GCU
Glasgow Caledonian
University

University for the Common Good
The Graduate School

Applications for Covid-19 Related Extension of Registration: Guidelines for completing the RDC3c form

Links to connected material:
- Online form   RDC3c form: Application for Covid-19 Related Extension of Registration
- Policy   COVID-19 Related Extension Policy and Process for Research Students
- Examples   Case study scenarios for COVID-19 related extensions

The guidelines include:
- Purpose of the RDC3c form
- What is required from the student and supervisor
- When should the RDC3c be submitted?
- How much extension time should you ask for?
- A copy of the RDC3c online questions
- A flow chart of the approval process

1. **Purpose of the RDC3c form: Application for Covid-19 related extension of registration**
   This form should be used by research students who wish to apply for an extension of time and, if a funded student, for an extension of funding on the grounds that their studies have been significantly disrupted by Covid-19.

   The extension of time is the time required to adjust to the disruptions and recover the research plan.

2. **Online form RDC3c Questions**
   The RDC3c online form questions and guidance for answering these questions are found in Appendix 1. These RDC3c form questions can be used by the student and supervisory team to prepare jointly their response ready for submission in the online form.   Only the online submission will be accepted.

3. **Covid-19 Related Extension Policy and Process for Research Students**
   Please read the accompanying policy and process to the online form. The policy provides further details on:
   - Eligibility for extensions of time and funding
   - Research recovery plans for all research students
   - Extensions of time
   - Extensions of funding and financial relief
   - Timeframes for applications for extensions of time and funding.
   - Criteria for extensions of time
   - Appeal of decision on extension

4. **What is required from the student and supervisor?**
   The student-supervisory team should work together to jointly submit this form. We recommend the team read carefully the Guidelines and the Policy before drafting their application and submitting it online.

   The student and supervisory team are expected to do the following:

   Prior to application

   All student-supervisory teams are expected to do the following due to the Covid-19 situation, even if they do not go on to apply for extension of time and funding:

   (This is good research practice when there is a disruption to the research plans.)

   - Complete a research recovery plan for the research project
   - Complete an individualised support needs plan for the research student, including updating your Personal Development Plan.
   - Wherever possible, adjust the research project to enable completion within the normal timeframe to enable students to move forward in their careers in a timely way.
   - Identify risks (in this case Covid-related) going forward, and put mitigations in place where possible, revising your research project risk register.
   - Identify the time needed to make adjustments to the research project and return the project to the trajectory it was on prior to disruption.
   - Document the revised timeframes for the research, including timings for the intermediate milestones such as RDC2, as well as the end dates. Documentation should appear in the supervisory meeting records, annual reports.
   - Complete an updated research project timetable or Gantt chart.

   If having done the above, the student and supervisory team make the assessment that studies have been significantly disrupted by the Covid-19 situation, you can then make a joint application for extension of time.

   Submission of the application
   - If an international student, you should check first with the [GCU VISA Team](#) for any implications that an extension of time might have on your visa.
   - If an externally funded student, you should check first with your funders for any implications that an extension of time might have with them and if the external funders will support the extension of time with funds. This check will help you complete Section 3 Funding information of the RDC3c form.
   - The student-supervisory team should work together on developing Section 4: Extension request, particularly:
     - **Circumstances:** Complete a 200 word max summary of your circumstances and why you need the requested time to recover your research plan.
     - **Recovery plans:** complete a 300 word max summary of your research recovery plans and student support needs plan.
   - The student enters the agreed text of the application into the online form.
   - In lieu of signatures, the student downloads a copy of the online submission and emails it to the supervisory team.
   - The Director of Studies DoS sends the student's email with the attached copy of the online submission form to the Programme Coordinator (Research Degrees) PC, and adds in their email, the declaration:

I confirm that the attached RDC3c submission has been discussed and agreed by the student and supervisory team.

- If the student and supervisory team wish to subsequently change something in the submission, they can submit it again and let the PC know to take the latest dated version.

After submission of the application

The School Research Progression and Awards Board (RPAB) does not require to see the full details of the research recovery plans, but the RDC3c process does require that the student and the supervisory team confirm that the research recovery plans have been discussed and agreed.   In their deliberations, the RPAB may request to see further information, such as:

- Research Recovery work plan (which might be in a plan format or in the meeting records)
- Student needs plan (which might be in an updated PDP or in the meeting records)
- Updated risk register
- Updated research project timetable or Gantt chart

So it is important to have these completed and ready to hand, if requested.

5. **When should the RDC3c be submitted?**

There is no deadline for a RDC3c application. Applications have now been built into our normal processes to cover the full period of study of students who are in their first year at the beginning of the COVID pandemic and to cover the possibility of further COVID pandemic disruptions. The RDC3c applications will be looked at by the RPABs as part of regular RPAB business.

For most students, we invite you to apply for time and funding extension after you have identified your recovery plan and started to implement it and have a better understanding of the time needed to adjust. Your application will then be taking a retrospective view. You should apply when the Scottish Government enters Phase 4 of its Covid-19 pandemic plan and after 1 October 2020.

For students nearing the end of their maximum study period or the end of their funding period or approaching an RDC2 deadline before 1 November 2020, you should apply for an extension of time in July to September 2020.   Priority will be given to your applications and we will set up special School RPAB meetings over the summer to deal with your applications.   After that the dates will fall into the normal RPAB schedule within the academic year.

In order to meet any RPAB, your application must be submitted online 1 week before the RPAB meeting, in order to enable the administrators to collate the agenda and for the RPAB members to read the applications in advance.   Final decisions will be communicated to the applicant within one week of the respective RPAB.

If you are a student in urgent need of clarification of any extensions of time and funding, please raise your situation to the attention of the Chair of the RPAB, the Senior PgRT, for the possibility of Chair's action and recommendation to the VP Research for urgent action (e.g. for an immediate one-month extension whilst the application is being prepared).

6. **The approval process**

A flow chart of the RDC3c process is given in Appendix 2: Process for the RDC3c - Application for Covid-19 Related Extension of Registration.

7. **How much extension time should you ask for?**

Each of you will have your own unique circumstances and research recovery plan. Please ask for the time you need to recover your research plans, i.e. the time needed to make adjustments to the research project and return the project to the trajectory it was on prior to disruption. If you discover, as the Covid-19 situation evolves that you need further time, then you may apply again.

Please consider that some of you may not need very much time, or in some cases no time, to continue through to completion, and some may require more than the maximum time given for the first application. The best way to judge the extension time is to wait until you have a clear idea of the recovery of your research and then assess the time you needed. If you need time and funding extensions imminently, you should apply for what you think you might need to recover your plans.   Then as things evolve, if you need more time than previously thought, apply again. We would like to highlight the first application is in monthly amounts for up to 3mths (for year 1-2 students FT) and up to 6 mths (for year 3-4 students FT).

Please consider that staff are committing to supervising for that extension of time and, where funded, the University is committing the funds to be there for that extension of time. This means that there may be less funding and supervision capacity for future students. You can help the University and your fellow students continue and sustain our research environment by asking only for what you need.

To give you an indication of the different types of extensions and times that would be possible, we have collected together a sample of Case study scenarios for COVID-19 related extensions. Further examples of case studies will be added to the document ongoing and also placed on the Graduate School website here under RDC3c.

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RESEARCH DEGREES COMMITTEE

Appendix 1: Online Form RDC3c Questions

APPLICATION FOR COVID-19 RELATED EXTENSION OF REGISTRATION

(These RDC3c form questions can be used by the student and supervisory team to prepare jointly their response ready for submission in the online form. Emails from the student and Director of Studies, with the attachment of the pdf output from the submitted online form, confirming their approval of the submission, will be required in lieu of their signatures.)

Purpose of the RDC3c Form:

This form should be used by research students who wish to apply for an extension of time and, if a funded student, for an extension of funding on the grounds that their studies have been significantly disrupted by Covid-19. All research students, at any stage in their programme, who are continuing as registered students in study during the covid-19 pandemic are eligible to apply for an extension of time.   The extension of time is the time required to adjust to the disruptions and recover the research plan.

The student-supervisory team should work together to jointly submit this form. We recommend the team read carefully the following documents before drafting their application and submitting it online.

1. COVID-19 Related Extension Policy and Process for Research Students
2. Guidelines for completing the RDC3c form: Application for COVID-19 Related Extension of Registration
3. Case study scenarios for COVID-19 related extensions

Section 1. Student-supervisor Information (To be completed by the student)

Student full name	
Student GCU email address	
Student ID number	
School	**GSBS SHLS SCEBE GCU London** Please select one
Mode of study	**Full-time (FT) Part-time (PT)** Please select one
Student status	**Home RUK EU International** Please select one
Director of Studies (DoS) full name	
DoS email address	

Section 2. Registration (To be completed by the student)

Research programme of study	PhD PhD by Previous Published Works ProfD MPhil Please select one
Year of study	**Full Time: Year 1 2 3 4 Extension yr beyond max period** **Part time: Year 1 2 3 4 5 6 Extension yr beyond max period** Please select one
Registration start date	
Details of previous Covid-19 Related Extensions of Registration RDC3c approved (please provide dates of RDC3c approval and extension times granted)	
Registration end date (please provide current end date of your max period of registration, adjusted for any past approved Extensions, Covid-19 Related Extension and Suspensions. Eg for FT PhDs with no extensions or suspensions, this would be 4 yrs from their start date. For PT PhDs, 6 yrs from their start date.	

Section 3. Funding Information (To be completed by the student)

Funding source	• **Studentship Funded by GCU** • **Studentship Funded by external source and stipend paid through GCU** • **Studentship funded by external source and stipend paid direct to you** • **Fees-only paid by GCU** • **Self- funded** • **Other, please specify** Please select one
Current end date of funding source (provide if studentship funded)	
Monthly scholarship amount received (provide if studentship funded)	

If studentship funded by external source and stipend paid direct to you, please provide:

Funder's name	
Details of funder's policy on extension of time and/or funding because of disruption to studies due to Covid-19. (We expect you to follow your funder's guidance and apply to your funder for extension of time and funding in the first instance.)	
Details of any extension of time and funding due to Covid-19 that has been granted by the funder to the student. (If there is no opportunity to receive extension of funds from the external funder, then you may apply to GCU for extension of time and financial support.)	

Section 4. Extension Request (To be completed jointly by the student and the supervisory team)

This extension request should be discussed and agreed with the student and supervisory team in advance of the submission of the RDC3c form online by the student.

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Extension of registration time requested
(The extension of time is the time required to adjust to the disruptions and recover the research plan. In the first instance, the student-supervisory team can apply for extensions of time up to a maximum of 6 months, if in their final years (eg years 3 -4 full time PhD, years 4 -6 of part-time) and up to a maximum of 3 months if in their first few years (ie years 1-2 FT, years 1-3 PT). If it becomes apparent that further time is needed to recover the research plan, you may apply again, each successive RDC3c application being for up to a maximum of 3 months.)

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Months   1   2   3   4   5   6   Please select one

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Comments on the extension time requested
(eg, if you think you might need more than the maximum amount of time allowable in this application, you can raise here that you anticipate a further RDC3c request and give your predicted time needed to adjust to the disruptions of Covid-19 and recover your research plan)

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New registration end date requested
(current registration end date + extension time requested) No fees will be charged for this extension.

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New funding end date requested
(current funding end date + extension time requested) If studentship funded

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Total funds requested
(extension time requested x monthly scholarship amount received) If studentship funded.

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Reasons for Extension request

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- **Unable to collect data and the impact cannot be mitigated**
- **Unable to undertake field work and the impact cannot be mitigated**
- **Unable to access GCU lab facilities and the impact cannot be mitigated**
- **Unable to access other resources required (please specify in your case) and the impact cannot be mitigated**
- **Unable to meet effectively between the student and supervisory team**
- **An impact on the supervisory team that has affected supervision or progress of either research or writing, such as illness**
- **Family/caring responsibilities**
- **Challenges with maintaining focus in current circumstances and stress**
- **Specific impact resulting from remote working as a result of a disability or being at higher risk of coronavirus**
- **Lack of access to mental health support, if needed**
- **Financial impacts, either personal or on the research activity**
- **Impacts related to any protected characteristics**
- **Other considerations that can be specifically attributed to Covid-19 and evidenced in the case.**

Please select one or a combination of these criteria

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Circumstances

Please provide a brief note of your circumstances (including personal and research project related circumstances), and why you need this amount of time to recover your research plan. (200 words max)

> *Reasons for needing the time might be, for example:*
> - *caring responsibilities that reduce the time that can be spent on the research studies;*
> - *fieldwork or data collection challenges;*
> - *reorienting to new ways of working that might include overcoming significant technological problems or difficulties in receiving supervisory guidance;*
> - *having to significantly redesign or refocus the study.*

Research Recovery Plan

Please provide a short summary of progress with your research project so far, give an outline of your research recovery plan with revised timeframes, indicate how you will use the time requested and provide a short summary of your individualised student support needs plan. (300 words max)

Section 5. Declaration

Separate email confirmations of the declaration are accepted in lieu of signatures.

Have the student and supervisory team discussed and agreed on 1) a research recovery plan, 2) any individualised student needs plan, 3) the extension time requested and 4) this submission?	Yes No Please select one

Actions required after submission of the online form:

If yes, the student-supervisory team agree on the submission of the extension request	The student should download a copy of the completed online RDC3c form after it is submitted and email it to the Director of Studies DoS. The Dos should forward the student's email with the copy of the online submission form to the School Programme Coordinator (PgR) and add in their email, the declaration: I confirm that the attached RDC3c submission has been discussed and agreed by the student and supervisory team.
If no, the student-supervisory team do not agree on the submission	The student should submit the completed online RDC3c form. The Director of Studies should send a separate covering letter to the School Programme Coordinator (PgR) with the supervisory team's recommendation on the extension request in Section 4 of the RDC3c form, and give the reasons why their extension request is different from the student's request for extension.

With RPAB approval of the extension, the Senior Postgraduate Research Tutor (Chair of the RPAB) is also certifying that School facilities will continue to be available for the above candidate throughout the extended time.

Appendix 2: Process for the RDC3c – Application for Covid-19 Related Extension of Registration

DoS and student complete RDC3c and student submits online form. Student downloads copy of RDC3c online submission and sends to DoS.

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DoS sends student's email + RDC3c copy to PC with email declaration confirming agreement.

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PC logs receipt of DoS declaration.

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RPAB considers online RDC3c. Expert views sought if necessary. Provides recommendation to VP Research. ←----→ Refer back to DoS if necessary

↓

VP Research makes final decision on Extension request.

↓

PC logs decision and notifies student and supervisory team.

Legend:

Student	
Supervisor(s)/Director of Studies (DoS)	
Postgraduate Research Tutor (PGRT)	
Programme Coordinator (PC)	
Research Progression and Awards Board (RPAB)	
VP Research	