidate business and administration should be directed to the Graduate School in the first instance – the email address is graduateschool@qmu.ac.uk, where either the GSO, another colleague from GQE, or a member of the wider Graduate School team will respond accordingly.

A3. Campus Welcome & Induction

Doctoral candidate orientation at QMU consists of:

1. Matriculation (administered by QMU's Registry department)
2. Induction
3. Development week one
4. Orientation to the Research Centre/Institute and Division/School
5. Orientation to the supervisory team (and associated staff and fellow candidates)

New candidates receive a letter in advance of the first development week, which provides information on matriculation, the induction schedule, accessing the University, and other important matters (e.g. links to the appropriate regulations).

Matriculation

All candidates are required to formally register with Queen Margaret University every year they are studying. This registration process is referred to as (online) matriculation.

Once you have matriculated, you are entitled to pursue your programme and access online facilities. The process will take around 15 minutes, so please ensure you set aside enough time to complete it.

Visit the Matriculation and Enrolment webpage [here](#) for detailed information regarding the matriculation process, including step by step instructions on how to matriculate.

Matriculation is managed by the QMU Registry department so if you have any issues or queries please contact them directly on Registry@qmu.ac.uk, phone them on 0131 474 0000 (request Registry when prompted), or visit them in person at Student Services, Level One of the main academic building.

Induction

QMU's academic year commences in September, which is the primary intake month for doctoral candidates (a second intake happens in January). Attendance at the induction session, which takes place on the first day of development week one, is required. On the first day, you will meet a variety of staff from the Graduate School team, as well as other members of the doctoral candidate community. Typically, the first day covers the following, although some of these matters may also be addressed later in development week one:

- Campus Health and Safety
- Campus Tour
- Candidate Representation (i.e. the Doctoral Candidates' Association and the Students' Union)
- Overview of the PhD/Professional Doctorate Regulations
- Research Skills Training Programme overview

You must bring the following items with you to your induction:

1. **Photographic ID** (acceptable forms of photographic ID are a passport, driver's licence or European Union Identification Card. Credit/debit cards are not acceptable forms of ID.

2. **Original academic certificates and transcripts** of your Bachelors and, if applicable, your Masters degrees.
3. Candidates on a Student Visa will be required to go to a pre indicated Post Office to collect their Biometric Identity Document (BID) within ten days of arrival in the UK. **International candidates must show their passport, certificates/transcripts, visa and BRP** to the Registry Officer in order to fully complete matriculation.

Development Weeks

Whether commencing studies in September or January, **all candidates must attend all first year development weeks**. The initial development week includes seminars and workshops to help you familiarise yourself with the University systems and get started with doctoral level studies. The other weeks contribute to our on-going wider doctoral development programme and support your engagement with READ. More information is provided in Section A5.

Orientation to Division/School

Supervisory teams are responsible for organising initial Divisional or School orientations, and they are best placed to identify the most relevant activities for their candidates. You will also be introduced to the Research Centre/Institute within which you will be based.

Meeting with doctoral candidates further on in their studies can be an incredibly useful source of support for new candidates, both in terms of transmitting key information about practical issues and in helping you to feel part of the research community within the University.

Supervisory teams will do their best to facilitate interactions between doctoral candidates in these early stages. Importantly, you will also be introduced to members of the Doctoral Candidates' Association (DCA) and it is strongly suggested that you become involved with the social and training opportunities that the DCA provides.

Orientation to the supervisory team

QMU operates a supervisory team model. This means that you will have two named supervisors who share the research supervision role between them. One member of the team will be identified as your Supervisory Chair. The Supervisory Chair is responsible for all administrative processes that need to be completed throughout your PhD journey. You may also have an advisor for all or parts(s) of your research. Advisors are usually external to the University.

Your provisional supervisory team will either have been notified to you in your offer letter or be confirmed shortly after you arrive at the University. During induction (and preferably before then), you should make contact with your supervisors to arrange a time to meet with at least one member of the team during your first week at QMU. During orientation, supervisors work closely with the Graduate School team to help candidates settle into the University environment and access the required specific resources and facilities. Your supervisors can also introduce you to other academic staff and candidates, as appropriate to your studies.

A4. Research Knowledge and Skills (Doctoral Development Weeks)

We recognise that candidates need training, plus knowledge and skills development of different sorts at various stages of their degree, and that such development should encompass general personal and professional development, as well as the more focused needs of the research project and the skills and knowledge required to help you progress towards becoming an independent researcher.

The doctoral development weeks are coordinated by the Graduate School and have been designed for all of our PhD and Professional Doctorate candidates.

The required Graduate School doctoral development weeks are delivered in September, January and April. These weeks are **mandatory** for all full-time first year and part-time first and second year candidates.

Further knowledge and skills development is arranged locally by your supervisory team, Research Centre/Institute and/or School. Locally coordinated development opportunities are wide ranging and reflective of the disciplinary context. If there is a need for you to use specialist equipment or laboratory facilities, you will receive appropriate training. Supervisory teams will work with you to put in place individualised opportunities, as agreed with you in your learning contract.

Candidates also have the opportunity to attend learning events external to QMU such as those provided by the [Scottish Graduate School for Social Sciences](#) and the [Scottish Graduate School for Arts and Humanities](#) (both available to all doctoral candidates irrespective of research topic), and/or conferences relevant to their field of study.

Professional development

A doctoral degree is principally a preparation programme that aims to equip an individual with the skills and experience necessary to act as an independent researcher. This could lead to a range of careers: in academia, in scientific research, in business, in health care or education. In consequence, it is appropriate as a doctoral candidate that you consider some of the broader professional development issues.

Within the context of the approved programme of study, there will often be opportunities for professional networking and dissemination activity of relevance both to your research in hand, and future work in the field. Supervisory teams will encourage candidates to take part in research seminars or professional workshops and to develop contacts with professionals working in their discipline. You are also encouraged to join different networks and groups and to become active on social media, following responsible practices.

Careers and Employability

Doctoral candidates can access support from Careers and Employability throughout their studies. Considering your career options and developing your employability skills alongside your research can ensure that you are in the best position to compete successfully in a competitive graduate market, both within academia, industry, the public sector and not for profit organisations.

The Careers and Employability team provide support at all stages in your career planning process. We can help you to identify and secure work experience, which will enhance your skills and expand your network. We can support you to explore career paths and make informed

decisions. We can advise on applications for jobs and further study, including CVs and interview preparation, and on using social media to develop your reputation and source opportunities and connections. Our resources include information on local part-time opportunities, graduate vacancies, volunteering and internships.

Many students find the following services helpful:

- Our annual Recruitment and Volunteering Fairs in the autumn put students in touch with local employers seeking students for part-time work, paid internships or graduate employment.
- Students can access careers information via Student Central, where they can also book 1:1 appointments with Careers Advisers, which can take place Online via Microsoft teams or in person at the Careers Centre on campus. You can also book places at upcoming events, which may include workshops on career management skills, webinars or industry and employer insight sessions.
- If a student is considering leaving QMU before completing their doctorate, the Careers Advisers can discuss their options in a positive way and help with university or job applications if necessary.
- Graduates can continue to use the Service for their entire working life after graduation. They will be able to access Student Central after they graduate and can explore resources as well as make an appointment with our team for careers advice.

Student Central: <https://studentcentral.qmu.ac.uk/s/careers>

Email: careers@qmu.ac.uk or employability@qmu.ac.uk

Social Media: Follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram (search 'QMU Careers and Employability')

Website: www.qmu.ac.uk/careers/

Academic writing support

Our [Effective Learning Service](#) publishes a series of guides and resources on academic writing. Workshops on writing for publication are also offered from time to time, and candidates are encouraged to check Moderator messages for upcoming workshops that may be applicable to them.

The [Royal Literary Fund](#) provides Queen Margaret with an RLF Fellow who is available to meet with candidates who require support with any aspect of their written English. Meetings are completely confidential, and the RLF fellow, although based at Queen Margaret, is independent from the University; thus offering a very useful outside eye to candidates engaged in extended writing projects. You can contact the RLF Fellow by emailing RLFWritingSupport@qmu.ac.uk. [This support may be particularly valuable to those candidates who have English as a second language.](#)

A5. Researcher Development and Enhancement (READ) Programme

The Researcher Enhancement and Development Programme (or READ) aims to support you to evidence your development and enhancement of knowledge, skills and abilities in creating and interpreting new knowledge through conceptualising, designing and undertaking projects and research. QMU was the first University in Scotland to deliver a Doctoral Certificate of this kind. The programme was developed with financial support from the [Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework \(SCQF\)](#) partnership, which was awarded in recognition of our innovative approach.

There are three modules:

- Innovative and Creative Approaches to Research
- The Researcher as Instrument
- Researcher Resilience and Career Development

The aims and learning outcomes for each module are embedded into the doctoral development weeks and other learning opportunities. You will also be able to discuss READ within your research supervision.

The benefits to you

The READ programme offers you the opportunity to gain a Doctoral Certificate in Researcher Enhancement and Development in addition to your Doctoral Degree. This is in recognition of the wider work that you already undertake to support your doctoral studies. For example, you will already be monitoring your own development needs and, where appropriate, you will decide on learning activities based on those needs. As a doctoral candidate, you are probably already keeping some form of critically reflective diary about your doctoral journey. Within READ, it is this critical reflection that is summatively assessed for academic credit. Successful completion of READ will allow you to demonstrate to potential employers a list of transferable skills proving your capability of working at SCQF level 12.

There are two points within the academic year when you can submit your reflective account for summative assessment. It needs to be emphasised that the READ programme is based on the premise of providing academic credit for work that you are already engaged with. Therefore, there is no additional workload associated for you beyond completing the assessment component.

READ assessment requirements

By the end of the three years you will have constructed three ePortfolios that consist of evidence to support your ongoing researcher development through use of blogs, reflexive accounts, critical commentaries and mappings. This work is accompanied by a critical reflective report of your learning (2000 words).

If you are full-time candidate, you will submit a piece of work for summative assessment (20 credits) annually, which is a cumulative assessment process. At the end of three years, you will have accumulated 60 credits, which equates to a Doctoral Certificate in Researcher Enhancement and Development. This timetable is more flexible for part-time candidates, but usually works on a pro rata basis, as explained here:

| Assessment routes for full and part-time students | | |
|--|---|---|
| Full-time candidates PhD and Professional Doctorate | One assessment to be submitted once a year | Candidates will be offered two points within each year when they can submit their work for assessment |
| Part-time candidates PhD and Professional Doctorate | One assessment to be submitted over a two year period | Candidates will be offered four points within each two year period when they can submit their work for assessment |

READ Case Study

The below case study was provided by PhD candidate Shawn Soh following successful completion of the READ module:

My positive experience of READ programme (Sept 2018 – Aug 2021)

I approached READ with humility. Metacognitive-led questions like “What am I doing?”, “Why am I doing this?”, “Would someone do this in another (or better) way?” and “Why would I accept (or reject) that approach?” constantly streamed in my mind. In other words, I challenged my ontological positioning and my epistemological posture to see how I could be a better researcher. I had continuously made a significant effort to recognise the philosophical stances of others to have constructive and enriching meetings of minds. For my PhD, I aimed to develop a measurement instrument of balance recovery confidence for the community-dwelling older adults. The READ program has helped me be a mindful researcher centring my focus to be older person-centred. Completing the READ program has been rewarding. I’m pleased that some of these reflections have been published in the form of two articles types (critical reflection on practice development and original practice development and research) in an international peer-reviewed journal, the International Practice and Development Journal (IPDJ).

What are some tips and tricks for candidates starting on this program? First, approach the program with an open mind. From the quote of Professor Isaac Asimov, “Your assumptions are your windows on the world. Scrub them off every once in a while, or the light won’t come in”. It is acceptable to agree or to disagree expressed by other people, but it is essential to value the diversity of opinions. Second, set a dedicated time and safe space for critical reflection. It is not easy to expose our vulnerabilities and personal biases. However, by doing so, we would learn more about our strengths and acquire practical strategies strived within QMU’s nurturing and conducive community to be better researchers. Lastly, build inclusive relationships within QMU local and international student population. QMU has over 5,000 students from around 80 countries. The cultural-rich peer interactions have provided immense insights to see the world differently. Be amazed about the world of research. Look forward to making your humble contribution to the vast world of knowledge as part of the QMU community.

Should doctoral candidates have any questions or queries about READ please email GraduateSchool@qmu.ac.uk.

A6. Expectations for Study at Doctoral Level

Note that all doctoral candidates must read the regulations which govern their studies, as these documents provide detailed information on attendance, supervision and progression. These are available to view on the Graduate School website [here](#) (under the Regulations & Forms Section).

| Expectation | Full-time | Part-time |
|--|--|--|
| Time for studies | Approx. 35 hours per week | Approx. 18 hours per week |
| Time on campus¹ | Regular campus attendance is required (approx. 3 days a week if not on data collection) so that you can engage fully with the research culture and community. | Part-time candidates based near campus should aim to study on campus no less than once a month and it is strongly encouraged that part-time candidates visit the campus as much as possible in order to engage fully with the research culture and community. |
| Attendance at all first year doctoral development weeks | First year candidates must be present for doctoral development weeks in September, January and April in their first year of study. | First year candidates must be present for doctoral development weeks in September, January and April (can be attended over years one and two) |
| Formal and informal contact | Formal meeting with supervisors at least once a month; other regular contact (e.g. phone/email) as defined in learning contract. | Formal meeting with supervisors at least once every two months. Other regular contact (e.g. phone/email) as defined in learning contract. |
| Attendance on campus for assessments | All Prof Doc candidates are expected to be present on campus to complete their XD011 presentation and their final viva. | |
| Maximum period without contact with supervisor | Six weeks, after which the de-registration process will begin. | Twelve weeks, after which the de-registration process will begin. |
| International candidates | Full compliance with University Policy and Procedures that govern UKVI Student Visa sponsorship. | Compliance with UKVI requirements for candidates visiting on Short Term Study visas (or any other relevant visa). |
| Paid work commitments | We recommend that full-time candidates do not undertake paid employment of more than 12 hours per week We recommend that bursary candidates do not undertake paid employment that is additional to the required School duties ² . International candidates must comply in full with University Policy and Procedures that govern UKVI Student Visa sponsorship. | |

¹Candidates who devote less time to their study may find that progress is inadequate, which can lead to de-registration.

² Full-time bursary candidates must undertake duties as specified in the bursary letter of award, as agreed with the Graduate School. See table 1 on p.26.

For a variety of reasons, some candidates may be registered as *non-resident* candidates. This may be because you are studying part-time at a distance or have a collaborative agreement with another University. This can present some issues, for example, becoming isolated from the QMU research community and doctoral cohort. Feeling isolated can be detrimental to motivation so **candidates studying off-campus at a distance are normally expected (at a minimum) to:**

- Attend the three development weeks held in September, January and April of their first year of studies.
- Visit campus to meet with supervisors, University colleagues and peers face to face *at least* 3 times during each academic year of study.
- Visit campus in person to defend your XD011 presentation.
- Attend campus in person to defend your Prof Doc research at final viva.
- Join the DCA and attend social events organised by the Doctoral Candidates' Association (DCA) during development weeks, including the Annual Doctoral Researchers' Conference.
- Maintain contact with supervisors, peers and the DCA, as getting involved can help you to feel included and will offer support if you are feeling isolated or demotivated.
- Engage in social media with peers.

Contributing to your research community and supporting your peers

Contributing to the research community is an important element of your academic success, and social interaction is the most essential, pervasive, and persistent feature of a successful community. Therefore, it is very important that you integrate and stay in contact with your fellow doctoral candidates and academic researchers during your study period, as together the doctoral community, of which you are a part, provides a strong support network.

To help candidates integrate with each other, a number of social events are arranged by the Doctoral Candidates' Association at various points during induction weeks and at ad hoc times throughout the year. For example, the Annual DCA Conference is held during the April development week each year.

The Graduate School also arranges a number of Graduate School Seminars and numerous PhD Assessed Seminars, and Prof Doc presentations, which take place throughout the year. These are in addition to the seminars and conferences that will be offered by your individual Divisions and Research Centres/Institutes.

All doctoral candidates are strongly encouraged to become active members of the University research community. This can be achieved in a number of ways but attending doctoral development weeks and internal seminars/conferences, and other similar events are the most obvious. Attendance and involvement openly show that you are supporting your peers, and this helps create a sense of belonging within your research community.

The doctoral journey is a demanding one, and the value of peer support and being an active participant in your local research community should not be underestimated.

A7. Responsibilities

You should have already been allocated your supervisory team, which will consist of at least two appropriately qualified and knowledgeable members of academic staff, both of whom are active researchers. Your supervisors hold equal and joint responsibility for the development of your research project, and similarly, they are equally and jointly accountable for supporting your timely academic progression.

It is in all of our best interests that you complete your Prof Doc in a timely fashion: for full-time candidates, this will be three years (including writing up) with the aim of being awarded your degree within the four year maximum period. To help you achieve this, your supervisors will provide you with personal and academic advice and direct your research project following the guidelines set out by the University.

Responsibilities of your supervisors

All QMU supervisors are expected to participate in initial and ongoing staff development opportunities delivered internally and externally. This helps promote a consistent approach across the University and ensures that our supervisors are familiar with current regulations and practices. We expect our supervisors to be person-centred. This means that they will be genuinely interested in your research and your well-being and provide individualised academic and pastoral support.

Supervision

Your supervisors should:

- Provide support to ensure that your research can be completed fully, including preparation and completion of the thesis, within the usual period of registration.
- Ensure that a clear agreement is made with you, via a formal learning contract, on the frequency and nature of supervisory contact required at any particular stage of the project. The frequency of such sessions should be at least once a month (pro rata for part-time candidates) although there is some flexibility depending on your progress and stage of research.
- Confirm, on a monthly basis (pro-rata for part-time candidates), the following information with the Graduate School: dates of supervisory meetings, those in attendance, academic topic of discussion, satisfaction with your academic engagement and progress.
- Notify the Graduate School, at an early stage, if your attendance or progression gives them cause for concern, having raised their concerns with you first.
- Hold written records of your formal supervisory meetings for the duration of your registration. They should keep any relevant or significant correspondence, including emails, which relate to your degree.
- Agree with you a procedure for dealing with urgent problems (e.g. by telephone, e-mail and/or the arrangement of additional meetings at short notice).
- In discussion with you, establish and maintain a satisfactory timetable for the research, including the necessary completion dates for each stage, so that the thesis may be submitted within the scheduled time.
- Read all the written work submitted in accordance with the agreed timetable and provide constructive and timely feedback. Your supervisors should advise you of any obstacles to providing timely feedback, e.g. periods of time away from the University, particularly when you are approaching submission.

- Assist you with disseminating your research both internal and externally – this may be at a Divisional, Research Centre/Institute or Graduate School seminars, at an external conference, and/or via social media.
- Provide advice on publication of your research.
- Advise you well in advance of any planned periods of absence from the University. If both supervisors are absent for a significant period (i.e. more than the length of time between supervisory meetings), they should ensure that appropriate arrangements for alternative supervision are made with the Graduate School and that you are informed of these.
- Be genuinely interested in your research and your well-being.
- Be open to receiving feedback from you or the Graduate School about their effectiveness as your supervisor.

Academic progress (pre-thesis submission)

Your supervisors should:

- Ensure that you are provided with constructive feedback on your progress with your research, module submissions, READ and researcher development as set out in The Vitae Framework.
- Ensure that the exact nature of any School duties is decided before the start of each semester by the Head of Division/Centre or Institute Director. This should be in consultation with you and your supervisory team.
- Ensure that you are informed of any development needs to meet the standard of work that is generally expected from a research candidate and suggest action, or training, as appropriate.
- Provide a written record of your progress through contribution to your supervision record and submission of the Annual Progress Report (APR) to The Graduate School.
- Provide advice and guidance on successful completion of your modules.
- Work with you to address areas of concern/feedback provided by your marking team.
- Provide guidance on good academic practice, including referencing, to maintain academic integrity and avoid unintended instances of academic misconduct.
- Report immediately any instances of academic or research misconduct (e.g. plagiarism, collusion, fabrication of research results etc.) to the Graduate School for investigation under QMU Disciplinary Regulations.
- Report any concerns regarding *seriously inadequate progress* to the Graduate School in a timely manner; having first discussed this with you and provided opportunities for you to respond to any such concerns.

Thesis and final viva

Your supervisors should:

- Initiate the procedures for the appointment of examiners for your final viva approximately three months before you submit your thesis. Your supervisors, in discussion with you, put forward the request for examiners, which is then considered and approved (or not) by the Graduate School. Failure to initiate the procedure will lead to delays in dispatching your thesis and arranging the viva examination.
- Read and comment on a draft of the complete thesis before submission.
- Ensure that you understand the procedures for the submission and examination of the thesis and assist you in preparing for the oral examination, including offering a mock viva
- Identify one member of the supervisory team to attend the final viva with you as an observer, unless you choose not to be accompanied by a supervisor.

- Continue to provide support and supervision throughout the period post viva, if you are asked to submit amendments or resubmit the thesis in full.

Candidate responsibilities

As a doctoral candidate, you are expected to take responsibility for your studies and academic progress, working in partnership with your supervisory team regarding your degree. In particular, this means that you should:

General

- Ensure your personal details are up to date on the [student portal](#).
- Complete matriculation at the start of each academic year (including when working on thesis amendments).
- Maintain appropriate and high standards of behaviour when dealing with others, including fellow candidates and other learners, members of staff and any other relevant stakeholders, when acting in the capacity of a University representative.
- Read, understand and comply with the University's regulations that govern your doctoral programme.
- Check your University email staff and student account(s) on a regular basis (ideally weekly), so as not to miss messages. The Graduate School does not send out academic related communications to personal email addresses. Assist@qmu.ac.uk can help you link your two QMU email accounts to help you keep track of all emails.
- Attend campus regularly and agree in advance with your supervisors any period(s) of absence from the University and seek appropriate permission.
- Regularly check the [Doctoral Hub Pages](#) to keep up to date with important Graduate School related documentation and announcements.
- Manage your time and work/study plans effectively.
- Report your holidays and absences – full-time bursary candidates are entitled to a maximum of six weeks' holiday per year (part-time pro rata), plus the Christmas holiday closure period. Dates for holidays should be agreed with the supervisory team in advance. All other doctoral candidates may take holidays at their own discretion, subject to meeting the usual requirements of study and any visa restrictions. However, holiday absences away from study should not normally exceed six weeks in any academic year. If you are in the UK on a Student Visa, please refer to Section A6 for more information on logging of authorised absence periods.

As a doctoral candidate, you are expected to take responsibility for your studies and academic progress, working in partnership with your supervisory team regarding your degree. In particular, this means that you should:

Supervision

- Work with your supervisors to establish and maintain the supervisory team working relationship. Once induction week is over, you will need to take some time to sit down with your supervisors and draw up a learning contract. The learning contract is an agreement between the candidate and their supervisory team. Both parties agree expectations, including how often they will meet and frequency of communication. Within the learning contract, you will agree, being guided by your supervisory team, the timescales for submitting written work to the team, and the timescales for them reading and providing feedback on written work. Another consideration will be how you communicate with each other, e.g. via email, face to

face meetings, Skype, and/or some other method (s). Candidates may find it helpful to draw up a flexible timetable for milestone events throughout the duration of the research.

- Whilst QMU regulations provide clear guidance and minimum standards for the management of supervision, there is flexibility to accommodate individual circumstances (for example the stage the candidate has reached) and preferences (for example format of meetings). The learning contract needs to be flexible to take these variations into account, in recognition of the individual nature of the doctoral candidate journey. The learning contract should be reviewed annually and updated as necessary.
- Organise meetings with your supervisors. All candidates are responsible for maintaining regular contact with their supervisory team and organising formal meetings. Full-time candidates must be in contact with their supervisory team at least once every six weeks, and part-time candidates at least once every 12 weeks. Your formal meetings, which normally take place in person, should be planned well in advance, according to an agreed schedule, and timeframe (i.e. monthly). The frequency of meetings will often be greater at the beginning and end of the candidate's programme. Informal or unscheduled meetings are also very important for the supervisory relationship. Informal meetings can happen in a number of ways, for example: face to face, by telephone or Skype, or in written formats such as email. If such meetings result in an agreed action point, or if important matters are discussed, the supervisory team and candidate should exchange emails afterwards to confirm the substantive points. It is expected that there will be regular email correspondence between meetings, and both candidate and supervisors should keep emails for future reference.
- Keep a log of your formal supervisory meetings. Candidates are required to keep a log of the dates they formally meet with supervisors, what is discussed, what work is to be carried out and any agreed deadlines. It is your responsibility to ensure that all meetings are logged and records kept. The format of the log will be decided by the candidate and the supervisory team, however, a template for a meeting log is included in Appendix 4 should you wish to use it. You and your team must agree to the content of the record and especially any action points and agreed deadlines³. The log should be shared by the candidate with the supervisors, and you each keep an agreed copy.
- Discuss any major concerns, issues or problems with your supervisors. Your supervisors will be happy to discuss your academic progress, as well as any pastoral matters, for example related to your health or other personal circumstances. Should you experience any difficulties with the supervisory relationship, you are encouraged, in the first instance, to raise these directly with your supervisors. Should you exceptionally wish to discuss an issue with an independent person, rather than with your supervisor(s), you should contact your Doctoral Research Coordinator for advice.

Academic

- Submit written work to your supervisor regularly and in good time, in accordance with the agreed timelines.
- Take note of any guidance and act upon feedback offered by the supervisors and marking team.
- Work together with your supervisors to ensure successful academic progression. Particular requirements for engagement and progression are detailed in full in the regulations. You are expected to maintain regular contact with your supervisors, and it is an expectation that

³ Logging supervisor meetings is required under QMU regulations to support your learning. In the unlikely event that any issues arise around supervision, these documents provide documented proof of your attendance and what you were asked to do by your supervisory team, which will be signed by all of you.

you pass all progression points within the required timescale (one module per academic year, pro-rata for part-time candidates).

- Alert your supervisors to any extenuating circumstances that might prevent you from meeting deadlines. In such cases, it may be appropriate to request a suspension or extension.
- Familiarise yourself with the expectations for good academic practice, including referencing, to maintain academic integrity and avoid unintended instances of academic misconduct.
- Complete your programme of research within the maximum period of study i.e. submit thesis within four years (full-time) or eight years (part-time).
- Participate in the wider research culture of the University, for example through your engagement with the Doctoral Candidates' Association and Research Centre/Institute, or other local activities.

Prior to thesis submission

- Familiarise yourself with the procedures for the submission and examination of your thesis.
- Agree with your supervisory team a date for formal thesis submission, so that they may set aside feedback time and prepare the necessary examination paperwork.
- Provide your supervisors with the opportunity to see a draft of the complete thesis.
- Schedule a date for a mock viva with your supervisors.
- Decide whether or not you would like one of your supervisors present in your examination – whilst not mandatory, this is usual and recommended practice.

De-registration

We want to support all of our candidates to successfully complete their doctoral studies. Very exceptionally, it may become necessary to deregister a candidate, however.

Candidates should be aware that de-registration may be pursued by the University under any of the following circumstances:

- a) the candidate is not in reasonable contact with their supervisory team;*
- b) the candidate has not matriculated;*
- c) the candidate has not paid tuition fees as required;*
- d) the candidate does not submit an annual progress report for each academic year of study;*
- e) the candidate is making seriously inadequate progress, as determined by the supervisory team in relation to the terms of the PhD Regulations;*
- f) the candidate fails to submit the final thesis within the maximum period of study;*
- g) the candidate fails to comply with any conditions set by the Research Strategy Committee, Graduate School Academic Board, Head of Graduate School, Dean of School or supervisory team.*

More details on de-registration processes are available in the doctoral regulations that govern your programme. They are available to read [here](#) (look under the Doctoral Regulations Section).

If you are experiencing difficulties of any kind that affect your engagement with your studies, it is really important that you let us know so that we can help you stay on track and potentially avoid de-registration. In some cases, it may be appropriate for you to apply for a suspension or extension, for example to cover periods where you are experiencing unexpected extenuating circumstances.

A8. Graduate Teaching Opportunities

QMU doctoral candidates are able to take advantage of opportunities to gain experience teaching and facilitating learning at University undergraduate degree level through the Division they are attached to, and/or assisting in research initiatives through their host Research Centre/Institute.

Pre-teaching preparation course

All candidates who teach/facilitate learning on undergraduate modules must complete the **Graduate School's Teaching Assistant Preparation Course**. This Course, runs once a year (usually in semester two). Please note that candidates working in this capacity must obtain approval from the Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme

Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA) Policy

The **Graduate Teaching Assistant** (GTA) Policy was first approved by the University Senate in June 2018 and is being updated in 2021. Any doctoral candidate (bursary or non-bursary) who is undertaking any aspect of academic work on behalf of the Division will be managed under the guidance within the GTA policy. The GTA Policy is available on the [Doctoral Hub page](#) under the *"Doctoral Candidate Folders"* area.

Opportunities to teach or undertake other academic work (e.g. Research Assistant) within a Division or your Centre/Institute should be discussed, in the first instance, with your supervisors at an early stage of your PhD. With the exception of bursary candidates, for whom there are specified mandatory requirements, the type and extent of opportunities will vary according to the particular needs Division and/or Research Centre/Institute.

Opportunities must align with, and provide added benefit to the candidate's learning needs. Your Head of Division/Director of Research Centre should use the GTA Policy to guide their allocation of academic duties to doctoral candidates, to ensure that the work provision is appropriate to the skills and expertise of each candidate, and that the hours of work are monitored. The Graduate School will monitor activity to ensure it is compliant with the University policy. It is not permissible for candidates to be required to undertake other tasks (such as administration). Candidates who have concerns about the nature and extent of duties they are asked to undertake should ideally discuss this with their supervisory team in the first instance. Our Doctoral Research Coordinators are also available to provide independent and confidential advice.

Guide for Graduate Teaching Assistants

The Doctoral Candidates' Association (DCA) has put together a helpful guide for doctoral candidates that teach/facilitate learning. This document is available on the [Doctoral Hub page](#).

Payment

Any non-bursary candidates should receive an hourly rate for all teaching duties undertaken. The hourly rate should be confirmed with/by the Head of Division prior to any teaching being undertaken. Human Resources are responsible for administering employee contracts and Finance / Payroll departments are responsible for making salary payments into UK bank accounts. Payments to candidates for teaching duties will be subject to tax and national insurance contributions.

Human Resources Email EmploymentStatus@gmu.ac.uk (or visit in person on the 2nd floor)
Finance and payroll Email – FinanceOffice@gmu.ac.uk or Payroll@gmu.ac.uk (or visit in person at their reception desk on the 1st floor).

A9. Guidance on Doctoral Business

Many of the Graduate School's administrative procedures require completion of a form. Use of forms helps ensure consistency with regulations, completeness of information and accurate record keeping.

Requests and Forms

The below table provides guidance on the most common doctoral candidate requests received by the Graduate School. Please be advised that all submissions are treated as requests for consideration by members of the Graduate School Academic Board and approval of your request is not guaranteed. You can normally expect to receive a response to your request within two weeks.

All fully completed forms should be emailed to the graduateschool@qmu.ac.uk copying in your supervisors. Incomplete forms will not be accepted, so please make sure all information requested is provided. All forms can be found on the [QMU website](#) under the 'Changes and Requests' section.

| Change | Information and Guidance | Relevant Form |
|---|---|--|
| Extenuating circumstances | If you are experiencing extenuating circumstances that are affecting your studies and that may prevent you from meeting submission deadlines, please submit an EC form for consideration by the GSAB. | Extenuating circumstances form – to be completed by you and supported by your supervisory team. Submit medical evidence if appropriate. |
| Absence Request for candidates on a Student Visa | All international candidates who are going to be absent from campus/Edinburgh for more than one day must have their absence authorised BEFORE departure. Reasons for requesting approval for an extended absence include data collection, remote research, or extended leave to holiday in home country. | Absence Request Form - to be completed by you and supported by your supervisory team. Absence "Sign In" Form - to be completed by you and cc'd to your supervisory team during each sign in week during your absence. |
| Suspension of study | If you are prevented from making due progress by ill-health or another significant cause you may apply to suspend your studies for between 1 and 12 months in the first instance. A request for suspension on medical grounds must be supported by a letter from your doctor. The maximum total period of suspension is normally 24 | Suspension request form - to be completed by you and supported by your supervisory team. |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| | <p>months. No fee is payable during a full year of continuous suspension.</p> <p>Retrospective suspension requests are not permitted unless there is a strong justifiable (usually medical) reason for not being able to have made a request for a suspension at the time it was required. Therefore it is important to be proactive in submitting your application.</p> | |
| Change in mode of study | <p>You may apply to change your mode of study from full-time to part-time or vice versa if you have good cause. It is not normally possible to request a change in mode of study retrospectively.</p> | <p>Change in mode of study form– to be completed by you, counter-signed by your Supervisory Chair.</p> |
| Change in Supervisory Arrangements | <p>During the course of your studies it may be necessary to make a change to your supervisory team. For example, this may be the case if a member of your team has any long term leave planned such as maternity leave or research leave or in the event that a supervisor experiences a longer than three month absence due to unforeseen circumstances.</p> <p>It may also be appropriate to request an additional supervisor if they can offer an area of expertise that is required for your research project.</p> | <p>Change in supervision form- to be completed by your supervisory team.</p> |
| Extension to Programme Registration | <p>An application for an extension to the period of study beyond the maximum (4 years full-time and 8 years part-time) may only be made in the most exceptional circumstances.</p> | <p>Extension form – to be completed by you and supported by your supervisory team.</p> |
| Withdrawal | <p>If you are considering withdrawing from the PhD programme please contact your supervisory team and/or the Graduate School Team.</p> | <p>Withdrawal form- to be completed with you and cc'd to your supervisory team.</p> |

If you need to discuss making changes to any aspect of your Prof Doc programme and need some advice and guidance, please contact graduateschool@qmu.ac.uk and we will be happy to help.

A10. International Students

It is your personal responsibility to ensure that you understand and adhere to all the terms and conditions of your Student Visa, including attendance monitoring. Basic guidance is given below for information. Please refer direct to the UKVI and UKCISA websites for detailed information.

Documents required on arrival

All international students, regardless of their nationality or visa status, must provide their passport/visa/immigration documents to the University for checking. Immigration document checks take place at matriculation. If you are unable to provide your immigration documents, you will not be able to matriculate.

The University is required to check original copies of the qualifications, which were used to obtain your place at the University. If you are a new international student, you should bring original copies of your qualifications with you to matriculation.

If you are studying full-time on a Student Visa, when you arrive in the UK, you will have ten days in which to collect your visa card (also known as a Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) or Biometric Identity Document (BID)). It is recommended that you go to the directed Post Office during your first week (induction week). You will be expected to send a copy of your BRP to International@gmu.ac.uk as soon as you have obtained it. If you are unable to go to the designated Post Office due to self-isolating/quarantine, please do not worry, there is an allowance from the government to collect your BRP a little later than guided.

Protecting your Student Visa

We are proud of the support we provide to international students studying with us, and the contribution you make to the University community. The policies and procedures set out below are designed to ensure that you can continue to enjoy your education at Queen Margaret University whilst at the same time satisfying the legal requirements placed on you and the University by the UK Government.

- You can only study full-time; part-time study may violate your visa conditions.
- You must be resident on a full-time basis within the local area of Edinburgh.
- If you suspend your studies for a fixed period of time or withdraw from your studies the University will no longer be able to sponsor you and you will need to return to your home country. Failure to leave the UK will violate your visa conditions.
- You must not work more than 20 hours per week in term time (for doctoral candidates, your programme of study is continuous for the full academic / calendar year and so you cannot work more than 20 hours per week at any time). However, the Graduate School recommends you work no more than 12 hours per week in addition to your doctoral studies.
- The University cannot continue to 'sponsor' you if your academic progress and engagement is not satisfactory.

In being granted our sponsorship licence, a number of requirements are placed on the University by UKVI. These include:

- Keeping a copy of your passport and visa documents, as well as holding safely and updating each student's contact details.

- Reporting to UKVI any student who fails to enrol on their course within the enrolment period.
- Reporting to UKVI any unauthorised student absences (including missing expected interactions or contacts).
- Reporting to UKVI any changes in students' circumstances (e.g. temporary or permanent withdrawal, reduction in the length or hours of the course).
- Reporting to UKVI where it is known that a student has violated the terms of their Student visa.

Attendance and progression monitoring

The University is your sponsor, and as your sponsor, we are required by the UK Government to monitor your attendance and engagement in your studies during your full doctoral programme period.

Attendance on campus

As a full-time candidate, you are expected to live within reasonable distance of the Edinburgh campus and to study for the recommended period each week (35 hours per week, with at least three days per week on campus) for the full academic year, unless you are on a period of authorised absence. Valid reasons for absence include (but are not limited to):

- Leaving campus to undertake research e.g. data collection or attending a conference.
- Leaving campus for a period of annual holiday e.g. to visit friends and family.
- Period of sickness (including planned periods in hospital).

Any absence away from campus (whether academic or personal) must be authorised by the Graduate School and your supervisors **before** your absence begins. Planned periods of absence away from campus should not normally exceed 60 days.

You must inform us of your absence by submitting the Doctoral Candidate Absence form.

The Graduate School will verify this with your supervisors and once authorised, we will use this information to log a formal "absence record" in your University records file.

If you are going to miss sign in, you must inform the Graduate School of your absence **before** the formal sign in week. Retrospective absence notifications will be recorded as an unauthorised absence, and we are required, by the UKVI, to report these unauthorised absences along with any concerns regarding your compliance with the conditions of your visa.

Monitoring academic engagement and progress

In order to monitor your academic progress, your "expected contacts" with the University include (but are not limited to):

- Formal sign in (in person) once per month at the Registry Information Point.
- Timely submission of formally assessed work associated with your programme of study (e.g. probationary reports/viva, delivery of Assessed Seminars, thesis).
- Attendance at formal monthly meetings with your supervisory team.
- Submission of draft work to supervisor(s) as part of your programme of study.

Please note that UKVI requires the University to monitor academic engagement and progression of all doctoral candidates on a Student visa, including those who are writing up their thesis or waiting for their viva.

Help us help you

We understand that, as doctoral candidates, you are autonomous, independent and capable learners undertaking important research. We also understand that the requirements UKVI place upon the University in regards to monitoring your academic engagement and progression may become an administrative burden. However, this is a non-negotiable requirement that the University must comply with. So, please remember to:

- Organise formal monthly meetings with your supervisors to discuss your academic progress and stay in regular contact.
- Sign in with Registry, in person, during the required sign in weeks throughout the year. Tell us about your planned absences **before** you leave campus.
- Comply with all conditions of your student visa.

UKCISA have produced a useful page of useful information for [Protecting your student status](#). You will also find the complete list of information relating to your visa conditions on the [UKVI website](#). Please help us by reading this information carefully.

All candidates' academic attendance and engagement is regularly monitored by supervisors and the Graduate School. For UKVI candidates, it will also be formally reviewed three times a year by the QMU UKVI Review Group. Please be aware that the University cannot continue to 'sponsor' you if you are not complying with the University's policies and procedures and / or your attendance and academic progress and engagement are not satisfactory.

Advice and guidance for international candidates

Within the University, visa and immigration advice can only be given by the International Office. Candidates should not rely on advice from family, friends, or other staff in the University. Candidates can make an individual appointment by emailing international@qmu.ac.uk or calling in to the drop-in advice sessions on Mondays 1400-1700 and Thursdays 1000-1200.

A11. Student / University Services

There are a number of University services that you will need or may wish to access whilst you are studying for your doctorate. Some of these are listed below for information.

Doctoral Candidates' Association (DCA)

Webpage <https://www.qmu.ac.uk/current-students/the-doctoral-student-association-dsa/>
General email dca@qmu.ac.uk

The DCA is a candidate-led initiative, acting as the voice of all doctoral candidates at QMU on a number of University-wide committees, including the Graduate School Academic Board (GSAB), the Research Strategy Committee (RSC) and the Student Experience Committee (SEC). This ensures that doctoral candidate needs and interests are represented throughout the institution.

The DCA plays an important role in:

- Advice and representation within the Graduate School and GSAB,
- Networking and information sharing,
- Social activities,
- Delivering the annual QMU Doctoral Researchers' Conference.

The Graduate School encourages you to follow the DCA [Twitter Pages](#) which will keep you up to date on DCA developments. Also, keep an eye out for emails from the DCA, where you can find information about academic and social opportunities throughout the year.

The DCA is a candidate-led initiative, and therefore it needs highly motivated and enthusiastic candidates to ensure its continued success. The DCA Co-Chairs change on a yearly basis, and all candidates have the opportunity to put themselves forward for these positions and continue the work of the Association. Becoming a DCA Co-chair provides an excellent personal and professional development opportunity, and allows candidates to use their own experiences to continually improve the experience of current and future doctoral candidates at QMU. If you are interested in becoming a member of the DCA Committee please speak to the current committee members or email GraduateSchool@qmu.ac.uk for more information.

DCA co-chair reflection

By Alistair Shields, PhD Candidate, Health Sciences, Affiliate member of CPcPR.

I am a mature part-time candidate and a co-chair of the Doctoral Candidates Association (DCA) between 2019–2021. Being local and with access to campus I joined the DCA to be an advocate for all doctoral candidates. I saw it as an opportunity to gain an understanding of our academic structures and exercise my planning and networking skills. Joining in 2019 was a somewhat unfortunate timing as we were struck by the pandemic but the work of the DCA did not stop. As a participant in the university's social and governance structures, as detailed in the handbook, my colleagues and I still had a role to play in an online format.

During this past two years I have, through my membership of the GSAB (Graduate School Academic Board,) commented on university regulations and guidance regarding the doctoral

programmes, discussed supervision styles, development opportunities, and raised questions among the candidates to provide informed comment to the board.

I was involved in arranging the 2021 DCA conference. This was to allow candidates to develop their skills by presenting their work, engaging with others, and making their research visible to the wider university. This allowed for new collaborations to develop and our first every 3 minute thesis competition was held.

I have been able to work with others, engage in team working, exercise time and workload management, gain new skills, particularly with virtual meetings, and become a better colleague to peers and academic staff through this time on the DCA. It has been a valuable experience and I would encourage others to join in, should your circumstances permit.

Registry

General email – registry@qmu.ac.uk

The Registry department deals with all aspects of the following:

- [Matriculation and enrolment](#)
- [Tuition fees and charges](#) relating to your programme of study
- [Managing your details](#), from your student record and smartcard help to your module and course options.
- [Transcripts and documents](#) relating to your study
- [Graduation](#)

Library Services

Website <https://www.qmu.ac.uk/study-here/learning-facilities/library/>

General email LRCHelp@qmu.ac.uk

Library Services are available physically through the Learning Resource Centre, which is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and online through the remote desktop. As a doctoral candidate at QMU, you already have access to thousands of books, journals and online resources to support your research. In the Learning Resource Centre you will find:

- Our print bookstock, archived print journals and DVDs
- Group study spaces (with smart-boards)
- Quiet study spaces (with IT and somewhere to plug in your laptop)
- Silent study spaces
- Large open plan areas with terminals
- Comfy seating

Online you will discover:

- eBooks, eJournals and databases
- Library catalogue, “Discover” service, ejournal and database listings
- Workshops to help you find and use online resources

Our Liaison Librarians can offer you specialist subject-related support, whilst our Research Support Librarian can offer advice and guidance on data management, open access publishing and social media.

IT Services

IT Services webpage <https://www.qmu.ac.uk/study-here/learning-facilities/it-services/>

As a QMU doctoral candidate you will have access to a wide range of IT facilities. See the Getting Started webpage for all you need to know about: online matriculation, logging in, email/webmail, mobile devices, WIFI access, HUB access, printing etc. [Remote Access](#) is also available via Citrix to candidates who are off campus.

Helpdesk

The Helpdesk Service provides staff, students and visitors with readily available help with day-to-day running of the Learning Resource Centre on behalf of the institution and its community, ensuring it is fit for purpose and meets the needs of all users.

In addition we provide advice and support when you have a problem with or a question about any aspect of service which Campus Services Dept. deliver. These include

- Library based queries e.g. helping with finding and using resources, research support, loans and borrowing, fines payment.
- IT queries e.g. resetting passwords, assisting with remote access, wireless network connections, logging off Horizon sessions.
- Raise jobs for Facilities teams e.g. removing waste, cleaning rooms, setting up meeting rooms.
- Raise jobs for Maintenance teams – e.g. unblocking sinks or toilets, re-establishing hot water, dealing with power failure.

If you are having issues with the above, please contact Helpdesk Service using any of the four options below:

- [Self Service Portal](#)
- Report by email on LRCHelp@qmu.ac.uk for library queries, for all other enquiries please contact Assist@qmu.ac.uk
- Report by telephone 0131 474 0000 and request “Helpdesk” when prompted
- In person at the Library Service Desk.

Student Support Services

When doctoral candidates face situations and circumstances where they need some further support, staff at Student Services are in place to support a wide variety of needs. All our staff are well aware of the unique challenges and pressures facing doctoral candidates and are here to support you. We can also signpost and refer to other services if we think that would be beneficial or you would rather be supported outside of the university. Below is some more information about the support that is available.

Counselling

Counselling offers you the opportunity to talk in private about anything that is troubling you. We provide a service for all students including doctoral candidates and we are able to support you

with a range of issues. It is a completely confidential process where the counsellor will listen carefully to what you have to say and will not judge you or tell you what to do. The aim is to help you understand things more clearly so that you can see for yourself how to deal with things more effectively.

We can usually see a student for their assessment session within a working week of them making contact. We can offer sessions in-person or via Teams or phone. We have some evening availability over Teams/phone for students on placement.

Where counselling is agreed at the assessment session, we can offer up to 6 sessions either in a block or one-at-a-time, agreed on a case-by-case basis. If a student is not sure if counselling is for you please email and we can discuss what is appropriate for you.

Information: <https://www.qmu.ac.uk/study-here/student-services/counselling-service/>

Email: counselling@qmu.ac.uk.

Bookings: One-at-a-time sessions and assessments can be booked at:
<https://studentcentral.qmu.ac.uk/students>.

Wellbeing

The wellbeing service is available to support all students with anything that may be having an impact on their wellbeing. The service is available to all students at QMU from undergraduate to postgraduates and doctoral candidates.

The Wellbeing Adviser can offer support, guidance and advice, they may signpost the student to other QMU support services and external support services if appropriate. The aim of the wellbeing service is to facilitate students in regaining their sense of wellbeing and potential to engage fully with their academic studies and student life.

Stay on Course support is also provided by the wellbeing service, this is for students who are struggling to engage with their academic studies (attendance, course work submissions, repeated extenuating circumstances, extensions) and may benefit from additional specialist support provided by the wellbeing service.

Information: <https://www.qmu.ac.uk/study-here/student-services/wellbeing-service/>

Email: wellbeing@qmu.ac.uk

Bookings: <https://studentcentral.qmu.ac.uk/students>

Disability

Support in QMU for disabled students is formalised via an Individual Learning Plan (ILP). Devised by a Disability Adviser and with the student's permission, this describes barriers to learning, recommends support from academic and other departments and formalises assessment arrangements.

The disability service is available to all students including doctoral candidates and irrespective of whether a student has had support as an undergraduate or not. It is not uncommon for students to identify a need for support later in their studies when more complex academic writing is needed, and when pressures are increased.

Disability Advisers also co-ordinate applications for the Disabled Students Allowance (DSA) for eligible students.

Any candidate who may have a disability and who has not accessed the service, or is unsure if they have a disability is encouraged to make an appointment with a Disability Adviser as soon as possible to discuss an ILP and other support. Students can book appointments direct on:

Student Central <https://studentcentral.qmu.ac.uk/students>

Information: <https://www.qmu.ac.uk/study-here/student-services/disability-service/>

Email: disabilityadvisers@qmu.ac.uk

Bookings: <https://studentcentral.qmu.ac.uk/students>

Funding

The University receives Discretionary (formerly Hardship) Funds from the Scottish Government in order to support undergraduate and postgraduate students from every part of the UK who experience financial difficulties during their studies. There is a separate Nursing Discretionary Fund for nursing students. Students who have to pay for registered childcare can apply for support from the Childcare Fund. In addition, the University provides an International Hardship Fund to support students from outwith the UK.

The Student Funding Adviser is based in Student Services and has appointments available over several days a week, although will do all he can to support a student in a crisis situation. A student can seek help with completing an application form or come to discuss any aspect of student funding. Appointments can be made on Student Central and further information is available there and on the website.

Information: <https://www.qmu.ac.uk/study-here/student-services/student-funding-service/>

Email: studentfunding@qmu.ac.uk

Bookings: <https://studentcentral.qmu.ac.uk/students>

International Office

Webpage <https://www.qmu.ac.uk/study-here/international-students/>

General email – international@qmu.ac.uk

[Visa and immigration](#) advice can only be given by the International Office. Candidates should not rely on advice from family, friends, or other staff in the University. Candidates can make an individual appointment by emailing international@qmu.ac.uk or calling in to the drop-in advice sessions.

Students' Union

The [Students' Union](#) is located on campus opposite the main academic building and next door to the Sports Centre. The Union offers the following services and opportunities: advice and support, representation, access to extra-curricular activities, volunteer opportunities and a commercial food, beverage and events service.

The Union has a Help Zone (which can provide advice and guidance on academic support issues (e.g. extenuating circumstances, academic appeal, complaints, and disciplinary cases), accommodation (e.g. flat hunting, insurance, advice on tenancy agreements), personal physical

and mental health and stress busting. If you would like to speak with a representative from the Students' Union you can visit them in person, email them at union@qmu.ac.uk or phone on 0131 474 0000 (request "student union" when prompted).

The Students' Union is also responsible for running many clubs and societies which all students, including doctoral candidates, are encouraged to join. More information on sports and societies can be found [here](#).

Sports Centre

Queen Margaret University [Sports Centre](#) offers a range of facilities to staff, students and the general public including a fitness suite, weights room, exercise studio, Astroturf, sports hall and outdoor gym. Opening Hours are:

- Monday - Thursday 7.30am - 10pm
- Friday 7.30am - 8pm
- Saturday and Sunday 9am - 4pm

Accommodation

Webpage <https://www.qmu.ac.uk/campus-life/accommodation/>
General email: accommodation@qmu.ac.uk

The University Halls of Residence are located on campus right next door to the University's main academic building. There is standard and premium accommodation available and a dedicated postgraduate block.

Academic and University calendar

Candidates can access up to date academic and University calendars [here](#)

B1. The Professional Doctorate Programme

Introduction

The Professional Doctorate route is designed to allow professionals to undertake doctoral work within the workplace environment. It has the specific focus of assisting in advancing professional development through project work and research that is embedded in the candidate's professional domain. The doctoral award learning outcomes are that by the end of the programme the candidates will be able to:

- Create and develop new knowledge which extends the boundaries of the discipline through advanced autonomous scholarship and original research, which merits publication.
- Communicate original and creative insights into new, complex and abstract ideas to a wide audience of peers, professional colleagues and policy makers in order to contribute to the changing environment of health and social science.
- Embed on-going critical evaluation and reflection of personal and professional development in individual practice and the context of their professional arena.
- Use in-depth knowledge of a range of methods of research and advanced academic enquiry effectively.
- Perform at a high level of literacy and practical skills; including use of information technology, data handling, data analysis, and preparing writing of grant applications, ethical submissions and publications in academic journals.
- Manage projects effectively using skills of goal setting, negotiation, prioritisation, data acquisition and collation, and effective time management.
- Be proactive in communication and engage in critical dialogue on complex matters, issues and ideas; with relevant individuals at different levels and in different situations.
- Challenge espoused knowledge and practice of the discipline, current theories, principles and concepts, through critical overview and detailed, leading knowledge of the specialist area.
- Exercise initiative to address complex challenges through critically analysing economic, political and ethical issues that may arise in their profession.
- Autonomously pioneer profession development through use of innovative knowledge that transforms individual health and/or social science practice.
- Conceptualise, design and implement a project for the generation of new knowledge, application or understanding at the forefront of the discipline, and adjust project design in light of unforeseen challenges.

Professional environment

Professional Doctorate programmes are designed to facilitate candidate choice and to allow candidates to pursue doctoral study while still in employment or an equivalent professional engagement. It is therefore intended that the elements of the programmes will be available in ways that facilitate full or part-time study. Thus the elements may be delivered:

- by work based learning,
- in concentrated blocks of study,
- in normal working hours during the week-days,
- by flexible learning, or
- through a combination of these formats.

To be able to meet the requirements of the Professional Doctorate, each candidate requires access to their professional environment. The responsibility for negotiating this rest with each candidate, who can either be employed within their professional environment (normally part-time candidates) or negotiate access to a professional location (normally full-time candidates), either as a volunteer, or in some other capacity. This is critical for the candidate, as it situates the learning within an appropriate and relevant environment. This issue should normally be discussed at interview prior to commencing the programme and it is the candidate's responsibility to identify their own work-related context.

Registration and timescales

The Professional Doctorate can be completed within the timescales given in the table below.

| | Full-time | Part-time |
|---|---|---|
| Minimum timescale | 2 years (with a Masters degree ⁴) 2.5 years (if abbreviated ⁵) | 4 years (with a Masters degree) 5 years (if abbreviated) |
| Prescribed period | 3 years (36 months) | 6 years (72 months) |
| Maximum period (continuation year) | 4 years (48 months ⁶) | 8 years (96 months) |

A full-time candidate should normally reach the standard for a Professional Doctorate within a prescribed period of study of three years and a part-time candidate within a prescribed period of six years. Full-time candidates should normally submit their thesis at the end of the third year for examination with a view of completing the examination process and being awarded the degree before the end of the maximum period of study. If no thesis is submitted within four years (full-time) or eight years (part-time), and no application for extension or suspension has been received and approved, your registration will be terminated automatically.

Your key progression points are summarised in the table below. You can use this to record your key submission deadlines.

| Programme start date | | | |
|--|----------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| End of prescribed period (deadline for thesis submission) | | | |
| End of maximum period (including continuation year) | | | |
| Progression Point | Regulation timeframe | | Deadline for submission |
| | Full-time | Part-time | |
| XD025 Theory and Context of Professional Practice 3000 Word Assignment | Around 6 months after start date | Before the end of year 1 | |
| XD025 Theory and Context of Professional Practice 6000 word portfolio | Before the end of year 1 | Before the end of year 2 | |

⁴ Up to 270 credits may be awarded by Recognition of Prior Learning, which would reduce the period by one year FTE.

⁵ Candidates may apply for abbreviation of study in the event that the research is proceeding agreed of schedule. A candidate may apply for both credit and abbreviation of study.

⁶ Candidates are entitled to use a "continuation period" of 12 months (full time) or 24 months (part time). By the end of this period all modules must be completed and the research thesis must be submitted.

| | | | |
|---|--|--|--|
| XD026 Development and Evaluation of Professional Practice 9000 Word Portfolio | Before the end of year 2 | Before the end of year 4 | |
| XD011 Doctorate Research Presentation | Before submission of the written component | Before the end of year 5 | |
| XD011 Doctorate Research 6000 Word Research Proposal | Before the end of year 3 | Before the end of year 6 | |
| XD015 Thesis | Before end of continuation period (ideally, before the end of prescribed period) | Before end of continuation period (ideally, before the end of prescribed period) | |
| XD015 Final Viva | Approx. 6 weeks following thesis submission | Approx. 6 weeks following thesis submission | |

Progress will be subject to regular review at supervisory meetings and through annual assessments, allowing candidates to identify barriers to completion and supervisory teams to put in place appropriate support mechanisms.

Programme structure

To gain a doctoral level qualification you are required to achieve 540 credits (120 M level and 420 D level). This comprises of the following credited study modules:

- XD025 Theory and Context of Professional Practice (90 credits)
- XD026 Development and Evaluation of Professional Practice (90 credits)
- XD011 Doctoral Research Module (60 credits)
- XD015 Research Thesis and oral examination (180 credits)

Candidates must successfully complete and pass all modules/credits in order to be awarded the degree of Professional Doctorate. The information in the following section details the aims, learning outcomes and experiences, assessment pattern and reading texts for the Professional Doctorate modules.

The programme is not linear in its structure therefore candidates can be undertaking XD025 Theory and Context of Professional Practice (TCPP) and XD026 Development and Evaluation of Professional Practice (DEPP), or XD026 Development and Evaluation of Professional Practice (DEPP) and XD011 Doctoral Research module at the same time.

It is recommended, however, that you would commence with TCPP and DEPP as these set the foundation for the doctoral journey. You must have passed at least TCPP and DEPP prior to formally commencing your research thesis.

| Programme structure | Standard entry | Non-standard entry | | |
|---|--|---|----|---------------------------------------|
| | PG Diploma 120 SCQF points at Level 11 (Masters) | Undertake 120 Level 11 points (Masters) using QMU array | OR | RPL up to 120 Level 11 Masters points |
| Theory and Context module XD025 | 90 credits Level 12 | 90 credits Level 12 | | 90 credits Level 12 |
| Developing and evaluating module XD026 | 90 credits Level 12 | 90 credits Level 12 | | 90 credits Level 12 |
| Doctoral research XD011 | 60 credits Level 12 | 60 credits Level 12 | | 60 credits Level 12 |
| Thesis | 180 credits Level 12 | 180 credits Level 12 | | 180 credits Level 12 |
| Total credits | 540 credits | 540 credits | | 540 credits |

Assessment guidelines

Please refer to Section 8 of the [Professional Doctorate Regulations](#) for full details governing submission and assessment of work. In summary:

- All candidates must submit *at least* one piece of work for formal assessment per academic year; but may be working on several pieces at once.
- Candidates submitting work for assessment at SCQF Level 12 should informally submit work on a regular basis to their supervisory team for formative feedback to ensure the work is reaching doctoral level. Candidates must negotiate the timing of their formative submission with their supervisory team in advance to ensure enough time is allowed for due consideration of the work.
- When candidates are ready to formally submit work for assessment, there are three identified submission dates for candidates - **one in December, one in March and one in June**. This is to allow adequate time for double marking and external examiner review prior to the examination boards which are held in September and March. You may submit work at any time but note that you are not then guaranteed an 8 week marking process, therefore, you are strongly encouraged to aim for the published submission dates.
- A candidate may not fail more than 240 credits at Doctoral level. This allows you the opportunity to fail and retrieve each module once. Should you fail more than 240 cumulative credits you will be required to withdraw from the programme. This means that if you fail the first module twice, you will acquire 180 credits of fail. If you then went on to fail XD026 once, you would exceed the 240 cumulative credits and would be required to withdraw.

B2. Prof Doc Module Information

Theory and context of professional practice (TCPP)

| Title | Theory and Context of Professional Practice | | | Code (if known) XD025 | | | |
|---|--|---|-------------------------------|--------------------------|---|---|---|
| SHE Level | Doctoral | Semester & Mode of Study | Semester 1 and 2, F/T and P/T | Credit Rating 90 | | | |
| SCQF Level | 12 | | | | | | |
| Module Contributors | | Dr Mairghread Ellis, doctoral qualified supervisors from Health Science and ASSaM | | | | | |
| Pre-requisites | | Nil | | | | | |
| Co-requisites | | Nil | | | | | |
| Prohibited Combinations | | | | | | | |
| <p>Aim: The aim of Theory and Context of Professional Practice (TCPP) is to facilitate candidates to critically debate the principal theories and concepts within the candidate's area of practice; and to identify and conceptualise a work based issue in order to effectively develop an advancement of practice.</p> <p>For the majority of candidates the work of the two professional modules (TCPP and DEPP) are normally linked - please see Other Relevant Details below</p> | | | | | | | |
| Learning Outcomes | | | Assessed in this module | A 7 | B | C | D |
| On successful completion of the module the candidate will be able to: | | | | | | | |
| L1 | provide a critical overview of the area of practice for development, and critically debate the theory and context of developing professional practice in the candidate's own area SCQF level 12 characteristic 1, 2: Programme outcomes 1, 2 | | Yes | * | * | * | * |
| L2 | integrate personal and professional learning needs into a personal development plan with clearly defined doctorate level learning outcomes SCQF level 12 characteristic 1, 5 : Programme outcomes 8,11, | | Yes | * | * | * | * |
| L3 | demonstrate originality and creativity in the design, plan and negotiation of a strategy for the advancement of professional practice, achievable within the available timeframe SCQF level 12 characteristic 2, 3 : Programme outcomes 1, 5 | | Yes | * | * | * | * |
| L4 | critically reflect on personal and professional learning achieved through this process, using research/evidence as appropriate SCQF level 12 characteristic 2 , 3: Programme outcomes 9,11 | | Yes | * | * | * | * |

⁷ A – Knowledge and Understanding B – Intellectual Skills C – Practical Skills D – Transferable Skills

Learning Experiences

The module will engage the candidate in the following types of learning experiences:

Introductory session on doctoral level work based learning.

In accordance with the theories of adult education candidates will be self-directing, be able to make learning choices and take responsibility for their own learning. Candidates will be supported in the production of their own Doctoral Action Plan (DAP) using the research vitae assessment tool as a basis for their learning needs in research. This will be facilitated by a supervision team.

Presentation of work to date at the second and third study weeks each year, with colleague feedback and discussion.

Individual contact time with supervisory team through face to face, telephone skype or email contact as appropriate. Candidates are responsible for their own learning and should keep regular contact with the supervisory team. It is expected that contact should be on at least a bimonthly basis. Candidates will also be able to share discussions via the Professional doctorate Hub pages if they so wish.

Additionally, and where possible, a representative of the workplace will sign the development plan to acknowledge the undertaking of, and level of work to be undertaken in the workplace.

Assessment Pattern

There will be two submissions for this module. It is intended that the first piece of work be worth 30 credits and the second 60 credits – these values are illustrative only

- A 3000 piece of work – submitted in January – to be the initial 'scene setting' giving a justification by the candidate to show their role as being at doctoral level and providing a theoretical framework for their analysis. This should include partial evidence for LOs 1 and 2
- A portfolio of evidence with a 6000 word critical commentary, - submitted in June - which should include
 1. personal development plan
 2. critical review/s of relevant literature
 3. detailed plan with consideration of required resources
 4. critical reflection on personal and professional learning
 5. This list is not comprehensive – as each individual's work will be different, and unique to their own work arena, thus the content of each portfolio may differ in part – this should be discussed with the supervisory team

The work will be graded as pass/fail, and both pieces of work must be passed to gain an overall pass for the module

Can this Module be Anonymously marked? No If No please provide an explanation.

As the second submission element comprises a portfolio containing an individual development and project plan - NO

Content

3 hours of introductory work to doctoral level work based learning.

Opportunities to present work at the second and third attendance week each year.

Individual contact time with supervisory team through face to face, telephone skype or email contact as appropriate. Candidates are responsible for their own learning and should keep regular contact with the supervisory team. It is expected that contact should be on at least a bimonthly basis.

897 hours of independent work and study (to include presentations and supervisory contact)

Indicative Main Texts

FULTON J., KUIT J., SANDERS., G and SMITH P., 2013. *Palgrave Research Skills – The professional Doctorate*, UK, Palgrave MacMillan.

BALL, I., AND MANWARING, G. 2010 *Making it work: a guidebook exploring work based learning*. The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education. Gloucester, UK

[BOUD, D., KEOGH, R., and WALKER, D.,](#) 1987 *Reflection: turning experience into learning*. London Kogan

MOON, J.A. 2006 *A handbook of reflective and experiential learning: theory and practice* London Routledge

RAELIN, J.A. 2008 *Work-based learning: Bridging knowledge and action in the workplace* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass

SCOTT, D., BROWN, A., LUNT, I., THORNE, L. 2004 *Professional Doctorates: integrating professional and academic knowledge* Berkshire: Open University Press

TAYLOR, B. 2010 *Reflective Practice: a guide for healthcare professionals*, 3rd ed London: Open University Press

THOMSON, P., WALKER, M. 2010 *The Routledge Doctoral Candidate's Companion* Oxon: Routledge

Other relevant details

TCPP provides the theoretical underpinning, justification and rationale for the development of an advancement of practice through critical evaluation and synthesis of relevant material The module allows the candidate to identify personal and professional learning needs in relation to the advancement of practice, and to construct an evidence based strategy and portfolio to demonstrate these outcomes

SCQF level 12 characteristic 4 Communication, ICT and Numeracy skills should be demonstrated in every aspect of this module's work and the submission for assessment

Date January 21, 2016

Development and evaluation of professional practice (DEPP)

| | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|-------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|---|---|---|
| Title | Development and Evaluation of Professional Practice | | | | Code (if known) | | | |
| | | | | | XD026 | | | |
| SHE /Level SCQF Level | Doctoral 12 | Semester & Mode of Study | Semester 1 and 2, F/T and P/T | | Credit Rating 90 | | | |
| Module Contributors | | Dr Gill Baer, doctoral qualified supervisors from Health Science and ASSaM | | | | | | |
| Pre-requisites | | Theory and Context of Professional Practice | | | | | | |
| Co-requisites | | | | | | | | |
| Prohibited Combinations | | | | | | | | |
| Aim: The aim of Development and Evaluation of Professional Practice (DEPP) is to enable the candidate to effectively develop, implement and critically evaluate an element of a proposed advancement in practice DEPP allows the candidate to reflect on the learning undertaken in Theory and Context of Professional Practice, to review and refine their needs in relation to advancing professional practice and to plan, undertake and report a contained piece of evaluative work in a systematic and rigorous manner (<i>*for the majority of candidates the work for the two Professional Practice modules work is normally linked</i>) | | | | | | | | |
| Learning Outcomes On successful completion of the module the candidate will be able to: | | | | Assessed in this module | A | B | C | D |
| L1 | Develop original and creative insights into an issue in their own professional practice <i>SCQF level 12 characteristic 1 & 2</i> | | | Yes | √ | √ | | √ |
| L2 | Develop deeper knowledge and critical understanding through the evaluation of professional practice <i>SCQF level 12 characteristic 1 & 2</i> | | | Yes | √ | √ | | √ |
| L3 | Identify and apply relevant skills, techniques and practices to plan the evaluation and to critically evaluate a specific element of professional practice <i>SCQF level 12 characteristic 1, 2, 4</i> | | | Yes | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| L4 | Demonstrate leadership, creativity and critical self-reflection during the process of gathering and presentation of information in relation to the evaluation of practice <i>SCQF level 12 characteristic 1, 3, 5</i> | | | | √ | √ | √ | √ |

Learning Experiences

The module engages the candidate in the following types of learning experiences:

In accordance with theories of adult learning, candidates will be self-directing, be able to make learning choices and take responsibility for their own learning. Candidates will be supported in the work required for this module by appropriate supervision

Seminars and discussions will consider approaches to advancing and evaluating practice and implementing change and candidates are encouraged to read widely to consider the most relevant approach for their proposed work and the work setting. Planning, negotiating and communication will be essential competencies to draw on and develop within this module.

Initial reflection on and amendment to the Doctoral Action Plan developed in TCPP will allow the candidate to consider the focus for DEPP. Candidates are expected to present their work twice during the block contact sessions (initial thoughts and plans; a progress / end of project evaluation).

Individual contact with the supervisory team through face to face, skype, phone or email contact should be planned as appropriate. Candidates should take responsibility for their own learning, moving the work forwards and organising regular contact with the supervisory team. For part-time candidates it is expected that contact should be at least bi-monthly, for full-time candidates contact should be at least monthly.

Assessment Pattern

Candidates submit evidence in a 9000 word portfolio that includes:
Context to the Development and Evaluation work
Plan of evaluation / process of identifying and planning evaluation
Implementation of the development work and evaluation strategy and
Evaluative report of the impact of the development
A short reflection on the learning through the DEPP process

This portfolio should include as linked appendices:
DAP* Doctoral Action Plan (e-link)
TCPP (e-link)
Selected evidence to demonstrate Learning outcomes have been met

100%: 9000 words

Can this Module be Anonymously marked? No If No please provide an explanation.

As learners are being assessed by submission on an individual DAP and evaluative report - NO

Content

Candidates are expected to attend relevant seminars and workshops provided during the Doctoral candidate attendance blocks

- workshop on doctoral learning
- workshop on evaluating practice
- workshop relating to change management
- Candidate presentations of initial ideas / development ± evaluation of advancement project

Individual contact with the supervisory team through face to face, skype, phone or email contact should be planned as appropriate. Candidates should take responsibility for their own learning, moving the work forwards and organising regular contact with the supervisory team. For part-time candidates it is expected that contact should be at least bi-monthly, for full-time candidates contact should be at least monthly.

Main Texts

The readings for TCPP module are also relevant for DEPP
In addition to TCPP readings the following may be useful

ALANA JAMES, E., SLATER, T. H. and BUCKNAM, A.J., 2011. *Action research for business, non-profit and public administration: a tool for complex times*. London: Sage.

CAMERON, E. and GREEN, M. 2015., *Making sense of change management: a complete guide to the models, tools and techniques of organisational change*. London: Kogan Page.

DREJER A 2000 'Organisational learning and competence development' in *The Learning Organisation* Vol. 7 NO 4 pp. 206 –220 Online Available: <http://www.emerald-library.com>

DWYER, J., STANTON, P., & THIESSON, V. 2004. *Project management in health and community services: getting good ideas to work*. Crows Nest, N.S.W: Allen & Unwin

LEE, N-J. 2008 *Achieving your professional Doctorate*. Open University Press

MCSHERRY R. AND WARR J. EDS 2010 *Implementing Excellence in Your Health Care Organisation* Maidenhead: Open University Press

MEZIROW J AND ASSOCIATES 2000 *Learning as Transformation: Critical Perspectives on a Theory in Progress* (Higher Education) London John Wiley and Sons Inc

RAELIN, J.A. 2008 *Work-based learning: Bridging knowledge and action in the workplace* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass

RADOR, Z. J., BATEMAN, N., ESAIN, A. and KUMAR, M. 2016., *Public service operations management: a research handbook*. Oxon: Routledge.

RICHARDS, D., & HALLBERG, I., EDS 2015 *Complex Interventions in Health: An overview of research methods*. London: Routledge

ROBSON, C. and MCCARTAN, K. 2016., *Real world research*. 4th Edition. UK: Wiley.

SENGE, P. M., 2006 *The Fifth Discipline – The Art and Practice of The Learning Organisation* London Random House

SHANI, A. B (Rani) and NOUMAIR, D. H. 2015., *Research in organisational change and development*. Vol.23. UK: Emerald.

SHAW, I. 2011., *Evaluating in practice*. 2nd edition. London: Routledge.

STRAUS, S., TETROE, J. and GRAHAM, I.D. 2013. *Knowledge translation in health care: moving from evidence to practice* [online]. 2nd ed. John Wiley & Sons [viewed 2 March 2016]. Available from: <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/book/10.1002/9781118413555>

Other relevant details

In planning and executing the work for DEPP and writing the portfolio, the candidate should make explicit how SCQF level 12 characteristics have been met.

- TCPP provides the theoretical underpinning, justification and rationale for the development of an advancement of practice through critical evaluation and synthesis of relevant material The module allows the candidate to identify personal and professional learning needs in relation to the advancement of practice, and to construct an evidence based strategy and portfolio to demonstrate these outcomes
- TCCP will therefore be the theoretical underpinning, justification and rationale for the design and development of an advancement of practice, whilst DEPP will seek to effectively implement and critically evaluate this advancement of professional practice.
- SCQF level 12 characteristic 4 Communication, ICT and Numeracy skills should be demonstrated in every aspect of this module's work and the submission for assessment

The aim of the linked Professional Practice modules (Theory and Practice / Development and Evaluation) is to enable the candidate to critically explore, justify, debate, present and evaluate an area of advancement of their own practice

Date 02/03/2016

Doctoral Research Module

| | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|-------------------------------|----------------|---|---|---|
| Title | Doctorate Research | | | Code XD011 | | | |
| SHE Level | Doctoral | Semester & Mode of Study | Semester 1 & 2 F/T and P/T | Doctoral | | | |
| SCQF Level | 12 | | | 60 | | | |
| Module contributors | | Doctoral qualified supervisors with methodological expertise. | | | | | |
| Co-requisites | | Theory and Context of professional practice, Development and Evaluation of professional practice | | | | | |
| Prohibited combinations | | nil | | | | | |
| Aims: The module aims to: Facilitate the development of a robust feasible, research proposal to address a specific research topic. This research proposal is then implemented through undertaking the thesis. | | | | | | | |
| Learning Outcomes | | | Assessed in this module? | A ⁸ | B | C | D |
| On successful completion of the module the candidate will be able to: | | | | | | | |
| L1 | Justify the rationale for the research through critical analysis and synthesis of relevant evidence sources, drawing on previous work undertaken in the programme. SCQH Level 12 characteristics: 1,3,5 | | Yes | x | x | | |
| L2 | Offer cogent argument for the proposed research aims, outcomes and question. SCQH Level 12 characteristics: 1,2,4 | | Yes | x | x | | |
| L3 | Design an innovative, imaginative and rigorous research methodology appropriate to the topic. SCQH Level 12 characteristics: 1, 2,3 | | Yes | x | x | | x |
| L4 | Explore potential limitations for the study. SCQH Level 12 characteristics: 3,5 | | Yes | x | x | | |
| L5 | Delineate a proposed timescale for the research, including reference to ethical approval requirements. SCQH Level 12 characteristics: 1,2,4,5 | | Yes | x | x | | |
| L6 | Communicate and contribute to the knowledge of colleagues through dissemination and critical discussion of ideas SCQH Level 12 characteristics: 4,5 | | Formative | x | x | x | x |

⁸ A – Knowledge and Understanding B – Intellectual Skills C – Practical Skills D – Transferable Skills

Learning Experiences

Candidates are offered the opportunity to attend the study weeks and participate in workshops relevant to doctoral studies. Candidates will be facilitated to develop and explore theoretical and philosophical aspects of research. Opportunities for presentation of personal research work, and presentation at the Doctoral candidate conference are given

Relevant seminar from methodological experts (10 hours)

Candidate led research seminars (18 hours)

External and internal research seminars opportunities

Supervision (10 hours)

Independent learning (562 hours)

Assessment Pattern

Presentation and defence of research proposal to peers (assessed summatively) with feedback based criteria for probationary assessments 20%

Normally you should write a full research proposal, 6000 words in length, describing and justifying the research project. This proposal must include:

- The topic – why is it important?
- the main research question
- specific aims
- a critical review of relevant literature
- description of and justification for the general methodology
- discussion of possible limitations
- References.

(80%)

Can this Module be Anonymously marked?

The proposal -No

The presentation - No

Content delivered through the study weeks:

Philosophical and theoretical frameworks

Ethical aspects of research

Creative and innovative data collection

Data analysis methodologies

Technological support for research.

Main Texts

Candidates are expected to access resource based information, literature and texts through the LRC.

Books, journal and web-based articles are referenced through workshops and to those specific topics chosen by the candidate in consultation with their supervisory team.

Indicative texts:

CRESWELL, J.W, 2014 *Research Design: qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches* Los Angeles Sage

CURTIS, E. 2013 *Quantitative health research – issues and methods* Maidenhead McGraw- Hill

HAMMOND, M., AND WELLINGTON, J., 2013 *Research methods- the key concepts* New York Routledge

LAPAN, S., QUARTAROLI, M.T.,AND REIMER, F., 2012 *Qualitative Research – An Introduction To Methods And Designs* San Francisco Jossey-Bass

MAY, T. 2011 *Social research – issues methods and design* Maidenhead McGraw- Hill

QUINLAN, C. AND ZIGMUND, W. 2015 *Business research methods* Andover Centage Learning

YIN, R.K., 2014 *Case Study Research – Design And Methods* Los Angeles Sage

Date 02/03/2016

Research Thesis and Oral Examination

| Title | The Thesis | | | Code XD015 | | | |
|---|--|---|--------------------------|----------------|---|---|---|
| SHE Level | Doctoral | Semester & Mode of Study | 1 and 2 F/ T , P/T | Doctoral | | | |
| SCQF Level | 12 | | | 180 | | | |
| Module Contributors | | Doctoral qualified supervisors | | | | | |
| Pre-requisites | | A candidate must accrue 150 points at SCQF level 12 before commencing on their thesis. This must include 60 points for the core doctoral research module. | | | | | |
| Prohibited combinations | | None | | | | | |
| Aims The thesis aims to facilitate the candidate to consolidate doctoral skills through undertaking a sustained, coherent and robust piece of research of relevance to the professional context of the candidate. | | | | | | | |
| Learning Outcomes On successful completion of the thesis the candidate will be able to: | | | Assessed in this module? | A ⁹ | B | C | D |
| L1 | Articulate a cogent, critical analysis of relevant evidence based material to justify the research undertaken. SCQF Level 12 characteristics 1,2,4 | | Yes | √ | √ | | √ |
| L2 | Autonomously construct and conduct a research study of relevance to their professional context SCQF Level 12 characteristics 2,3,4,5 | | Yes | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| L3 | Draw inferences from the data that add to the body of knowledge for the professional context. SCQF Level 12 characteristics 3, 5 | | Yes | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| L4 | Defend the thesis during the viva voce examination, showing depth of understanding, skills of debate and clarity of argument. SCQF Level 12 characteristics 1,2,4,5 | | Yes | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| L5 | Disseminate knowledge from their research work to a variety of audiences through presentations and writing. SCQF Level 12 characteristics 2 4 5 | | | √ | √ | | √ |

Learning Experiences

The thesis is supported by supervision processes. Candidates can attend any workshops and seminars offered during the study weeks and are expected to seek out opportunities relevant to their own research development offered internally and externally.

The regulatory requirements for supervision are 1 formal meeting per month (full time) and 1 formal meeting per 8 weeks(Part-time)

Assessment Pattern

Summative

45,000 word thesis marked and judged by internal and external examiners through scrutiny and viva voice examination

⁹ A – Knowledge and Understanding B – Intellectual Skills C – Practical Skills D – Transferable Skills

Can this Module be Anonymously marked?

No

Content

- Supervision by team of experienced and research-active staff

Main Texts

Books and Journal articles will be specific to topics chosen by the candidate. General reading may refer to the following:

Indicative texts:

CRESWELL, J.W. 2014 *Research Design: qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches* Los Angeles Sage

CURTIS, E. 2013 *Quantitative health research – issues and methods* Maidenhead McGraw- Hill

HAMMOND, M., AND WELLINGTON, J., 2013 *Research methods- the key concepts* New York Routledge

LAPAN, S., QUARTAROLI, M.T.,AND REIMER, F., 2012 *Qualitative Research – An Introduction To Methods And Designs* San Francisco Jossey-Bass

MAY, T. 2011 *Social research – issues methods and design* Maidenhead McGraw- Hill

QUINLAN, C. AND ZIGMUND, W. 2015 *Business research methods* Andover Centage Learning

YIN, R.K., 2014 *Case Study Research – Design And Methods* Los Angeles Sage

Date 15/02/2016

Annual Progress Reports

It is the responsibility of the candidate and the Supervisory Chair to ensure timely submission of the Annual Progress Report directly to the Graduate School. These are usually required to be submitted by the end of September of each academic year, although all candidates and supervisors will be emailed with a specific deadline. The APR provides a confidential opportunity to summarise progress and achievements to date and to raise any issues of concern.

Following submission, the APRs are reviewed by the Head of Graduate School and the Doctoral Research Coordinators, who will subsequently be in contact with either candidates and/or supervisors to offer assistance with resolving any highlighted concerns regarding progress and/or supervision.

Submission of an annual progress report is a mandatory progression requirement for all candidates.

B3. Submission of thesis and oral examination process

Submitting your thesis

When you are ready to submit your thesis, please make sure you follow the guidance and instructions in the [Professional Doctorate Regulations](#).

Please read the instructions carefully in relation to: formatting (including max. word counts), binding and submission; Nomination of Examiners process and Examination Arrangements and Outcomes.

When completing the Doctoral Candidate Thesis Declaration form, you will be asked to confirm your requested post nominal qualifier, if any. You should discuss and agree with your supervision team which of the options best fits your thesis and programme of study. You should take into consideration which title would be the most useful for your future career. You do not need to select a post nominal and can opt for an unnamed Professional Doctorate instead. The options to select from are:

- Doctor of Business Administration (DBA)
- Doctor of Cultural Leadership (DCultural Leadership)
- Doctor of Cultural Practice (DCultural Practice)
- Doctor of Global Health and Development (DGlobalHealth)
- Doctor of Health Sciences (DHealthSci)
- Doctor of Health and Social Sciences (DHealthSocSci)
- Doctor of Person-centred Practice (DPcP)
- Doctor of Public Administration (DPA)
- Doctor of Rehabilitation Sciences (DRehabSci)
- Doctor of Speech, Language and Hearing (DSLH)
- Doctor of Social Sciences (DSocSci)

| Progression Point | Full-Time | Part-Time | Hyperlink to Forms / Guidance |
|-----------------------------|---|---|--|
| Submission of Thesis | 3 years from start date (4 years if continuation year used) | 6 years from start date (8 years if continuation year used) | Refer to Section 9 of the Prof Doc Regulations for guidance on examination regulations and Section 10 for guidance on formatting and binding of the thesis. The Doctoral Candidate Thesis Declaration Form must be completed and signed by all supervisors (advisors do not need to complete the form). This form must be submitted with the thesis. The Supervisory Chair should complete the Nomination of Examiners form (fully complete with examiners' CV information) and email it to the Graduate School 3 months in advance of |

| | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|--|
| | | | thesis submission. Note: nominations are considered as requests and will be subject to review by The Graduate School Board. |
| Payment of examination fee | Following submission of thesis | | All doctoral candidates must pay an examination fee. Please see the Registry webpages here for the most up to date fee. |
| Oral Examination (or viva) | After the submission of your thesis and candidate declaration form. | | There are no forms for candidates to complete during this part of the examination process. Candidates will receive the Examiners' Joint Report via email from the Graduate School. |

Organising your viva

Once you have submitted your thesis and declaration form, and your examiners have been approved, the Graduate School will organise your oral viva. The aim is to organise your viva approximately six weeks following thesis submission, as your examiners are entitled to at least four weeks to review your thesis. The Graduate School will communicate the date and schedule for your viva by email so please make sure you are checking communications regularly. Please also be aware that your examiners' availability may be limited due to other commitments, so you will need to be reasonably flexible in accommodating the proposed viva date/schedule. If there are any dates that you are definitely not available, please make sure you let the Graduate School know before we proceed with viva planning.

You are required to attend your viva in person, and this will take place at the QMU campus. Only in *very exceptional* circumstances will a viva be permitted to take place by video conference/Skype. You may wish to have a family member or friend come along and be on campus; this is acceptable. However, they are not permitted to come into the viva with you. One member of your supervisory team can be invited to attend your viva examination, unless you request otherwise. Please indicate your preference on the Nomination of Examiners' form. Your supervisor is there as an observer and does not have the right to participate in the viva examination but may contribute briefly if invited to do so by the examiners.

Preparing for your viva¹⁰

Your thesis and viva represent the culmination of your degree. Whilst the viva is an examination, and must be treated as such, we would encourage you also to approach it as an opportunity to demonstrate your subject expertise, research skills, and contribution to the wider body of knowledge. Remember that you are the expert on your subject, and your examiners, will genuinely be interested to engage in a constructive dialogue with you. Whilst they have a duty to explore any areas that might ultimately require attention before they can recommend the award of PhD, they will also want focus on some of the more original content and ideas emerging from your work. QMU supervisors have a duty to make sure your thesis is worthy for examination before it is

¹⁰ Advice and guidance courtesy of Stanistreet, M (1996) Preparing for Your Viva. University of Liverpool.

submitted, and they are required to indicate this on the declaration form that accompanies your submission. Assuming your supervisors have indicated that they are content for the thesis to come forward, you can be confident that it meets the criteria for examination.

Re-reading your thesis is the most obvious form of preparation. Try to anticipate questions, comments and constructive criticisms, and prepare how you might respond to these/justify your decisions. You will not be able to predict the actual questions asked by the examiners, but this approach will encourage you to think actively about your work. You should also refresh your memory of the relevant literature, especially more recent literature. There is no expectation for you to re-read all the papers you have referenced, but it can be useful to re-read some of the more recent key references especially if they have had a strong influence on guiding / supporting your research. Each year, the Graduate School offers a session during the Development weeks on preparing for your final viva. Attendance at this session each year of your registration will also help you prepare for the final viva by offering ongoing opportunities to reflect on the upcoming discussion with your examiners.

Practising for your viva will help. We would suggest that you arrange a mock viva with either your supervisors or a member of your independent assessment panel.

You must not have any contact with your examiners either directly or indirectly before or after your viva until such time as you have met the requirements for the award of PhD. This is to maintain complete confidentiality. If, for any reason, you very exceptionally feel that it might be helpful to make contact with an examiner for any reason, please liaise with the Graduate School Officer who will be able to contact the examiner, should there be a good reason to do so.

During your viva

The purpose of the final viva is to allow your examiners to determine your understanding of the subject matter of your thesis. They will want to gather evidence that you have an appreciation of its significance and have established expert knowledge in the field, as well as an awareness of the breadth of the subject area.

The examiners will expect you to:

- show a critical analysis of your own work and of that of others
- appreciate the limitations of the methods employed and the results or findings you (and maybe others) acquired
- understand how the broad conclusions of your thesis support, add to or conflict with previous work
- know the major concepts and recent developments in your subject
- discuss the outcomes of your research and impact plans

There is no structured agenda for the conduct of the viva examination. Some examiners prefer to work through the thesis in the order in which it is written. Other examiners prefer to discuss topics. Very few examiners will undertake a page by page critique.

You are not expected to know your thesis by heart, but to refer to the appropriate page when the examiners wish to discuss a specific point. You should bring a hard copy of your thesis with you to the viva examination with important pages highlighted so you can easily refer to important sections.

Be prepared to justify and defend your research questions, aims, hypotheses, methods, ideas, results, findings and conclusions. You can expect to be challenged at several points in the viva about some of your ideas; the theoretical and practical aspects of the thesis and research. It is expected that you can draw on a range of techniques and evidence to defend and situate your research in the field or wider community. If the examiners do pick up on some genuine limitations with your research, it is best to concede the point gracefully as an area for future research.

Your supervisor, if present, usually makes notes of the questions you are asked and observes your defence.

Once the viva has concluded, you and your supervisor (if present) will leave the room and the examiners will discuss and agree the outcome of the examination. Occasionally, some examiners will give you an indication of the outcome of their preliminary examination of the thesis at the beginning of the viva as a way of signposting you to the viva.

If this is your first examination, the examiners have five options to choose from (as detailed in Professional Doctorate Regulation 9.5.9):

- a) the candidate be awarded a pass;
- b) the candidate be awarded a pass subject to minor amendments, to be completed within two months of the Examiners' report being sent to the candidate;
- c) the candidate be awarded a pass subject to major amendments, to be completed within six months of the Examiners' report being sent to the candidate;
- d) the candidate to be permitted to resubmit a substantially amended version of the thesis for re-examination, within twelve months of the Examiners' report being sent to the candidate. A second oral examination is obligatory, except where the Examiners specify in their report that this will not be necessary.

Post viva

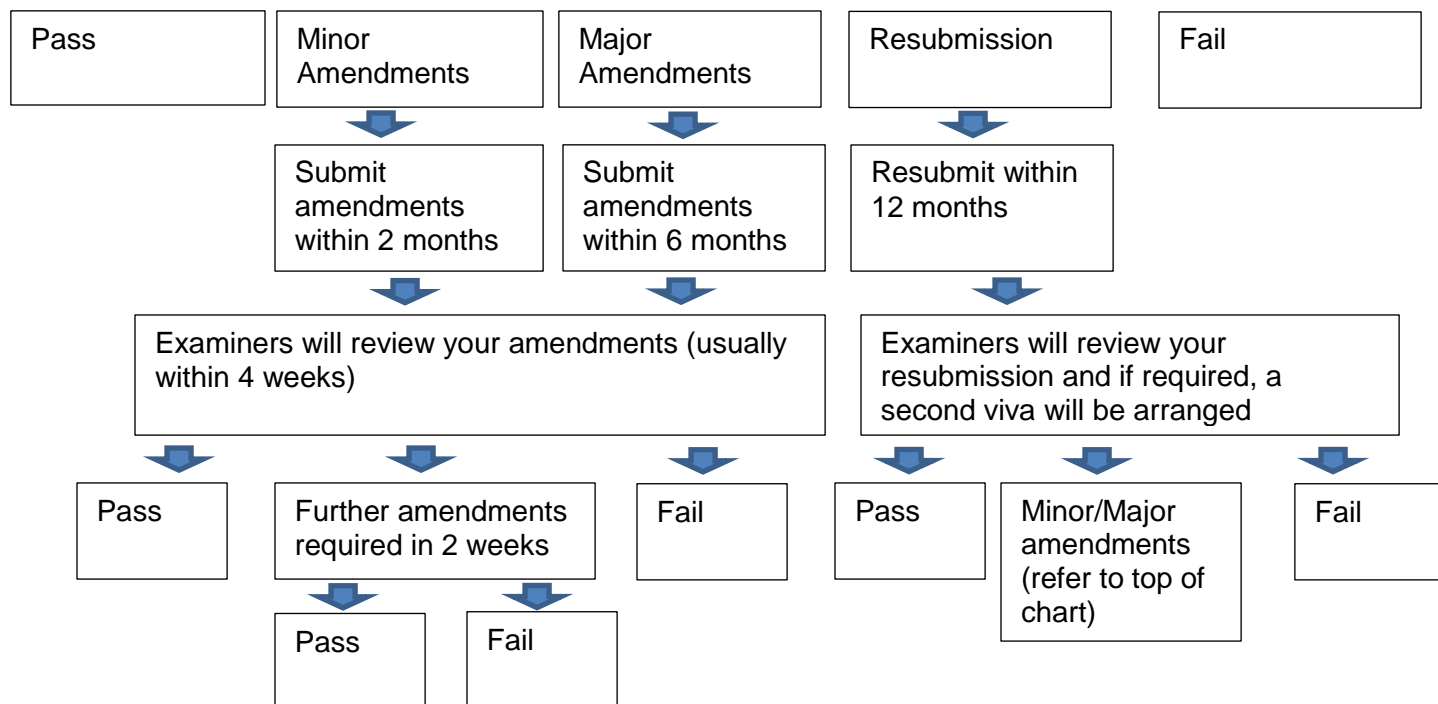
Once the examiners have agreed the examination outcome, you and your supervisor (if you have a member of your team in attendance) will be invited back into the room to be informed of their decision and an explanation given. In most instances, candidates are awarded the degree subject to amendments being completed, and these should be explained to you.

The examiners now prepare a *Joint Report of the Examiners* and submit it to the Graduate School within seven days of the viva. Once approved by the Graduate School Academic Board, the report will be sent to you (cc'd to your supervisors) by email to your University email address.

The Joint Report formally documents the examination outcome, details the list of amendments/corrections (if applicable) that you are required to make in order to be awarded the degree. It confirms the name of the person designated to check your corrections. A final deadline for submission of amendments will also be given.

Viva outcomes – the next steps

Overview:



a) Pass

Congratulations! The Graduate School will confirm that you have successfully passed all the modular elements of your programme and if you have, your examination paperwork will be processed through the relevant committees so that you may graduate. You may be given this award and still asked to make typographical and presentational corrections to your thesis.

b) Minor amendments or c) major amendments

These are by far the most common examination outcomes awarded to candidates. If the examiners recommend one of these outcomes, the Joint Report will detail the specific amendments that you must attend to in order to satisfy the examiners and be awarded the degree.

Once you have completed all amendments, you should submit the amended thesis to the Graduate School (graduateschool@gmu.ac.uk) – **do not send directly to your examiner(s)**.

It is also usual to submit a separate document that lists the amendments in a table and provides your comments on how you have attended to them. If you are in disagreement with the requested change, provide a narrative, explaining and justifying your decision¹¹. It is helpful to provide thesis page numbers where the examiners may find evidence of any changes. Providing this document can greatly help speed up the review process.

¹¹Please note that in this instance, you knowingly fail to make a required amendment at your own risk.

The Graduate School will liaise with the examiner(s) and request that they review your amended thesis within four weeks of receipt. If they are satisfied the amendments have been completed in full and to their satisfaction; they will make a *recommendation of award* and you will receive an outcome of:

a) Pass Congratulations!

If the examiner(s) are not satisfied the amendments have been satisfactorily completed, you will be informed by the Graduate School and given the opportunity to make the required amendments within a period of two weeks. If after this, your thesis does not incorporate the required amendments, the examiner(s) must decide if the amendments that have been partially completed still deliver a thesis that is worthy of a Prof Doc. At this stage the examiners may make one of the following recommendations:

a) Pass Congratulations!

b) Fail

If you are awarded a pass, the recommendation proceeds through the University committees as described below. If you fail, you will be advised by the Graduate School and advice and guidance given for your individual situation.

d) resubmission and re-examination

In the event that your examiners ask you to resubmit your thesis, you will be permitted 12 months in which to attend to the required amendments and resubmit your thesis for formal examination once again. In this instance, the process of re-examination follows the pattern of a first examination. You will normally be required to attend another oral examination with the same examiners¹². The outcomes of the second examination are restricted to a) Pass, b) minor amendments or c) fail. Note that a thesis may be resubmitted for formal examination only once and no candidate may be examined more than twice for a given degree.

e) Fail

This outcome is very rare for any of our doctoral degrees. As explained earlier in this Handbook, candidates generally only submit their thesis once their supervisors have confirmed that they consider the thesis to be worthy of consideration for the award of Prof Doc. Should examiners have serious concerns about a submitted thesis, we would expect them to alert the Graduate School at the earliest opportunity.

What happens once a recommendation of award has been made?

Your recommendation of award will be put to the following committees in this order:

- a) The Graduate School Academic Board (GSAB)
- b) The Research Strategy Committee (RSC); and
- c) Senate

¹² Should any of the original Examiners be unavailable, a revised examination team must be approved by the Graduate School Academic Board.

The final authority of awarding you your degree rests with the Senate **only**. Once Senate has approved your award you will receive a *Letter of Award* from the Graduate School with a request to submit a copy of your final thesis and a signed copy of the Library Authorisation Form. Once you have done this, you will be eligible to graduate!

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Governance

Appendix 2 – Frequently asked questions

Appendix 3 – Training Needs Analysis Template

Appendix 4 – Supervisory meeting log template

Appendix 1 – Governance

Graduate School Academic Board

Many of the processes and stages of the doctoral candidate journey are considered and approved via the University's Committee structure. The main Committee with responsibility for progressing doctoral candidate business is the Graduate School Academic Board (GSAB).

The membership and remit of the GSAB is provided on the following pages. The Board is convened by the Head of the Graduate School, and the Graduate School Officer is Secretary to the Board.

As you will see from the remit, all major decisions affecting your progress will be processed through the Board, in many cases following approval by a virtual panel (subset of the Board). Standard items are sent out on a weekly basis for consideration and, where appropriate, approval. All QMU Committee dates are published [here](#).

Decisions taken by the Board will be communicated to you and your supervisors as soon as possible. The Graduate School Officer will write to you with the agreed outcome and any follow up action required on your part. We aim to do this within two working days of receipt from all reviewers, but occasionally we might need a little longer. In some cases, decisions about candidate progress are taken by Convener's Action. This typically happens when a decision is needed within a short time frame. For example, a candidate may need to seek an urgent suspension of studies on medical grounds. In such cases, it is best to contact the Graduate School Officer who can advise on the process and timescale.

Remit

The purpose of the Graduate School Academic Board is to provide an institution level forum for consistent decision making on matters relating to the doctoral candidate journey. The Board may make recommendations for enhancement of the quality framework governing the doctoral candidate journey, based on evaluation of reports and individual candidate cases.

Terms of reference

The Graduate School Academic Board has delegated authority from the Research Strategy Committee as set out below:

PhD and Professional Doctorate candidates

- To receive summary information on applications from the Doctoral Research Coordinators.
- To approve the appointment of supervisory teams for new candidates and any subsequent changes to the composition of the supervisory team.
- To approve nominations of assessment panels and marking teams.
- To approve applications for prior credit.
- To approve requests to suspend studies.
- To approve examination arrangements, including any exceptional arrangements, for example permission to hold the viva at a location other than QMU and permission to exceed the word limit.
- To approve requests to submit early and requests to extend the submission deadline, either for the viva or amendments thereafter.
- To consider examiners' reports and make recommendations for award to Senate through the Research Strategy Committee.
- To consider recommendations for de-registration and make recommendations to the Research Strategy Committee.
- To approve requests for change from part-time to full-time study, or vice versa.
- To approve requests for change from campus based to non-resident status, or vice versa.
- To respond to operational issues and make recommendations regarding the provision of appropriate resources and facilities.

PhD candidates

- To approve Outline Proposals including confirmation that adequate resources are in place.
- To approve assessment panel recommendations on probationary viva outcomes.
- To approve assessment panel recommendations on Assessed Seminar outcomes.
- To approve requests for extension to the submission deadline for Outline Proposals, probationary viva and Assessed Seminars.

Professional Doctorate Candidates

- To agree the assessment schedule.
- To approve changes to modules.
- To monitor quality and approve the annual programme report, including module evaluations.

Reports and reporting lines

- Consider an annual summary of all Doctoral candidate activity, monitoring provision against internal and external indicators in line with the UK QAA Quality Code.
- Review a summary of candidate and supervisor progress reports and make recommendations for addressing issues of concern, factors to aid candidate progress or issues pertaining to supervisor/candidate relationships.
- Remit particular issues for discussion and/or review by standing Committees of Senate or of Court as appropriate.
- Report, through the Doctoral Research Coordinators, to the Health Sciences and Arts, Social Sciences and Management School Academic Boards.
- Act and advise on issues remitted to it by other Committees of Senate and Court, and
- Submit minutes of its face to face meetings, and other key papers, including all award and de-registration recommendations to the Research Strategy Committee.

Membership

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Convener | Head of Graduate School |
| Ex Officio | Doctoral Research Coordinators Doctoral Candidates' Association Co-Chairs |
| Nominated | Six nominated research active staff with experience of doctoral supervision and/or examination from each School/Institute |
| Secretary | Graduate School Officer |

Method of Working

Virtual: Business is processed virtually on a weekly basis. Summary reports of all decisions are presented to the full membership at the face-to-face meetings.

Face-to-face: The Graduate School Academic Board meets at least four times a year. Additional meetings may exceptionally be called at the discretion of the Convener.

Research Strategy Committee

The Graduate School Academic Board reports into the Research Strategy Committee (RSC). The RSC has a remit to provide strategic leadership on all matters associated with the University's research knowledge exchange activities. It develops and reviews policies, strategies, and procedures that promote best practice in research and doctorate registration, education, supervision and examination. It also ensures that research conducted in the University complies

with appropriate ethical standards. The GSAB Convener is a member of RSC and the minutes of GSAB meetings are presented, in full, to RSC. RSC considers full paperwork related to recommendations for the award of PhD or Professional Doctorate, as well as full paperwork for recommended de-registrations. Paperwork for other GSAB decisions is available to RSC on request.

Doctoral candidates can access the QMU Staff Intranet. You will find the RSC membership and remit [here](#), as well as agendas, minutes and papers for business that is not confidential (unreserved business).

GSAB papers relating to individual candidates are considered under a separate part of the agenda (reserved business). These papers are only available to a restricted audience, and candidate members on RSC leave the meeting when the papers are considered.

Senate

The Research Strategy Committee reports into the University Senate. Senate has delegated authority from the University Court to maintain the academic standards of the University. No candidate may receive an award of the University (or be eligible to graduate), without this first having been approved by the Senate.

In line with this, Senate receives, in full, the joint reports of examiners for PhD and Professional Doctorate viva examinations, as well as confirmation that the examiners are satisfied any required corrections have been addressed to their satisfaction. Senate also approves the recommendations of all Boards of Examiners, including the Board of Examiners for the Professional Doctorate and READ. Senate agendas, minutes and papers are available [here](#).

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Appendix 2 - Frequently asked questions

If you would like to suggest additional questions to be included within this section, please email: graduateschool@qmu.ac.uk

Period of registration

Q. What is the prescribed period of study?

A. Your prescribed period of study is either three years (full-time) or six years (part-time). Ideally, all candidates should be aiming to submit their thesis within this time frame.

Q. What is the continuation period and what is it used for?

A. The continuation period is a year beyond the usual three year period for full-time study. Formally this is your 4th year of study and thesis submission and examination processes should be completed by the end of your maximum period of registration. For part-time candidates, the continuation year is a maximum of 24 months long.

Suspensions and extensions

Q. I would like to apply for a suspension or extension to my period of studies. How do I go about this?

A. You should discuss this with your supervisors in the first instance to find out whether they support your request. They can help you liaise with the Graduate School Officer to submit an application, if appropriate. If you want to submit an application for consideration by the GSAB, please see Section A7 of this document for links to the appropriate forms.

Q. Are suspension and extension requests always accepted / approved?

A. No – this depends on the reason for the suspension and, in some cases, evidence that a suspension is for a valid reason. For example, your GP might provide you with a letter of support. The Graduate School Academic Board will consider each application on its own merits before coming to a decision. You will be notified of the GSAB's decision by email from the Graduate School.

Q. Can I apply for a retrospective suspension?

A. Retrospective suspensions should not normally be submitted. If there are **very** exceptional circumstances supported by evidence that explains why a candidate was unable to proactively apply for a suspension at the time it was required, then a request may be considered by the GSAB.

Changing mode of study

Q. I am considering changing from full-time to part-time or vice versa. How do I arrange that?

A. You should discuss this with your supervisors to find out whether they support the suggested change. If your supervisors are supportive of the change, you will need to complete a "change in mode of study form". Please see Section A7 of this document for links to the appropriate forms.

Email and Hub access

Q. Why can't I get into my University emails?

- A.** Make sure that you have matriculated and that your email has been set up. You will also need to make sure you regularly update your password to maintain your access. If you are still experiencing difficulties, dial 0 and ask to speak to ASSIST or email them at assist@qmu.ac.uk. They will request that IT Services investigates and resolves your issues.

Q. Why haven't I been added to the doctoral candidate Hub area?

- A.** If you have matriculated (this needs to be done at the start of every new academic year) then check that you are logging into the hub using your candidate account. Doctoral candidates have access to a candidate Hub area as well as a staff hub area. If you still can't access it, please email GraduateSchool@qmu.ac.uk

Training and resources

Q. The training I need is not listed, who do I contact to ask?

- A.** Please email GraduateSchool@qmu.ac.uk with your suggestion for future training. Please also discuss this with your supervisors who may be able to point you to external opportunities. Please note that not all requests for specific training can be provided. This will depend on available resources and wider demand for the topic.

Q. The book I want isn't in the library. How do I get it?

- A.** The Library offers an interlibrary loan service. Alternatively, you can contact your Liaison Librarian for more detailed help.

Tuition Fees and Bursary Payments

Q. I have a query about my tuition fees – who should I ask?

- A.** Registry (registry@qmu.ac.uk) deal with all the administrative aspects of issuing invoices for University fees relating to your research degree. Please contact them in the first instance if you have a query about your fees or examination charges.

Q. I have a query about the payment of my bursary money – who should I ask?

- A.** The Finance department administer bursary payments to candidates. Please contact them in the first instance if you have a query or issue about your maintenance payments Email Finance@qmu.ac.uk or visit them in person at their Reception Desk near Student Services on level 1 in the main academic building.

Miscellaneous

Q. I have a query about my Student Visa – who should I ask?

- A.** The International Office (international@qmu.ac.uk) deal with all the administrative and technical aspects of issuing international candidates with their Student Visas. Please contact them in the first instance if you have a query about your visa status or require help. They also have drop in sessions on Mondays and Thursdays.

Q. I want to book a work room – how do I do that?

- A.** You are entitled to book, on occasion, a staff work room (available with computers in some instances) and these can be booked using QMU's Building Online Bookings (BoB) system - <http://intranet.qmu.ac.uk/sites/is2/BookSys/default.aspx>

Appendix 3 – Training Needs Analysis Tool

Vitae Researcher Development Framework

The Researcher Development Framework has been created from empirical data collected through interviewing researchers to identify the characteristics demonstrated by excellent researchers. It is structured in four domains, which encompass what researchers need to know to do research, how to be effective in their approach to research when working with others and in contributing to the wider environment.

Within each of the domains are three sub-domains and associated descriptors categorised in up to five phases. The phases seek to capture the knowledge, behaviours and attitudes of a typically “good” researcher at different stages of development for each descriptor.

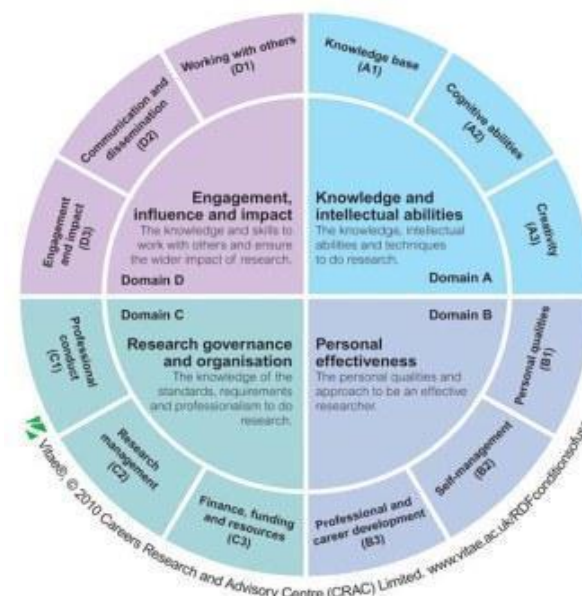
TRAINING NEEDS ANALYSIS & LEARNING PLAN FOR PGR SKILLS TRAINING

PGR Candidate’s name:

Principal Supervisor’s name:

AcademicSchool:

Start date:



| Skills areas | Vitae characteristic | Proposal(s) for attaining skill orevidence of attaining skill | Confidence 1-4 ¹³ | When |
|---|----------------------|--|---------------------------------|------|
| (A) Research Skills and Techniques - to be able to demonstrate: | | | | |
| 1. the ability to recognise and validate problems | A2 | | | |
| 2. original, independent and critical thinking, and the ability to develop theoretical concepts | A2 | | | |
| 3. a knowledge of recent advances within my field and in related areas | A1 | | | |
| 4. an understanding of relevant research methodologies and techniques and their | A1 | | | |

¹³ 1=not at all confident, 4= very confident

| | | | | |
|---|-------|--|--|--|
| appropriate application within my research field | | | | |
| 5. the ability to critically analyse and evaluate my findings and those of others | A2 | | | |
| 6. an ability to summarise, document, report and reflect on progress | A2 | | | |
| (B) Research Environment – to be able to: | | | | |
| 1. show a broad understanding of the context, at the national and international level, in which research takes place | A1/C2 | | | |
| 2. demonstrate awareness of issues relating to the rights of other researchers, of research subjects, and of others who may be affected by the research, e.g. confidentiality, ethical issues, attribution, copyright, malpractice, ownership of data and the requirements of the Data Protection Act | A1/C1 | | | |
| 3. demonstrate appreciation of standards of good research practice in their institution and/or discipline | C1 | | | |
| 4. understand relevant health and safety issues and demonstrate responsible working practices | C1/C2 | | | |
| 5. understand the processes for funding and evaluation of research | C3 | | | |
| 6. justify the principles and experimental techniques used in my own research | C2 | | | |
| 7. understand the process of academic or commercial exploitation of research results | C3 | | | |
| (C) Research Management – to be able to: | | | | |
| 1. apply effective project management through the setting of research goals, intermediate milestones and prioritisation of activities | B2/C2 | | | |

| | | | | |
|---|-------|---|--|--|
| 2. design and execute systems for the acquisition and collation of information through the effective use of appropriate resources and equipment | A3/C3 | . | | |
| 3. identify and access appropriate bibliographical resources, archives, and other sources of relevant information | C3 | | | |
| 4. use information technology appropriately for database management, recording and presenting information | C2/A3 | | | |
| (D) Personal Effectiveness – to be able to: | | | | |
| 1. demonstrate a willingness and ability to learn and acquire knowledge | B1 | | | |
| 2. be creative, innovative and original in my approach to research | A3 | | | |
| 3. demonstrate flexibility and open-mindedness | B1 | | | |
| 4. demonstrate self-awareness and the ability to identify own training needs | B2 | | | |
| 5. demonstrate self-discipline, motivation, and thoroughness | B2 | | | |
| 6. recognise boundaries and draw upon/use sources of support as appropriate | B2 | | | |
| 7. show initiative, work independently and be self-reliant | B2 | | | |
| (E) Communication Skills – to be able to: | | | | |
| 1. write clearly and in a style appropriate to purpose, e.g. progress reports, published documents, thesis | D2 | | | |
| 2. construct coherent arguments and articulate ideas clearly to a range of audiences, formally and informally through a variety of techniques | D2 | | | |

| | | | | |
|---|-------|--|--|--|
| 3. constructively defend research outcomes at seminars and viva examination | D2 | | | |
| 4. contribute to promoting the public understanding of my research field | D3 | | | |
| 5. effectively support the learning of others when involved in teaching, mentoring or demonstrating activities | D1 | | | |
| (F) Networking and Team working - to be able to: | | | | |
| 1. develop and maintain co-operative networks and working relationships with supervisors, colleagues and peers, within the institution and the wider research community | B3/D1 | | | |
| 2. understand my behaviours and impact on others when working in and contributing to the success of formal and informal teams | D1 | | | |
| 3. listen, give and receive feedback and respond perceptively to others | D1/C1 | | | |
| (G) Career Management - to be able to: | | | | |
| 1. appreciate the need for and show commitment to continued professional development | B3 | | | |
| 2. take ownership for and manage my career progression, set realistic and achievable career goals, and identify and develop ways to improve employability | B3 | | | |
| 3. demonstrate an insight into the transferable nature of research skills to other work environments and the range of career opportunities within and outside academia | B3/D3 | | | |
| 4. present my skills, personal attributes and | C1/B2 | | | |

| | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|
| experiences through effective CVs, applications and interviews | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|

Planning document for meeting Candidate's Needs

Some examples might be Graduate School workshop, webinar, watching relevant DVD, extended reading programme.

| Course/seminar/module/activity to be completed/attended | Description of course/seminar/module/activity to be completed/attended | Date |
|--|---|-------------|
| | | |
| | | |
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Appendix 4 - Doctorate Supervision Record Templates

These templates are provided as options. You are welcome to adapt these to best fit your needs or to create a completely new one. We recommend you discuss the template to use with your supervision team as they may request for specific information to be recorded.

| | |
|--|--|
| 1. Present: | |
| 2. Date and time of meeting: | |
| 3. Research Questions and Aims: | |
| 4. Main topics discussed: | |
| 5. Standing items for discussion when relevant: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Access to resources• Networking• Time management• Writing• READ planning• Learning Contract/Development Plan• Other (add as required) | |
| 4. Progress towards meeting annual learning plan objectives | |
| 5. Any other issues | |
| 6. Agreed Actions (including timeframe for each): | |
| 7. Date and time of next meeting: | |

We are agreed that this represents an accurate account of our meeting.

Student name, signature and date

Supervisor(s) name, signature and date

| | |
|------------------------------------|--------------|
| Present: | Date: |
| Apologies: | |
| Research Question and Aims: | |

| | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------|----------------|
| Issues discussed: | Ongoing issues: | |
| Major Decisions Made: | | |
| Action agreed: | Who | By When |
| | | |

| | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|--|-------------|--|--------------|--|
| Date of next meeting | | Time | | Venue | |
| Reflections from meeting: | | | | | |

| | |
|--|--|
| We are agreed that this represents an accurate account of our meeting. | |
| Candidate signature and date: | |
| Supervisor 1 signature and date: | |
| Supervisor 2 signature and date: | |

Advice and guidance

The candidate is responsible for scheduling the monthly (or bi-monthly for part-time candidates) formal supervision meetings with their supervisors. All supervisors are expected to attend as many formal meetings as possible.

It is recommended that these formal meetings are scheduled in to all supervisors' diaries well in advance.

This form (or your own variation) should be completed by the candidate within one day of each meeting with their supervisor(s). The candidate will then email the form to all their supervisors – this helps keep supervisors up to date with progress if they were unable to attend.

The supervisor(s) will print the form for discussion and signature at the beginning of the next meeting.

The signed forms will be held as a formal record by the Supervisory Chair.