



# **GUIDELINES FOR RESEARCH STUDENTS**

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# CONTENTS

	Abbreviations/definitions	3
.	Introduction	4
1	Your Responsibilities	4
2	The University's Responsibilities towards you	5
3	You and your Supervisors	7
4	Training	8
5	Facilities	10
6	Paid Employment	10
7	Matriculation	13
8	The Progress of the Project	13
8.2	Registration	14
8.3	Ethical Approval	14
8.4	Confirmation/Progression to Doctoral Level (Transfer)	14
8.5	Progress Monitoring	14
9	Dealing with Difficulties	16
9.2	Difficulties with your Supervisors	16
9.3	Suspending Registration	17
9.4	Research Misconduct/Plagiarism	17
10	Submission of Thesis	18
11	The Examination Process	18
12	Student Appeals	20

## **Appendices**

	Appendix 1 The Registration Process	21
	Appendix 2 The Progression to Doctoral Level Process	24
	Appendix 3 The Examination Process	26
	Appendix 4 Responsibilities of the Supervisor	28
	Appendix 5 QAA Code of Practice for PG Research Students	29
	Appendix 6 Researcher Development Framework	30
	Appendix 7 Scottish Credit Quality Framework Descriptors	31
	Appendix 8 List of the University's Higher Degree Forms	33
	Appendix 9 Code of Practice	34

## ABBREVIATIONS/DEFINITIONS

**Research Student** – The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education's (QAA) definition of a research student (as well as those students studying for the degrees of MPhil and PhD) also includes The New Route PhD, PhD awarded on the basis of published work and all forms of taught and professional doctorates.

The GCU Graduate School – (GS) was created in 2010 formed and takes on the role of the Swhich was formed in 2004 to enhance the higher degree student experience. One of its main roles is the provision of generic research and personal and transferable skills training for students and continuous professional development for staff involved in higher degree student supervision.

**Graduate School Board (GSB)** – oversees the work of the GS and is chaired by the Director of the Graduate School and deals with issues related to higher degree students. Membership as HDC (below) plus higher degree student representation.

**Higher Degrees Committee (HDC)** has a quality assurance and policy making role for all higher degrees and is responsible for the admission, registration, transfer, supervision, monitoring, suspension and examination of students undertaking the University's degrees of Master of Philosophy and Doctor of Philosophy, Prof.D. and PhD by previous Publication. HDC meets at least 6 times per academic session and comprises 20 members who have experience in the supervision and examination of higher degrees and from 2005 HDC will also have 3 research student representatives.

**Dean of School** - has overall responsibility for staff and students in their School. Deans delegate day to day responsibility for higher degree student matters to the Associate Dean of Research and Knowledge Transfer.

**Associate Dean of Research (ADR)** - designated person in each School with responsibility for higher degrees/higher degree students. Normally this person would chair the School Research Committee.

**School Research Committee (SRC)** – deals with all issues relating to research and knowledge transfer within the School. The Committee also reviews higher degree student applications prior to sending them to HDC, for example, research proposal registration and transfer applications.

**Supervisory team** - will consist of a minimum of two supervisors and a maximum of three. The roles of the individual supervisors will vary from team to team but the **Director of Studies** will be the main supervisor. He/she will be an expert in the subject area of the study, and will be responsible for arranging supervisory meetings and training for the student. The second supervisor may have expertise in another facet of the study or may have extensive supervisory experience. If the team contains an inexperienced supervisor then the team must have three supervisors one of whom shall act as mentor to the inexperienced supervisor. The third supervisor/mentor need not be from the same discipline but must be an experienced supervisor.

## **INTRODUCTION**

These guidelines are intended to provide general guidance to research students and should be read in conjunction with the regulations for the award of the University's degrees Master of Philosophy, Doctor of Philosophy, Professional Masters and Professional Doctorate. The regulations take precedence over these guidelines and in the event of any inconsistencies the regulations rather than the guidelines will apply. You should also be aware, however:

- (a) that differences in detail exist between different disciplines. Your School and/or Division may have its own handbook to supplement this document, covering any special arrangements or expectations that apply in your subject. Your Director of Studies will be able to tell you if this is the case; and
- (b) that, the guidelines should also be read in conjunction with the Research Student Logbook.

## **1. YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES**

The general responsibilities common to all research students include the following:

- (a) complying with the regulations for the award of the University's degrees of Master of Philosophy, Doctor of Philosophy and Prof.D. and with any additional School/Division procedures;
- (b) complying with other relevant University regulations, including the disciplinary regulations
- (c) meeting the various general deadlines set out in the regulations for the award of the University's degrees of Master of Philosophy, Doctor of Philosophy and Prof.D, and any specific deadlines set by your Director of Studies;
- (d) discussing with your supervisors the type of advice and guidance that you find most helpful;
- (e) agreeing a schedule of meetings (students studying outwith the University should agree other forms of contact e.g. e-mail) with your Director of Studies and keeping to it;
- (f) keeping in regular contact with your Director of Studies and keeping him or her informed of the development of your project;
- (g) taking the initiative in raising problems or difficulties, however elementary they may seem. It is in your own interests to do this as quickly as possible, so that problems can be resolved before they start to affect your research. In particular, if you have an urgent problem you should not wait for the next planned meeting to discuss it with your Director of Studies;
- (h) attending taught courses or classes as required by your supervisors;

- (i) submitting written work as required by your Director of Studies, in good time to allow for comments and discussion before proceeding to the next stage;
- (j) keeping your Director of Studies informed about the extent of any paid employment commitments you may have – N.B full time students are limited to a maximum of six hours work per week;
- (k) completing a annual report monitoring form each year;
- (l) complying with the health and safety legislation, with University and School safety regulations, and with any safety rules applying in any location where you are undertaking research;
- (m) complying with the Data Protection Act; and complying with the research ethics applying in your discipline.
- (n) undertake research, personal and transferable skills training as agreed with your supervisors;
- (o) keep your student Log book up to date;
- (p) complying with the University's Equality and Diversity Policy and all Scottish Legislation on Equality;
- (q) complying with the Freedom of Information Act
- (r) complying with the laws on Intellectual Property Right.

Additional requirements may apply in your subject area, and you should check this with your Director of Studies at the outset.

## **2. THE UNIVERSITY'S RESPONSIBILITIES TOWARDS YOU**

The University undertakes to ensure the following:

- (a) that only candidates who meet the necessary high academic standards and who appear capable of completing the requirements for the degree are admitted;
- (b) that suitable supervisors are available;
- (c) that the necessary resources and facilities are available, and that the School can cover the costs associated with the project. In admitting a student, a School undertakes to provide the necessary supervision and resources, and will be held responsible for doing so;
- (d) that the proposed topic is suitable as the basis of a research degree/Prof.D and that it is capable of being completed within the time limits for the degree submission;
- (e) that one or more supervisors with appropriate knowledge of the student's field of study will be appointed;

- (f) that the supervisors meet the criteria for eligibility to supervise;
- (g) that a replacement supervisor will be appointed if the original supervisor leaves the University or is unable to continue with the supervision;
- (h) that all research students must access to a copy of the University's Guidelines for Research Students when they enrol:  
<http://www.gcu.ac.uk/graduateschool/postgraduatestudy/phdprogrammes/guidelinesandlogbooks/>
- (i) that research students are provided with information about the resources and facilities available to them
- (j) that research students are provided with adequate facilities, including:
  - For full-time students, a desk in a shared room
  - Access to computing facilities suitable for the research at the University
  - Use of a telephone for research purposes at the University
  - Library access at the University and electronically
  - Laboratory space as applicable and as agreed with your supervisor
- (k) that students receive appropriate training to equip them with the skills needed for the successful completion of the research. What constitutes 'appropriate' training will vary from student to student, and should be agreed between the student and the Director of Studies at the outset of the research.
- (l) that students acquire the skills set out in Researcher Development Framework, (Appendix 6).and carrying out an online PDP of current skills to inform development: <http://www.vitae.ac.uk/researchers/430901-383631/Vitae-Excel-RDF-Planner-Prototype-2010.html>
- (m) that students have the opportunity to attend an induction programme or otherwise acquire the necessary information as early as possible in the first year.
- (n) that supervisors comply with the requirements set out in the regulations and in the Guidelines for Supervisors: in particular, that they:-
  - Explain at the outset the kind of guidance and support to be provided;
  - supervise you in line with the QAA Code of Practice, see the QAA website for the full code: <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/public/COP/cop/contents.htm>.
  - Help the student draw up a research plan/learning goals contract, and monitor progress in relation to the plan;
  - Tell the student about the various University deadlines and procedures that must be complied with;
  - Meet the student on a regular basis as outlined in section 3.
  - Give the student regular feedback on progress, including constructive criticism on written work;
  - Raise any concerns about progress with the student at an early stage and – if the problem continues – with the Dean of School/ADR/HDC;

- Ensure that the student goes through the University's registration and transfer procedures at the appropriate time if progressing satisfactorily;
- (o) that all research students are included in the University-wide Annual Report Monitoring Exercise;
- (p) that Schools – through supervisors – continually monitor students' progress on an informal basis, so that problems can be addressed at the earliest possible stage
- (q) that suitable examiners are appointed for every student
- (r) that an oral examination is held
- (s) that students are provided with feedback after the examination
- (t) that appeals and complaints are dealt with under the appropriate procedure, and that they are dealt with fairly and as quickly as possible.

### **3. YOU AND YOUR SUPERVISORS**

#### **3.1 The role of the Director of Studies**

Your Director of Studies' role is essentially to give you advice, help and encouragement so that you receive a good training in research and produce a successful thesis/learning contract. The thesis/learning contract is, however, to be your own work, and you must accept the responsibility for its eventual success or failure.

#### **3.2 Establishing a relationship with your Supervisory team**

You will be told when you matriculate who will form your supervisory team. Your team will have a minimum of two and a maximum of three supervisors. In order to establish a good working relationship, you and your supervisors should agree at the outset how to proceed and what each of you expects from the other. Your Director of Studies, the main supervisor, will explain to you what kind of guidance you can expect to receive from him or her, and you in turn must ensure that you know exactly what each supervisor expects of you. If you are not sure about your respective responsibilities, you should ask your Director of Studies for clarification. Your Director of Studies will tell you at the outset what the respective responsibilities of each of the supervisors are. It is very important that you know which of them to contact about different aspects of your work.

#### **3.3 Meetings with your Director of Studies**

You and your Director of Studies must meet/communicate regularly, normally once a week for the first three months and then thereafter a minimum of monthly for the remainder of the years of study. If face to face meetings are impracticable, for instance if you are offshore-based or studying part time other forms of contact should be used – email or telephone. You are both responsible for ensuring that this happens.

### 3.4 Scheduling meetings

You should confirm the date of the next meeting/contact at the end of each supervisory session. Neither you nor your Director of Studies or other supervisor(s) should cancel scheduled meetings without good reason, and if a meeting is cancelled you should re-arrange it as quickly as possible.

### 3.5 Contacting your Director of Studies between meetings

You should be able to contact your Director of Studies for advice and assistance at other reasonable times outside your planned schedule. You must ensure that you know your Director of Studies' work telephone number and work e-mail address in case you need to get in touch. The onus is on you to contact your Director of Studies quickly if you run into difficulty, without waiting for the next planned meeting.

### 3.6 Attendance Monitoring and maintaining contact during periods of absence from the University

**All students must consult the policy and process for Attendance and Monitoring which is held on the Graduate School website:**

**[http://www.gcu.ac.uk/media/graduateschool/Graduate%20School%20Attendance%20Monitoring%20Reporting%20\(Feb13\).pdf](http://www.gcu.ac.uk/media/graduateschool/Graduate%20School%20Attendance%20Monitoring%20Reporting%20(Feb13).pdf)**

The expectation is that all your supervisors will, where possible, let you know in advance if they intend to be away from the University for any length of time. If necessary, the Dean of School/Associate Dean of Research may appoint a temporary replacement Director of Studies/supervisor, including if your supervisor is unexpectedly absent, due to illness, for example. Full time students based at the University may not work away from the University (e.g. on fieldwork) without their Director of Studies' agreement and the School Research Committee's permission. Full time students must report any unplanned absence or sick leave to their Director of Studies as soon as possible. Medical certificates should be supplied where appropriate. Full-time students who are in receipt of a studentship should be counselled about suspending their studentship depending upon the length of absence. Part time and Prof.D students should inform their Director of Studies of any periods of illness. Medical certificates may be required you if you apply for a suspension of registration due to ill health. (also see 6.4).

Reasonable efforts should be made to maintain contact – normally through telephone or e-mail – when either the student or the supervisor(s) is away from the University for an extended period, other than during periods of illness or holiday.

## **4. TRAINING**

### 4.1 Subject specific training

Schools should normally have specified, compulsory training courses for all their students. This will normally include an induction programme early in your first semester of research. You and your supervisors will agree your subject specific training as part of the skills audit at the first supervisory meeting. Some Schools also

offer specific subject-based support through Postgraduate Research Tutors, subject-based research committees and Heads of Division. **All research students must also attend the University's Research Student Induction as soon as possible after matriculation.**

#### 4.2 Key and generic skills training

Most students will require key and generic skills training in addition to subject/project specific skills. You should discuss your training needs with your supervisors at the outset, and agree on a training programme. You should consult your **Research Student Logbook** and the **Researcher Development Framework** (Appendix 6) and carryout an online PDP of current skills to inform development: <http://www.vitae.ac.uk/researchers/430901-383631/Vitae-Excel-RDF-Planner-Prototype-2010.html> prior to meeting your supervisor. You and your Director of Studies should keep your training needs under review, as you may find that you need further training as the research progresses. Your research student logbook will assist in reviewing your training requirements.

#### 4.3 Making the arrangements

Your Director of Studies will either make the necessary arrangements for you to attend the courses in your training programme or will tell you how to go about registering for the courses yourself. Part time/Prof.D students may be able to gain the necessary skills through staff development in the workplace. It is your responsibility to ensure that you attend the courses.

#### 4.4 Centrally-run courses

Research students can attend central courses organised through The Graduate School including staff development offered by HR and GCU Learn but you must agree this in advance with your Director of Studies.

#### 4.5 School seminars

You should try to attend any research seminars taking place in your School, as they will give you a wider perspective on your subject. You will, normally, be required to give a seminar on your own work at some stage: your Director of Studies will let you know about this in good time.

#### 4.6 Conferences

You should discuss relevant conferences with your Director of Studies. Depending on the source of funding for your research, you may be able to claim limited expenses from your funding body for conference attendance. If you are not funded by a research council you may be eligible for limited funding from your School.

#### 4.7 Monitoring

You are responsible for attending agreed training courses or otherwise gaining the agreed skills and your Director of Studies will check that you have attended or

otherwise gained the skills at supervisory/skills review meetings. Details of your training and skills gained should be recorded in your Research Student Logbook.

## **5. FACILITIES**

5.1 Your Director of Studies should tell you at the start of your research about the facilities that are available to you. These should include the following, which represents the minimum standard of provision:

- For full-time students, a desk in a shared room
- Access to computing facilities suitable for the research at the University
- Use of a telephone for research purposes at the University
- Library access at the University and electronically
- Laboratory space as agreed with your supervisor

## **6. PAID EMPLOYMENT**

### 6.1 Teaching and demonstrating

Students are expected to agree a personal development plan with their Director of Studies at the outset of their studies, which will be kept under review and revised on a regular basis. These plans should also be the subject of regular liaison with the Head of Division and Associate Dean of Research. Part of this package is normally expected to involve teaching, since this activity is important in maximising future employment opportunities. The University guidelines set out clear upper limits on how much teaching should be undertaken, and such duties should be accompanied by appropriate mentoring and training. As part of their planned development some students, however, may agree to undertake alternative duties, while others may agree with their supervisory team that other academic commitments, such as fieldwork or writing up, should take priority over the acquisition of teaching experience for a specified period.

Allocation of teaching hours should therefore be guided by the above flexibility and should be discussed and agreed by student, supervisory team and Head of Division as an appropriate part of the student's personal development needs.

You should ask your Director of Studies about any opportunities which exist for teaching and demonstrating. You will be required to undergo training before beginning such work and must attend an induction, run by GCU Learn, prior to starting teaching and then undertake work-based learning sessions. The University sets a limit of a maximum of six hours a week, including preparation and marking that a full time research student may do, in order not to damage the progress of the research. As of 1 October 2005 students who are awarded a University funded studentship are expected to contribute up to a maximum of 6 hours per week unpaid activity during term time. The activity would normally be teaching, demonstrating, lab work or administration. Similar work undertaken out with term time would be paid for in the normal way.

The normal model of contact time for students undertaking lectures or seminars is **1+1+1**, that is, 1 hour face to face contact plus 1 hour for preparation plus 1 hour

marking time. Research students involved in marking should normally have an upper limit of 25 scripts. Research students involved in demonstrating require less preparation time and the teaching model for 1<sup>st</sup> year research students would normally be the: **4+2**, that is, research students engaged in demonstrating in their first year would be allocated 2 hours preparation for 4 hours demonstrating. The teaching model would then be a straight **6** hours demonstrating in succeeding years.

Students whose research takes them outside the University and cannot commit to regular teaching slots throughout term time should agree alternative, suitable work with their Head of Division and Director of Studies. Where research students are asked to engage in administration work this work must be research related.

## 6.2 Relationship between research and paid employment

If you are a full-time MPhil/PhD student, you must not take on any paid employment, including employment outside the University, which is likely to interfere with the progress of your research. You must inform your Director of Studies about the extent of your employment commitments, including teaching and demonstrating commitments (see above). If you are a part-time student and in employment, it is particularly important for you to let your Director of Studies know about work pressures. Students may wish to consider the option of suspending their research (see 9.3) if they are going through an unusually busy time in work – taking up a new job or working on an important project, for example. This applies particularly to part time students.

## 6.3 Status of PhD students

### **Research Student**

Individuals matriculated at the University on a research programme of study are considered by the University to be students.

### **Employee**

Individuals that have a contract of employment with the University which lays down the terms and conditions of the relationship between the Employee and the Employer are considered to be employees. If the contract is a part-time contract then the terms and conditions will be on a pro-rata basis.

- It is possible for part-time PhD students to also be part-time employees or full-time employees of the University. These individuals would be entitled to employment benefits pro-rata for their employment activity.

### **Casual workers**

These individuals have a much looser relationship with the University. Due to the absence of mutual obligation on the part of both parties to offer/accept work, it means that normally the contract of employment will not apply. Thus many employment protection rights will be excluded.

- It is possible for self-funded full-time and part-time research students to also be casual workers if they are given paid work by the university. However, under University regulations, full-time research students may only work up to a maximum of 6 hours in any given week of the year on activities other than their studies.

- Full-time PhD research students awarded full studentships can work up to a maximum of 6 hours in any given week on activities that can be considered part of their PhD training, such as teaching and lab demonstration. However, the student's right to study is protected by strict adherence to the maximum hours regulation. These individuals are students. They do not receive payment for the PhD training activities and they are not considered to be casual workers.
- Outside of term time, full-time PhD research students awarded full studentships may take on paid work up to a maximum of 6 hours in any given week. They are then considered to be casual workers, as well as students.

### **Full-time PhD students receiving a studentship**

These individuals are students and are offered a grant/stipend/studentship. The research studentship is an annual scholarship that is paid in equal instalments throughout the year to research students while they are undertaking their studies. As a scholarship, the payments are not taxed. However, if the student is no longer able to study, a formal suspension of studies should be made and the award suspended until they can return to their studies. These individuals are entitled to the benefits of students.

They do not have a contract of employment and are therefore not employees. It is incorrect that GCU issues P45 slips to research students at the end of their studentship period. P45 slips are only issued to employees of the University who hold a contract of employment. PhD students should be recognised by Benefit Agencies as students and are entitled to student benefits. If students require confirmation of this status for the Benefit Agencies, they can ask The Graduate School and Academic Registry for a letter of verification of their student status.

## 6.4 Absence

**All students must consult the policy and process for Attendance and Monitoring which is held on the Graduate School website: [http://www.gcu.ac.uk/media/graduateschool/Graduate%20School%20Attendance%20Monitoring%20Reporting%20\(Feb13\).pdf](http://www.gcu.ac.uk/media/graduateschool/Graduate%20School%20Attendance%20Monitoring%20Reporting%20(Feb13).pdf)**

Any absence must be reported to the supervisor immediately and medical certificates provided if appropriate. During absence covered by medical certificates, payment of the award will be continued at the full rate for the first four weeks and at half rate for the next four weeks, within any twelve month period from the first day of absence. For longer periods of certified illness, and for maternity leave, the award will be held in abeyance, and no payment will be made.

For longer periods of certified illness, the student and supervisor should submit a suspension of studies form to The Graduate School to cover the duration of the absence. Upon return to their studies, the suspension should be ended and the research studentship award payments renewed for the remaining duration of the

three year period of funding. Thus for example, a student who is absent from their studies for 5 months, should suspend their studies for 5 months, will be entitled to payments as described above for the first two months of illness and will receive a further 3 months of award payment at the end of their original 3 year period of study. They will also have their target dates for submission of the RDC1, RDC2 and thesis extended by the suspension period of 5 months.

It is up to the School's discretion if they wish to supplement the above payment award during certified absence; however, funds must be found from the Schools for this.

## **7. MATRICULATION**

### **7.1 Annual matriculation**

You must matriculate as a research student at the beginning of your first year of research, and again at the start of each academic year until you graduate. You will not be issued with a student card until you have matriculated, which means that you will not be able to borrow books from the library or gain access to University premises. Matriculation in the second and subsequent years is subject to the completion of a satisfactory annual progress monitoring report

### **7.2 Changing your registration status**

You will register as full-time, part-time or writing up (see section 10.2) and that will be your status for the rest of the academic year. If you need to change your status during the year (for example, if you have taken up employment and need to go part-time), you should discuss the proposed change with your Director of Studies. If your Director of Studies agrees to the change, he or she will forward your application for change of status to the secretary to the Higher Degrees Committee. The change will not take effect until the Committee has approved it.

## **8. THE PROGRESS OF THE PROJECT**

### **8.1 Planning your project**

When you start your research, your Director of Studies will help you draw up a research plan/learning goals contract marking out the stages which you are expected to have completed at various points. This will help you and your Director of Studies to recognise if things are going wrong and you are starting to fall behind. If your Director of Studies does not offer to help you draw up a research plan/learning goals contract, you should ask him or her to do so.

Once the plan has been drawn up, it is your responsibility to maintain the progress of work and to meet the various deadlines set out in the plan/contract. If you are not sure what you have to do at any stage, you should ask your Director of Studies at once. You should let him or her know immediately if you experience difficulty in meeting your deadlines, or have any other concerns about your progress.

## 8.2 Registration

The purpose of the registration process (RDC1form) is to enable the HDC to scrutinise and approve the arrangements for the proposed research study including the supervisory team. All research students starting on or after 1 August 2013 will follow a revised registration procedure which means that students have to apply to register their proposal within **one month** of matriculation, whether studying full time **or** part time. Professional Doctoral candidates shall submit their proposal within one month following confirmation of progression to stage 2 of their programme. Please bear in mind that registration involves the preparation of a one page summary of your area of study indicating: the topic area, outline of the research design and methods; the intended contribution to knowledge and your Personal Development Plan (PDP/R). The registration proposal and a completed RDC 1 form should be submitted to the School Research Committee in the first instance. It is your Director of Studies' responsibility to ensure that this, and all other higher degree forms, are completed and submitted within the deadlines. You can apply to register for an MPhil, MPhil with the possibility of transfer to PhD and PhD direct. **(Note: if you are studying in a unit which is not located in a School you will be assigned to the most appropriate School and will register your proposal through that School).**

## 8.3 Ethical approval

You should note that research involving human or animal subjects will need ethical approval. Depending on the type/extent of the research ethical approval may be required from the School, the University or the NHS. Supervisors and students should be aware that research which makes use of interviews, questionnaires and observation/participant observation require ethical approval – normally from the School Ethics Committee. For further details consult the University's Research Ethic's Principles and Procedures (ethics booklet).

**See appendix 1 for full details of the Registration procedure.**

## 8.3 Progression/Confirmation of Registration to Doctoral Level (Transfer)

All research students starting on or after 1 August 2013, whether registered initially for MPhil with possibility of transfer to PhD or PhD direct, must undertake a Progress/Confirmation Review to show that they have made satisfactory progress and to clearly demonstrate their ability to pursue study to doctoral level. This shall normally be completed before the first 12 months for full time students and before 18 months for part time students. It is recommended that the review begin at 9 months for full time students and 14 months for part time students. Students are required to prepare a full progress report on the work undertaken for the supervisors and the relevant member of the Committee. A 500-word abstract should accompany the RDC 2 form. The progress process should normally include:

- a. a report, normally c. 6,000 to 10,000 words
- b. a presentation of their research to date and their intended line of investigation to an audience (of research students and staff) to be followed by questions from the audience. This should take place at some point during the first year.

- c. a 'viva' examination by a panel of at least 2 academic staff acting as internal assessors, one of whom should have experience of PhD supervision.

The Progress/Confirmation Review report will normally also form part of the of the annual progress review. In addition to the 500 word abstract the report should include: a table of contents; an introduction; literature review, research aim and research objectives; proposed methodology and methods including ethical considerations; research/PhD timetable and your Personal Development Programme (PDP/R). A template for the report is included in the RDC 2 form. N.B full time funded students who fail to progress by the end of their first year may have their studentships suspended or withdrawn.

See appendix 2 for full details of the Confirmation/Progression (Transfer) procedure.

### 8.5 Progress Monitoring

All research students are subject to the requirements of the University's annual Progress Monitoring Exercise. Students should complete a Research Student Annual Report at the end of their first year and at 12 monthly intervals thereafter, see your Research Student Log for further details. The Graduate School will send reminders to Directors of Studies in February of each year and copies of the reports should be returned to the Graduate School by **31 March** of that year. **Please note that students who fail to make satisfactory progress may have their funding suspended or be withdrawn from the programme.**

The Research Student Annual Report form is completed conjointly by the student and the Director of Studies. The form gives the student the opportunity to comment on their supervision and requires that the supervisor makes one of the following recommendations:-

- (i) confirmation of the student's doctoral status and re-registration as a PhD student
- (ii) that the student's registration as an MPhil/PhD research student be continued for another specified number of months and reviewed again;
- (iii) that the student be given permission to register for the degree of MPhil;
- (iv) that the student's registration be discontinued.

*In the case of students registered for the Prof.D.*

- (v) that the student's registration be continued;
- (vi) that the student's registration be discontinued.

Under the procedure, your Director of Studies is required to show you his/her section of the report and get you to sign to confirm that you have seen it; electronic signatures are acceptable for offshore-based students. A copy of the form will then be sent to the ADR. If the report and recommendation is unfavourable, you and your Director of Studies may be invited to appear before the School Research Committee to discuss matters. In extreme cases, the University has the right to discontinue a student's registration.

It is important that both student and Director of Studies answer the questions in the form as openly and honestly as possible, since one of the aims of the exercise is to pick up problems at an early stage while there is still time to do something about them. If difficulties arise later on, the record of annual reports will be used to determine how problems occurred and what steps were taken by the Director of Studies and student to deal with them. Your Director of Studies should discuss the report with you before finalising it.

## **9. DEALING WITH DIFFICULTIES**

### **9.1 Delays in your progress**

If you run into difficulties which cause you to fall behind in your research, it is essential that you take action as quickly as possible before too much time is lost. The first thing you should do is to speak to your Director of Studies, who may be able to suggest a solution. For example, if you are being hindered by equipment failure or by difficulty in getting access to source material, it may be possible to make other arrangements to let you get on with your work. If your Director of Studies cannot help, he or she should advise you as to what you should do next, or you can approach your Postgraduate Research Tutor (PGRT). Students in a unit outwith a School should contact the PGRT in the School to which they have been assigned.

You should keep a written record that you have spoken to your Director of Studies about the problem, as this will be important if you need to apply for a suspension of registration or if you need to make an appeal or complaint. You should also refer to it in your Research Student Annual Report.

### **9.2 Difficulties with your Director of Studies**

If you and your Director of Studies cannot establish an effective working relationship, and talking to him/her does not resolve matters, you should inform your Postgraduate Research Tutor who will try and help you resolve any issues you may have. You are encouraged to take action at an early stage, before too much damage is done to the project. It is in everyone's interests for such problems to be sorted out within the School and as informally as possible. As a last resort the University's Higher Degrees Committee may become involved and the following procedure should be adopted:

This is the agreed procedure which should be followed when you have identified a complaint or grievance **during your period of study** – see section 12 below for review of examination result.

- Candidates who are dissatisfied with any aspect of their work should in the first instance discuss this with their Director of Studies or other supervisor(s). Depending on the nature of the problem it may also be of value to consult the relevant PGRT, Dean of School/Head of Division/ADR.
- Should the worries persist or discussion with the supervisor is inappropriate, the candidate may informally discuss any problems or grievances with the Secretary to Higher Degrees Committee.
- Following discussion with the Secretary, the candidate may be advised to speak with or to submit a case in writing to a member of the Higher Degrees Committee or the Chair of the Higher Degrees Committee who will then take appropriate action at University level.
- If the process above does not result in an outcome that the student considers to be satisfactory, the student can then use the “University Grievance, Mediation and Resolution Procedure”.

### 9.3 Suspending registration

It may be advisable for a student facing difficulties that are affecting the project (ill-health, for example, or a very busy period at work) to suspend registration until the problem has been resolved. The period of suspension (provided it is properly agreed through the correct channels) will be deducted from the time allowed for completion of the thesis. You will not be liable for fees during periods of suspension, but you may not, if you are a funded student, be paid any studentship during this period.

If you and your Director of Studies agree that suspension is the best option you should apply through your Head of Research to the Higher Degrees Committee, (form RDC 3).

Suspensions are for a fixed period of time, normally not more than one year, and can be backdated. You are advised to contact your Director of Studies before the period of suspension runs out, either to make arrangements to return to studies or to seek a further period of suspension. A suspension will not be renewed automatically without any action from the student/ Director of Studies.

### 9.4 Research Misconduct/Plagiarism (Regulation 15 applies)

The University expects all researchers, including research students, to maintain good scholarly standards. Research misconduct is a disciplinary offence, and will be treated very seriously. Possible sanctions include withdrawal from the University or recommending to the examiners of a thesis that no degree should be awarded.

The University defines research misconduct as behaviour, intentional or not, that falls short of good scholarly standards. Examples of behaviour that constitute research misconduct include; Piracy, fraud, collusion, plagiarism, persecution, malicious accusation, denigration, interference, negligence and non-compliance, as outlined in the University’s Code of Good Practice in Research.

Students are responsible for the good conduct of their own research. Your Director of Studies should inform you of the expected standards, in particular, you should ensure that you understand what constitutes plagiarism and fraud and that you know how to reference properly and, if applicable, how to maintain laboratory records. You should also understand the need to respect confidentiality. The handbook 'A Guide to Avoiding Plagiarism', available from The Graduate School and the 'University's Code of Good Practice in Research' will provide guidance but if you have any doubts at any time in the course of your research about how you should handle material, you should seek your Director of Studies' advice.

## **10. SUBMISSION OF THE THESIS**

### **10.1 Deadlines for submission (Regulations 4 and 13 apply)**

If you do not submit within the normal time limits (5 years full-time or 6 part-time for a PhD or Prof.D, 3 years and 4 years for MPhil, N.B these are the **maximum** limits) you will have to apply through your Director of Studies to the School Research Committee and ultimately the Higher Degrees Committee for an extension of time, and you will have to pay fees for the extra period. If you have a valid reason for not submitting within the permitted time period then you should apply for a suspension of registration as outlined at 9.3. Fees are not applied during periods of suspension.

### **10.2 Writing-up enrolment**

When you complete your research you may enrol for up to one year as a "writing-up" student in order to write up the work. This is subject to confirmation from your Director of Studies that you have finished your research, including any laboratory work, and only need to write up the results. You will be expected to remain in contact with your Director of Studies during this writing-up period and you will be allowed to use University facilities such as computers and the library. If the thesis has not been submitted by the end of the writing-up year, you will have to revert to either full-time or part-time registration and pay the appropriate fees. If you have a valid reason (ill health for example) for not completing during the writing-up year then you should apply to suspend registration.

### **10.3 Deciding when to submit**

Students and Directors of Studies are normally expected to agree together when a thesis/learning contract is ready for submission and both of you have to complete a declaration form to this effect, (form RDC 8). If you and your Director of Studies disagree as to the readiness of the thesis for submission, you ultimately have the right to submit without his or her agreement however you would be ill-advised to do so. Equally, you should not assume that your Director of Studies' agreement that the thesis/learning contract is ready for submission would guarantee the award of the degree.

## **11. THE EXAMINATION PROCESS (Regulations 7-12 & 14 apply)**

### **11.1 The examiners**

As you near the end of your research, if you are a MPhil or PhD student, your Director of Studies will begin thinking about possible examiners. **You should have no involvement in the appointment of examiners or examination arrangements**, other than the setting of a mutually suitable date. Normally one internal and one external examiner will be required. There would always be an independent, experienced researcher to chair the viva - normally the Dean of School or his/her nominee – someone who has not been involved in your supervision. If you are a Prof.D student the external examiner will be appointed at the outset of the learning contract programme.

## 11.2 The examination

An oral examination, or in special circumstances an alternative form of examination, is compulsory for the degrees of MPhil, PhD and Prof.D. Your Director of Studies may, with your agreement, attend the oral – but he/she cannot take part in the examination. The expectation is that only one of your supervisors will attend the oral, normally your Director of Studies. You and your supervisors should agree in advance which supervisor, if any, will attend.

## 11.3 The result

At the end of the oral examination, you and your supervisor, if in attendance, will be asked to withdraw while the examiners reach their decision. The examiners may indicate informally their recommendation to you on the understanding that this is dependent on approval from the Higher Degrees Committee and Senate. The Graduate School will notify you in writing of the outcome of the examination. Possible outcomes include:

- That the student be recommended for the award
- That the student be recommended for the award subject to minor amendments being made to the thesis. The examiners will supply the candidate with a list of corrections and the candidates will have three months (6 months for part time students) to submit the corrections.
- If the candidate (MPhil/PhD) is asked to re-submit the thesis, with or without a further oral or alternative examination, the examiners must provide written guidance. This may be given at the time of the oral, or at a later date via the Secretary to the Higher Degrees Committee. When the student re-submits they should supply an addendum specifying what revisions have been made and where these changes are located in the thesis. If the examiners require the thesis to be revised and re-submitted, the Director of Studies will normally be expected to continue as supervisor for the re-submission. The candidate will have one year to re-submit the revised thesis. (2 years for a student studying on a part time basis).
- That the candidate (Prof.D) be permitted to resubmit for the award and be re-assessed.
- The candidate be not awarded the degree and not permitted to re-submit.
- In the case of a PhD examination the candidate may be recommended to re-submit and be **re-examined** for the degree of MPhil.
- In the case of a Prof.D examination the candidate may be recommended to re-submit and be re-examined for the degree of Prof.M by learning contract.

See appendix 3 for further information on the submission/examination procedure.

## 12. Student Appeals Against the Outcome of an Examination (Regulation 14 applies)

Given the existence of procedures for complaint and grievance (see section 9.2) during the study period, alleged inadequacy of supervisory or other arrangements during the period of study shall not constitute grounds for requesting a review of the examination decision.

The review procedure is set out in full in the regulations for the award of the University's degrees of Master of Philosophy, Doctor of Philosophy, Professional Masters and Professional Doctorate. In summary a research student may, in the circumstances outlined below, request a review of an examination decision, whether at the first examination or re-examination:

- that there were circumstances affecting the candidate's performance of which the examiners were not aware at the oral examination; and/or
- that there is evidence of procedural irregularity in the conduct of the examination (including administrative error) of such a nature as to cause doubt as to whether the result might have been different had there not been such irregularity; and/or
- that there is evidence of unfair or improper assessment on the part of one or more of the examiners; **a candidate may not otherwise challenge the academic judgement of the examiners.**

Appeals must be made, in writing, to the Secretary to the Higher Degrees Committee and the grounds for appeal must be clearly stated. The deadline for submitting appeals for MPhil/PhD students is three months from the date of formal notification from the University of the outcome of the examination. Prof.D. students should submit notice of their intention to appeal within 14 days of notification of the result and shall submit the case for appeal within 14 days of giving notice.

## APPENDIX 1

### 1. REGISTRATION

**Matriculation** - when you first arrive at the University you need to matriculate. Information contained in your joining instructions will guide you through the on-

line self-registration process. Part time students who cannot attend the University can matriculate remotely from the University. If your joining instructions have not been sent to you prior to arrival then you should collect them from the Base in the Saltire Centre. **You must matriculate annually for the duration of your research and you may not submit your thesis for examination or graduate unless you are a matriculated student.**

Once matriculated the next step towards a Higher Degree is the registration of your research proposal. All research students, whether full time or part time, must apply for registration within **one month** of their course start date. Please bear in mind that registration involves the preparation of a one page summary of your area of study.

Advice will be given to you on the completion of the Higher Degree Registration application form (RDC 1 form) but the following points should also be borne in mind

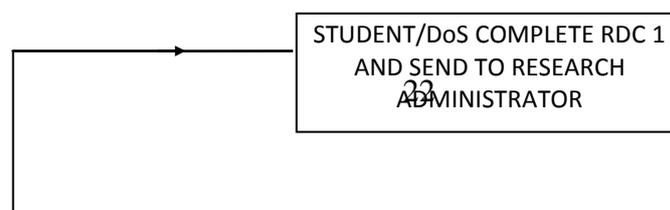
- responsibility for the completion of all forms rests with the Director of Studies (the main supervisor)
- the proposed summary of your area of research should be drawn up jointly between you and your and Director of Studies
- please read carefully the notes attached to the application form
- your Director of Studies should be the supervisor with whom you have most contact, He/she will receive all correspondence relating to your research
- ensure that the proposed summary has adequate referencing
- ensure that if the application clearly shows the topic area, outline of the research design and methods; the intended contribution to knowledge and your personal Development Plan (PDP/R)
- ensure that full addresses (for correspondence) are provided for any external supervisor
- overseas students or those proposing to work outside the UK should refer to regulation 2.8

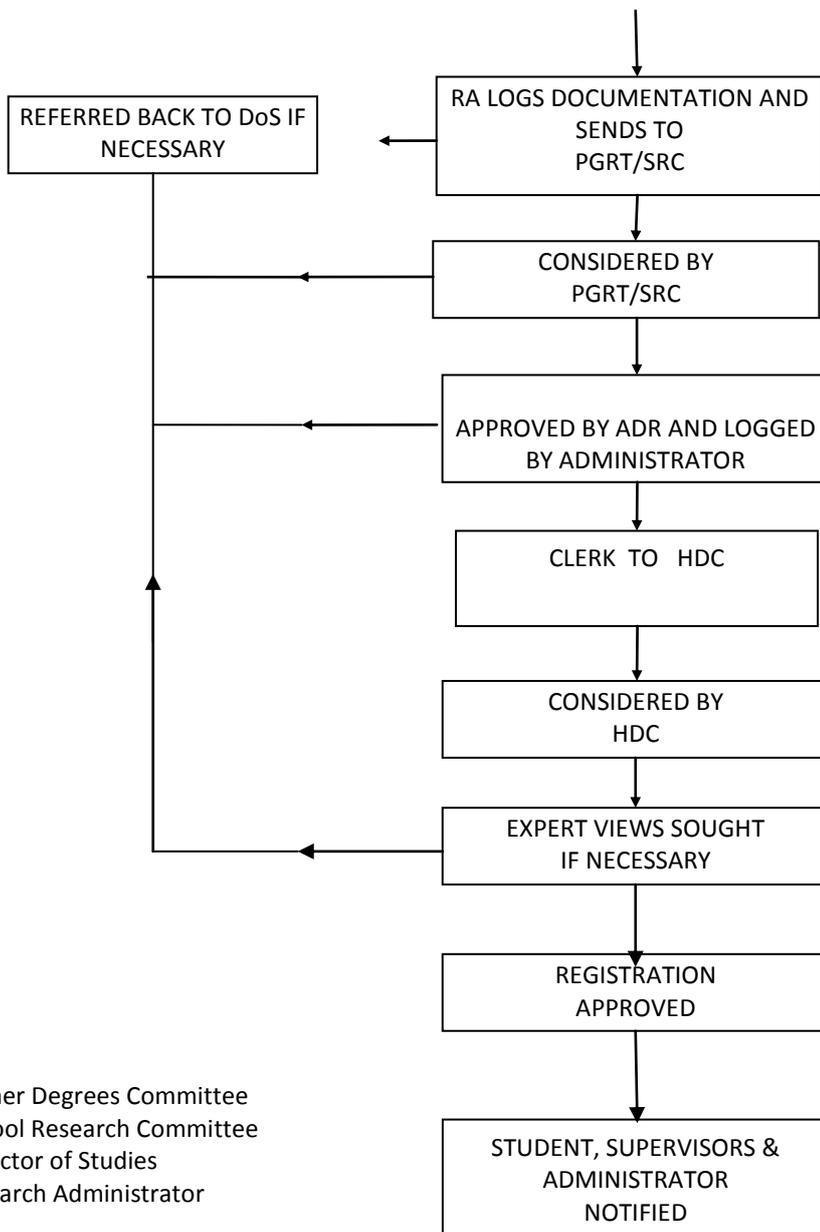
1.4 Once the RDC 1 registration form is completed, you or your supervisor should send it to your School Research Administrator who will process the application at School level. If you are in a Unit located outwith a School you should send it to the Research Administrator of the School to which you have been assigned. Your application will be reviewed at School level. The ADR or the member of the School Research Committee reviewing the application may contact you or your supervisor to discuss/clarify points about the summary and you would may be required to give an oral presentation to the review committee. Once the School Research Committee is happy with the proposal it will be forwarded to the Secretary to the Higher Degrees Committee (HDC) who will consider it from the point of view of administrative detail only, to check that each section has been correctly completed and that the regulations have been complied with. This process is to ensure that the HDC is presented with a fully completed form and can devote its attention to the topic of your study, the supervisory experience and the academic content.

- 1.5 Before the application can be accepted for consideration by the Higher Degrees Committee, it must be signed by the Associate Dean of Research to indicate that the necessary resources will be provided.
- 1.6 Once the Secretary to HDC is satisfied with the form, it has been signed and all appendices are ready, it will be put on the agenda for the next available meeting of HDC. The HDC normally meets six times per session. A list of current members can be obtained from the Secretary to HDC.
- 1.7 Once the HDC is satisfied with the candidate's application, the Secretary will inform you by issuing a formal letter of registration. A copy will also be sent to your Director of Studies and your School Research Administrator. As you will receive several letters during your period of registration, it is a good idea to file them in your Research Student Logbook for ease of reference.
- 1.8 Should it be necessary to change anything on the application form once registration has been accepted, the relevant forms must be obtained from the Graduate School website: <http://www.gcu.ac.uk/graduateschool/postgraduatestudy/phdprogrammes/currentphdstudents/> the available forms are listed in Appendix 8. Any change in the proposal itself should be forwarded to the Secretary with a statement from the Director of Studies indicating agreement from all supervisors.

## APPENDIX 1

**FIG 1**  
**PROCEDURES FOR REGISTRATION OF RESEARCH PROGRAMME**





## APPENDIX 2

### 2 PROGRESSION OF REGISTRATION TO DOCTORAL LEVEL (TRANSFER - Regulation 6 refers)

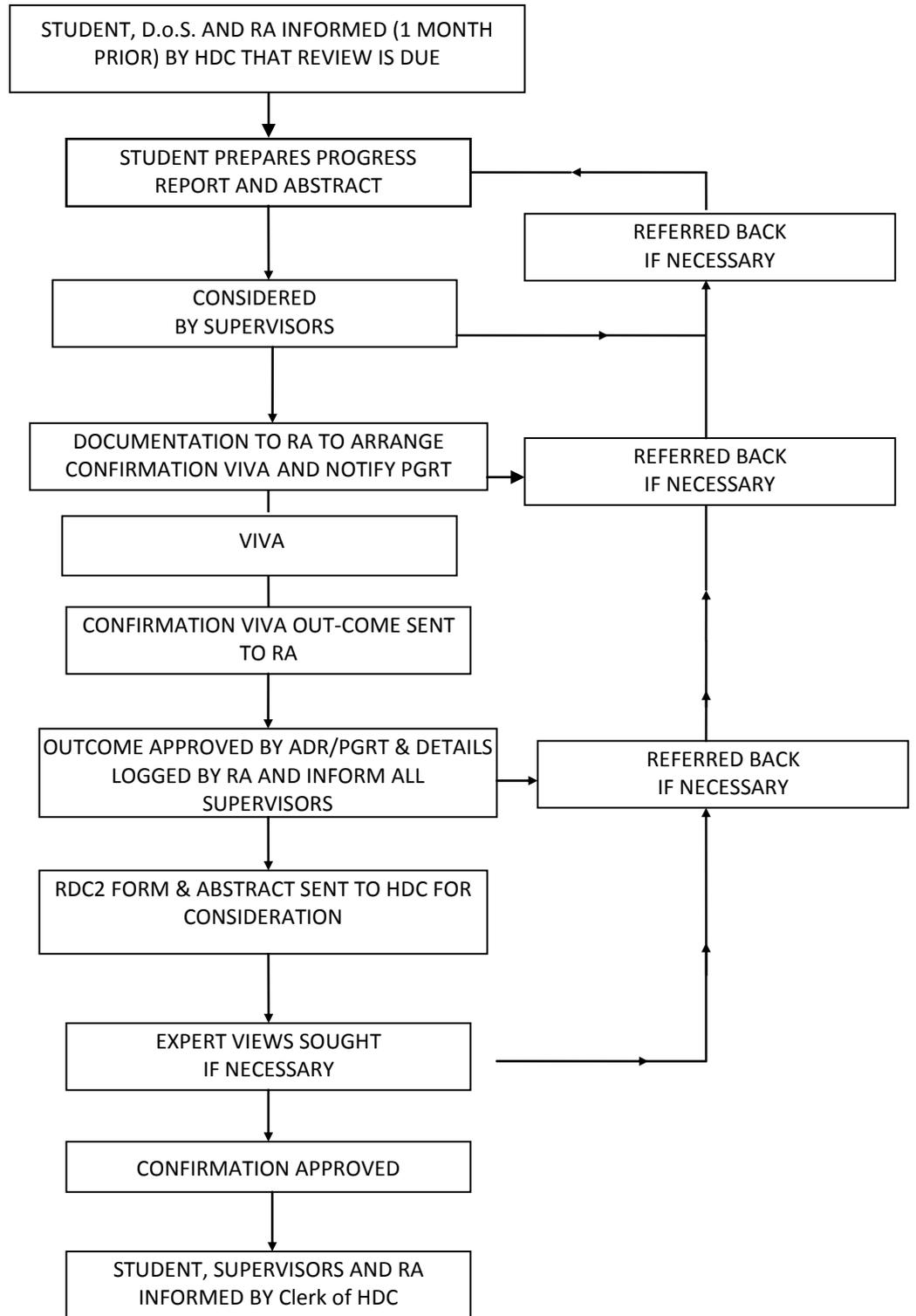
Candidates hoping to attain the award of PhD normally register, in the first instance, for “MPhil with the possibility of transfer to PhD” (MPhil/PhD). However, all research students must undertake a Progress/Confirmation Review. All candidates will prepare a full progress report which is submitted to their School for consideration. Candidates are also required to give an oral presentation and to undergo a ‘viva’ conducted by two moderators - academic staff acting as internal assessors, one of whom should have experience of PhD supervision and who are not part of the student’s supervisory team. Upon completion of the review by School Research Committee the application form (RDC 2) and an abstract of the progress report should be forwarded to the Secretary to the Higher Degrees Committee who will put it on the agenda for the next available meeting of HDC. Regulation 6.2 gives details of the content of this report.

The report should include:

- a 500 word abstract
- a table of contents
- an introduction
- a literature review, the research aims and objectives
- the proposed methodology and methods including ethical considerations
- the proposed timetable for the study
- a copy of the student’s Personal Development Programme (PDP/R)
- the RDC 2 form can be obtained from The Graduate School website:
- <http://www.gcu.ac.uk/graduateschool/postgraduatestudy/phdprogrammes/currenthdstudents/>
- HDC’s decision will be forwarded to you and your School by the Secretary.

**Fig 2**

**PROCEDURES FOR CONFIRMATION OF REGISTRATION**



HDC: Higher Degrees Committee  
SRC: School Research Committee  
DoS: Director of Studies  
PGRT: Post Graduate Research Tutor

**3. EXAMINATION** MPhil and PhD (Sections 7 to 14 of the regulations refer)

As you near the end of your research your Director of Studies should begin thinking about possible examiners. **You should have no involvement in the appointment of examiners or examination arrangements**, other than the setting of a mutually suitable date with your Director of Studies.

You should, however, be fully aware of your responsibilities as outlined in regulation 9 and the regulations relating to the preparation of the thesis (regulation 13). It is advantageous to be familiar with the other regulations.

The student declaration form (RDC 8), a simple statement to be signed by you and your Director of Studies, is available on-line and from The Graduate School, MS 010.

A handbook on thesis preparation is issued to you when you start your research programme but copies can also be obtained from the Graduate School, MS 010

A copy of the thesis for each Examiner should be forwarded to the Secretary to HDC who will send them with the relevant paperwork to the Examiners. **Theses must not be sent directly to Examiners.**

The Secretary to HDC will formally notify you of the date, time and place of the *viva voce*, oral examination.

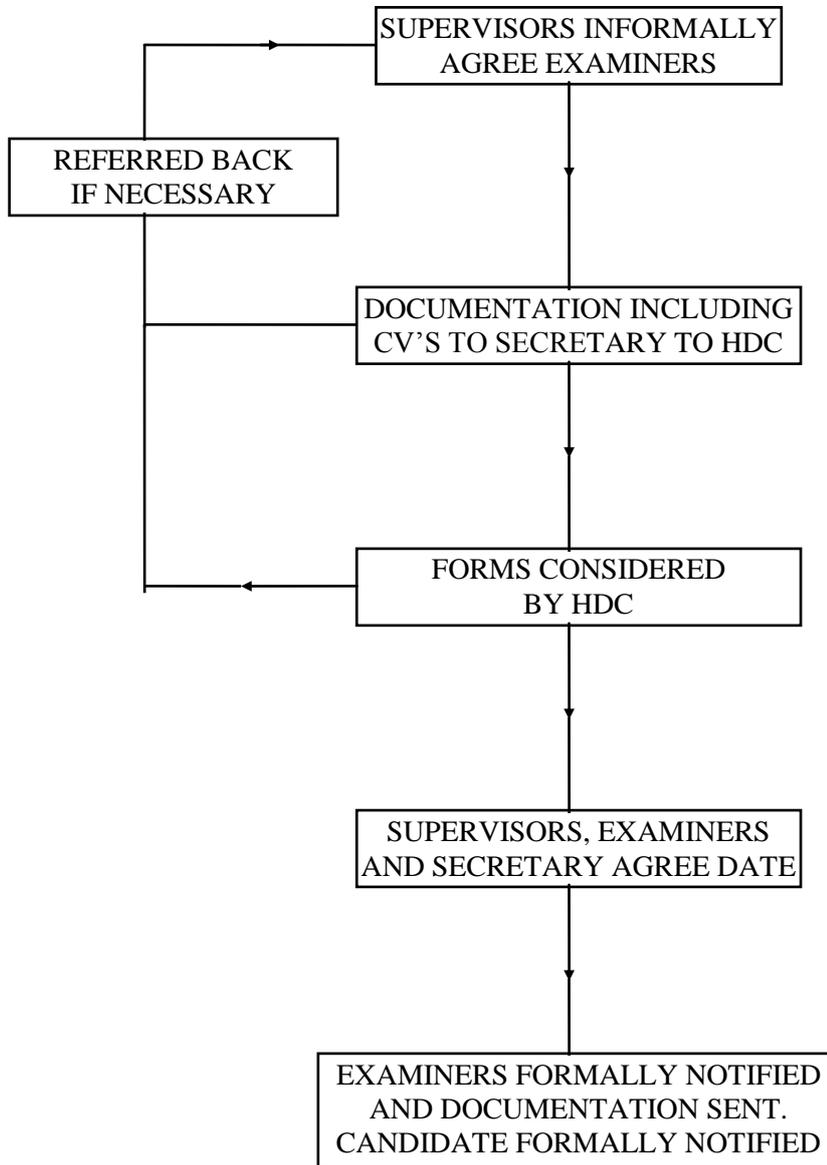
It is fairly common for the Examiners to ask for minor revisions of the thesis.

Amended theses should be **submitted to the Secretary** to forward to the Examiner(s) for final approval.

Following a successful examination a certificate will be prepared. This will be presented to you at a University Graduation Ceremony. Further information on this will be sent to you from the Graduations and Awards Office. In order for the Graduations and Awards Office to perform this function you must be a matriculated student and please also ensure that the University has a note of your current address.

FIG 3

**PROCEDURES FOR APPROVAL OF EXAMINATION ARRANGEMENTS**



HDC: Higher Degrees Committee

## **Responsibilities of the Supervisor**

### Specific responsibilities

Supervisors have a number of specific responsibilities. These include:

- Explaining to the student at the outset the kind of guidance and support to be provided
- Helping the student draw up a research plan/learning contract, and monitoring the student's progress in relation to this plan
- Supervisors should carry out a PDP of current skills to inform development: <http://www.vitae.ac.uk/researchers/430901-383631/Vitae-Excel-RDF-Planner-Prototype-2010.html> and agree an initial skills training programme. Supervisors and student should review this plan at regular intervals.
- Telling students about the various University procedures and deadlines that they must comply with
- Meeting the student on a regular basis, see 6.1 for guidance of the frequency of meetings
- Supervisors should ensure that students register their research proposal with the Higher Degrees Committee within 4 months of enrolment (FT) and 6 months (PT), see appendix 1 for further details on the registration procedure
- Giving the student regular feedback on progress, including constructive criticism on written work
- Raising any concerns about progress with the student and, if necessary, the Dean of School/ADR at an early stage
- Ensuring that the student goes through the transfer procedure, if applicable, at the appropriate time, see appendix 2 for further details of the transfer procedure
- Completing a Annual Report Form for the student at the appropriate time each year
- Ensuring that the student understands the nature and requirements of postgraduate research and the standards expected
- Ensure that the student knows what constitutes research and professional misconduct and knows how to reference properly.

## **QAA Quality Code for Higher Education: Chapter B11 Research Degrees**

- The Quality Code is the definitive reference point for all those involved in delivering higher education which leads to an award from or is validated by a UK higher education provider. It makes clear what institutions are required to do, what they can expect of each other, and what the general public can expect of all higher education providers. These Expectations express key matters of principle that the higher education community has identified as important for the assurance of quality and academic standards.
- This Chapter of the Quality Code is about doctorates and research master's degrees. It is informed by a wider context in which UK research degrees are offered, including an environment of continuous improvement and the desire to learn from others' experiences in research education.
- Full chapter available online:

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/quality-code-B11.aspx>

### **The Researcher Development Framework**

The Researcher Development Framework articulates the knowledge, behaviours and attributes of successful researchers and encourages them to aspire to excellence through achieving higher levels of development.

The framework is a comprehensive new approach to enhancing the careers of researchers. It was developed by and for researchers, in consultation with academic and non-academic employers.

#### **Who is it for?**

Primarily, the framework is designed for:

- researchers within higher education to evaluate and plan their own personal, professional and career development
- managers/supervisors of researchers in their role supporting the development of researchers
- trainers, developers, human resources specialists and careers advisors in the planning and provision of support for researchers' development
- institutions in making decisions about their strategic approach to development of researchers.

The framework will also be of use for:

- funders of researchers and other stakeholders with an interest in the development of researchers
- non-higher education employers in identifying the benefits of employing researchers
- people interested in training as a researcher or researchers looking to move into higher education from other sectors.

#### **What is the purpose of the Researcher Development Framework?**

The Researcher Development Framework (RDF) was developed in response to a range of recommendations to create a UK development framework for postgraduate researchers and research staff in higher education institutions.

**More information can be found online:**

<http://www.vitae.ac.uk/researchers/428241/Vitae-Researcher-Development-Framework.html>

## Appendix 7

### SCQF Level 11 – (SHE level 5, PG 1, PG Dip, PG Cert, MA MSc, SVQ 5)

NB: the descriptors set out the characteristic generic outcomes of each level. They are intended to provide a general, shared understanding of each level and to allow broad comparisons to be made between qualifications and learning at different levels. They are not intended to give precise nor comprehensive statements and there is no expectation that every qualification or programme should have all of the characteristics. The descriptors have been developed through a series of consultations and are offered as a first working guide and will be revised in the light of feedback on their use.

Knowledge and Understanding	Practice: Applied knowledge and understanding	Generic Cognitive Skills	Communication, ICT and numeracy skills	Autonomy accountability and working with others
Characteristic outcomes of learning at each level include the ability to:				
<p>Demonstrate and/or work with:</p> <p>knowledge that covers and integrates most, if not all, of the main areas of a subject discipline – including their features, boundaries, terminology and conventions</p> <p>a critical understanding of the principal theories, principles and concepts</p> <p>a critical understanding of a range of specialised theories, principals and concepts</p> <p>extensive, detailed and critical knowledge and understanding in one or more specialisms, much of which is at or informed by developments at the forefront</p> <p>critical awareness of current issues in a subject/discipline and one or more specialisms</p>	<p>Use a significant range of the principal skills, techniques, practices and/or materials which are associated with a subject/discipline</p> <p>Use a range of specialised skills, techniques, practices and/or materials which are at the forefront or informed by forefront developments</p> <p>Apply a range of standard and specialised research or equivalent instruments and techniques of enquiry</p> <p>Plan and execute a significant project of research, investigation or development</p> <p>Demonstrate originality or creativity in the application of knowledge, understanding and/or practices</p> <p>Practice in a wide and often unpredictable variety of professional level contexts</p>	<p>Apply critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis to issues which are at the forefront or informed by developments at the forefront of a subject/discipline</p> <p>Identify, conceptualise and define new and abstract problems and issues</p> <p>Develop original and creative responses to problems and issues</p> <p>Critically review, consolidate and extended knowledge, skills practices and thinking in a subject/discipline</p> <p>Deal with complex issues and make informed judgements in situations in the absence of complete or consistent data/information</p>	<p>Use a range of advanced and specialised skills as appropriate to the subject/discipline – for example</p> <p>communication, using appropriate methods, to a range of audiences with different levels of knowledge/expertise</p> <p>communication with peers more senior colleagues and specialists</p> <p>use a wide range of software to support and enhance work at this level and specify new software or refinements/improvements to existing software to increase effectiveness</p> <p>undertake critical evaluations of a wide range of numerical and graphical data</p>	<p>Exercise substantial autonomy and initiative in professional and equivalent activities</p> <p>Take responsibility for own work and/or significant responsibility for the work of others</p> <p>Take responsibility for a significant range of resources</p> <p>Demonstrate leadership and/or initiative and make an identifiable contribution to change and development</p> <p>Practice in ways which draw on critical reflection on own and others' roles and responsibilities</p> <p>Deal with complex ethical and professional issues and make informed judgements on issues not addressed by current professional and/or ethical codes or practices</p>

**SCQF level 12 – (SHE level 6, PG 2, PhD – Doctorate)**

NB: The descriptors set out the characteristics generic outcomes of each level. They are intended to provide a general, shared understanding of each level and to allow broad comparisons to be made between qualifications and learning at different levels. They are not intended to give precise nor comprehensive statements and there is no expectation that every qualification or programme should have all of the characteristics. The descriptors have been developed through a series of consultations and are offered as a first working guide and will be revised in the light of feedback on their use.

Knowledge and Understanding	Practice: Applied knowledge and understanding	Generic Cognitive Skills	Communication: ICT and numeracy skills	Autonomy accountability and working with others
Characteristic outcomes of learning at each level include the ability to:				
<p>Demonstrate and/or work with:</p> <p>a critical overview of a subject/discipline, including critical understanding of the principal theories, principles and concepts</p> <p>a critical, detailed and often leading knowledge and understanding at the forefront of one or more specialisms</p> <p>knowledge and understanding that is generated through personal research or equivalent work which makes a significant contribution to the development of the subject/discipline</p>	<p>Use a significant range of the principal skills, techniques, practices and materials associated with a subject/discipline</p> <p>Use and enhance a range of complex skills, techniques, practices and materials at the forefront of one or more specialisms</p> <p>Apply a range of standard and specialised research/equivalent instruments and techniques of enquiry</p> <p>Design and execute research, investigative or development projects to deal with new problems and issues</p> <p>Demonstrate originality and creativity in the development and application of new knowledge, understanding and practices</p> <p>Practice in the context of new problems and circumstances</p>	<p>Apply a constant and integrated approach to critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis of new and complex ideas, information and issues</p> <p>Identify, conceptualise and offer original and creative insights into new, complex and abstract ideas, information and issues</p> <p>Develop creative and original responses to problems and issues</p> <p>Deal with very complex and/or new issues and make informed judgements in the absence of complete or consistent data/information</p>	<p>Use a significant range of advanced and specialised skills as appropriate to a subject/discipline – for example:</p> <p>communicate at an appropriate level To a range of audiences and adapt communication to the context and purpose</p> <p>communicate at the standard of published academic work and/or critical dialogue and review with peers and experts in other specialisms</p> <p>use a range of software to support and enhance work at this level and specify software requirements to enhance work</p> <p>critically evaluate numerical and graphical data</p>	<p>Exercise a high level of autonomy and initiative in professional and equivalent activities</p> <p>Take full responsibilities for own work and/or significant responsibility for the work others</p> <p>Demonstrate leadership and/or originality in tackling and solving problems and issues</p> <p>Work in ways which are reflective self-critical and based on research/evidence</p> <p>Deal with complex ethical and professional issues</p> <p>Make informal judgements on new and emerging issues not addressed by current professional and/or ethical codes or practices</p>

**List of the University's Research Degree Forms**

RDC 1	Application to register for a research degree of the University
RDC 2	Application for confirmation of registration to Doctoral Level
RDC 3a	Application for suspension of registration
RDC 3b	Application for extension of registration
RDC 4	Application for a change in approved arrangements for supervision
RDC 5	Application for approval of examination arrangements
RDC 6	Notification of change in registration
RDC 7	Notification of withdrawal of registration
RDC 8	Candidate's declaration form
RDC 9	Preliminary report and recommendation of an examiner on a candidate for the degree of PhD/Prof.D or MPhil
RDC 10	Recommendation of the examiners on a candidate for the degree of PhD/Prof.D
RDC 11	Recommendation of the examiners on a candidate for the degree of MPhil
RDC 12	Preliminary report and recommendation of an examiner on the re-examination on a candidate for the degree of PhD/Prof.D or MPhil

### Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes

This code should be read in conjunction with the University Regulations governing the degrees of Master of Philosophy and Doctor of Philosophy, and with other codes of good practice affecting postgraduate research students and research student supervisors. Unless otherwise stated this code applies to both part-time and full-time postgraduate research students.

The publication of our Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes is an important step in signalling that GCU takes good research practice very seriously. For example we will:

- monitor higher degree students' progress to ensure that necessary support is being given and appropriate training received
- monitor higher degree students' progress to ensure that appropriate progress is made
- consult with higher degree students on issues and policies which effect them
- involve higher degree students in the research life of the relevant centre, school or division, wherever possible

While studying for a research degree at at Glasgow Caledonian University, higher degree students can expect the following:

- high quality standard of supervision: you will have regular contact with your supervisory team who have the necessary relevant research expertise, are engaged in research themselves, have undertaken training in research supervision skills, or who have extensive experience in supervising projects to a successful conclusion
- comprehensive training: you will be offered a training programme covering the specific skills and knowledge needed for your research project, the generic research skills needed for your discipline and generic skills and competencies associated with your personal and career development
- appropriate work space, laboratory space and materials (where relevant), IT equipment, office consumables and social facilities
- research expenses as agreed with your supervisory team and approved by the ADR necessary for carrying out your programme of research (full-time doctoral students)
- some funding for conference attendance to present your work (for full-time higher degree students)
- an opportunity to undertake paid teaching and demonstrating duties (for full-time higher degree students) with appropriate training provided

Higher degrees are available at both the doctoral level (PhD) and Masters level (MPhil). The code also covers Professional Masters and Doctorate students.