



Glasgow Caledonian University

Recruitment & Admission of Postgraduate Research Students Policy and Procedure

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Recruitment and Admission of Research Students Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The responsibility for PGRS recruitment lies with the Academic Schools and the Admissions and Enquiry Service is responsible for the process management. However, the University also has to be satisfied, that the process is being carried out on a rigorous and equitable basis.
- 1.2 This policy sets out a university framework for the recruitment and admission of PGRS, that is operated by the Academic Schools and the Admissions and Enquiry Service, with quality assurance overseen by the University's Higher Degrees Committee (HDC).

2. Principles and Quality Assurance

- 2.1 Procedures are followed within Academic Schools for the selection of projects and supervisors, which ensure the projects are appropriate, can be resourced, will be adequately supervised and that ethical considerations have been considered.
- 2.2 There are clear and transparent student selection criteria.
- 2.3 The University requires evidenced documentation trails including the full completion of the Decision Form which gives the selection criteria and rating of the candidate, the application form, references, proof of qualification, equal opportunities, consideration of proficiency in English, and the use of trained and competent staff in the selection.
- 2.4 Each School has a nominated member of staff who deals with application enquiries. This person maintains records of research student recruitment.
- 2.5 The Admissions and Enquiry Service also has a nominated member of staff to handle enquiries and application forms.
- 2.6 The University obtains evidence that all of these criteria are satisfied at the following points:
 - 1) inclusion of the project in the University's Portfolio of PhD Projects Policy as overseen by the University Research Committee
 - 2) accepting a candidate for a PGRS study place through application, interview and full completion of the Decision Form by academic staff - overseen by the ADR
 - 3) registration of the programme of study through submitting the registration RDC1 for consideration and approval at the HDC.

3. Research Student Selection Requirements Checklist

The following checklist has been produced by the Graduate School and approved by HDC for those involved in the recruitment of PGRS. It is not exhaustive, but does include all the requirements for the process of research student selection.

3.1 **Resources:** the resources to fulfill the proposed research project must be available.

3.2 **Supervision team:** the proposed supervision team must be identified at the selection decision. The supervision team must be a minimum of two and a maximum of three.

3.3 **Supervision research expertise:** the research area must be within the expertise of the proposed supervisors.

3.4 **Supervision capacity:** care should be taken to ensure that no supervisor exceeds the recommended number of PGRS supervisions. Higher degree regulations state that supervisors will normally be allocated no more than 6 FTE students as Director of Studies and up to 10 doctoral FTE students in total. Part-time students are pro-rata at 2/3 FTE, as their expected timeframes are 1.5 times those of full-time students.

3.5 **Supervision experience:** there must be at least one experienced supervisor (defined to have a minimum of 1 successful completion) on the supervision team.

3.6 **New inexperienced supervisors:** are allocated an experienced supervisor as a mentor, which they keep until their first successful completion. This mentor should normally be part of their first supervisory team, but may be outwith the supervisory team.

3.7 **School consultation:** ensure that appropriate consultation/decision-taking/communication has taken place with relevant groups at School level.

3.8 **External funder requirement:** if external funders (e.g. Research councils) are involved, ensure that their requirements are fully taken into account.

3.9 **UKVI requirements:** candidates must meet current UKVI requirements.

4. Short Listing and Interviewing Requirements

4.1 **Selection team composition:** the selection team making decisions on PGRS applications is required to have at least two members. This applies to decisions made at both stages of 1) shortlisting and 2) at interview. At least one member with expertise in the research area, usually the proposed Director of Studies, should be included in the selection team.

- 4.2 **Selection records:** records should be kept of short listing meetings, detailing: whether the candidate met the selection criteria, the completed application form, c.v., references, whether the minimum academic requirement/standard met, satisfactory research proposal, proficiency in English, and the decision reached and its rationale. These details should be recorded on the Decision Form which should be returned to the Admissions and Enquiry Service.
- 4.3 **Equality and Diversity:** the selection team should be familiar with and apply university practices to ensure equal opportunity.
- 4.4 **Mandatory interviews:** all PGRS candidates, who have passed stage one, must be interviewed to ascertain their suitability for the proposed doctoral research project before a research study place can be offered.
- 4.5 **Student Candidates at a distance:** where candidates are based at a distance and cannot be interviewed in person, they may be interviewed, either by telephone but, preferably, by video conference or Skype.
- 4.6 **Qualifications Verification:** it is essential that qualifications are verified before an offer is made. References should be sought and photocopies of certificates should be retained.
- 4.7 **Research Suitability:** the suitability of a candidate for the proposed research has primary importance in any decision making in comparison with the ability of the student to attract external funding or to self-fund their research.

General information on research degrees is provided by the Graduate School through its website, the postgraduate prospectus and other promotional materials. This information includes, but is not limited to: levels of fees; admission procedures; English proficiency requirements; an electronic version of the application form; links to Schools' Research websites; research degree regulations and monitoring processes; procedures for student complaint and grievance. This information should be drawn to the attention of potential students.

Overview of the Admission and Recruitment of Postgraduate Research Students (PGRS) at GCU

