POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH (PGR) CODE OF PRACTICE – 1 September 2020

The Northumbria *Postgraduate Research (PGR) Code of Practice* is annually reviewed and updated by the Graduate School Committee (GSC). The following text is arranged around the QAA Quality Code for Higher Education Expectation for Research Degrees (Chapter B11), published by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) in 2012 and the indicators of sound practice it sets out (highlighted in grey below). A simplified QAA Quality Code published in November 2018 includes a new version of the guidance relating to research degrees, available at https://www.qaa.ac.uk//en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/research-degrees.

CHAPTER B11: RESEARCH DEGREES

Expectation
Research degrees are awarded in a research environment that provides secure academic standards for doing research and learning about research approaches, methods, procedures and protocols. This environment offers students quality of opportunities and the support they need to achieve successful academic, personal and professional outcomes from their research degrees.

HIGHER EDUCATION PROVIDER ARRANGEMENTS
1.   Higher Education providers that are research degree awarding bodies have regulations for research degrees that are clear and readily available to research students and staff, including examiners. Where appropriate, regulations are supplemented by similarly accessible, subject-specific guidance at the level of the faculty, department, research centre or research institute.

1.1   The *University Framework for Quality and Standards March 2009* sets the context, details management responsibilities, and lists key elements of the Framework which ensure effective arrangements to maintain academic standards and enhance quality of programmes.

1.2   For research degree programmes in particular, these arrangements are managed on behalf of Academic Board through a network of committees comprising the Graduate School Committee, Faculty Research PGR Committees. The relevant Terms of Reference are available on the Graduate School Intranet Pages.

1.3   Throughout the programme, standard University processes and forms are used as a required minimum, with confirmation by Faculties that this is happening. This ensures a minimum standard, assures quality, and enables regular review and enhancement across the University. Faculties may add to standard forms and processes to meet subject-specific requirements, and they report local variations to Graduate School Committee.

1.4   Institutional regulations specifically for Research Degrees are published at the Graduate School Intranet Pagesand website.

1.5   Faculties provide subject-specific material for both potential and current students.

2.   Higher Education providers develop, implement and keep under review codes of practice for research degrees, which are widely applicable and help enable the higher education provider meet the Expectation of this Chapter. The codes are readily available to all students and staff involved in research degrees, and written in clear language understood by all users.

2.1   Graduate School Committee routinely reviews all formal documentation on an annual basis, and puts major formal changes to Academic Board for approval in June each year.

2.2   The University's Postgraduate Research (PGR) Code of Practice is published at the Graduate School Intranet Pages and website.

<table>
<tr><td>3.</td><td>Higher Education providers monitor their research degree provision against internal and external indicators and targets that reflect the context in which research degrees are being offered.</td></tr>
</table>

3.1   Each Faculty formally assures Graduate School Committee (in an annual report) that their operation of Postgraduate Research programmes is in accordance with the University's Postgraduate Research (PGR) Code of Practice. Faculties use a standard University process for annual review. In addition, the Graduate School itself formally assures the Graduate School Committee (in an annual report) that (a) the operation of Postgraduate Research training is in accordance with the University's research degree regulations and Code of Practice; and (b) that the operation of Postgraduate Research examinations, through the Research Degrees Committee and the administration of the Graduate School, is in accordance with the regulations and Code of Practice.

3.2   Graduate School Committee reviews the extent to which Academic Faculties, Graduate School and the Research Degrees Committee are discharging their responsibilities for research degree programmes, by assessment of these annual reports. Graduate School Committee thus determines whether programme management is satisfactory or not, and makes recommendations for enhancement or improvement. Graduate School Committee annually reports to Academic Board (via Research & Innovation Committee).

3.3   In addition, postgraduate research programme provision is periodically reviewed on a six-yearly cycle using a modified version of the standard periodic review process.

3.4   Graduate School Committee annually reviews timely submission data and produces an action plan as appropriate to improve timely progression.

3.5   Academic Faculties annually report to Graduate School Committee on the quality of research degree programmes; research degree programmes are directly linked to the individual Faculty's Research & Innovation plan and Academic Development Plan.

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">THE RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT</td></tr>
<tr><td>4.</td><td>Higher Education providers accept research students only into an environment that provides support for doing and learning about research, and where excellent research, recognised by the relevant subject community, is occurring.</td></tr>
</table>

4.1   Research opportunities are only advertised and offered where students can be trained and supported within an environment which is supportive of research.

4.2   To deliver Postgraduate Research (PGR) programmes, Faculties must demonstrate to Graduate School Committee a supportive research environment as follows:

- Statistical evidence of timely and satisfactory progress, including submission and completion rates.
- Evidence that supervision meets the criteria for appointment, i.e. the University will provide an appropriate and qualified supervision team with the relevant subject expertise (MPhil/PhD/Professional Doctorate Regulations, Section 7.1). Academic Faculties are responsible for appointing, supporting and developing supervisors to ensure that supervision teams satisfy the following criteria:
  o current subject expertise, current research experience, skill/experience to monitor, support and direct PGR students (e.g. Principal Supervisor to have one successful supervision and attended Regulations Update session every three years)
  o all new supervisors attend the New Supervisor Workshop
  o individual supervisor's workload is not excessive.

Academic Faculties are required to report annually to GSC to confirm that current supervisors meet these criteria.

Faculties will provide an environment that allows effective interactions between Postgraduate Research students and active researchers, sufficient to constitute a high quality research environment and involving collaboration with other cognate disciplines, Faculties or HEIs as appropriate.

4.3   Annually, Faculties establish with the Graduate School Committee their capacity to deliver Postgraduate Research Degree programmes, by stating the academic areas and providing evidence of quality support to the standard specified by the University. Their case is directly linked to Faculty Research & Innovation Plans and Academic Development Plans.

SELECTION, ADMISSION AND INDUCTION OF STUDENTS
5.   Higher Education providers' admissions procedures for research degrees are clear, consistently applied and demonstrate equality of opportunity.

5.1   The University provides support to applicants in their selection and preparation of projects at application stage. Faculties report to Graduate School Committee on how this is done in an annual report.

5.2   All applicants use the standard University Postgraduate Research application form, which includes the proposed title of the research and the research proposal and also provides:

- CV/Resume/Portfolio (if applicable)
- Evidence of qualifications
- Evidence of adequate and proper arrangements for fee payment
- Evidence of English Language qualifications (if applicable)
- Formal identification
- Copy of previous Tier 4 Visa (if applicable)

5.3   The University undertakes to process all applications speedily:

- Notify applicant within 2 weeks whether the application is being considered or whether the University cannot supervise this area;
- Complete the application process to acceptance or rejection within six weeks of receipt of the application.

Faculties report to Graduate School Committee their success in meeting the service standards in an annual report.

5.4   At admission, the Pro-Vice Chancellor of the Faculty (or nominee)

- Nominates the Principal Supervisor and
- Undertakes to provide a full supervision team and
- Undertakes to provide all the required resources to support the programme and to which the student is entitled i.e. individual or shared workspace (desk or bench space); access (where appropriate) to telephone, fax and photocopying facilities; IT resources and technical support; library facilities; fieldwork and collaboration support; opportunity to meet other Postgraduate Research students.

All Faculties use the standard University Postgraduate Research online application form to track   admissions and confirm the Pro-Vice Chancellor of the Faculty's commitment to provide each Postgraduate Research student with the required resources. Faculties report to Graduate School Committee on the resources made available to students in an annual report.

5.5   We acknowledge the unique contribution that all individuals can make and it is the responsibility of the University to ensure that no one individual or group is treated less favourably in terms of the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, or any other inappropriate or irrelevant criteria or distinction. Interview Panel Chairs will have attended

the University's Recruitment and Selection Training and relevant Equality and Diversity Workshops. Faculties confirm to Graduate School Committee in an annual report.

5.6   All applications are treated confidentially and in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations and   Freedom of Information Acts.

5.7   At enrolment, potential UK/EC candidates demonstrate adequate and proper arrangements for fee payment in accordance with the University's Debt Collection Policy. However, international students demonstrate this on application and certainly before acceptance. In both cases, students self-certify (as a condition of admission/enrolment) that they have the financial means to support themselves and to meet their financial commitments to the University, throughout their period of study.

6.	Only appropriately qualified and prepared applicants are admitted to research degree programmes. Admissions decisions involve at least two members of the higher education provider's staff who have received training and guidance for the selection and admission of research degree students. The decision-making process enables the higher education provider to assure itself that balanced and independent admissions decisions have been made in accordance with its admissions policy.

6.1   Applicants are eligible for consideration if:

- They meet the minimum entry requirements, including overseas equivalent qualifications (confirmed by a designated person within the University) or (for candidates with non-standard entry qualifications) after formal approval by the Faculty Research Degrees Sub-Committee (FRDSC); and also
- Meet the required level of English Language (if applicable)

6.2   Entry requirements are normally:

- A recognised first degree (which may be required to be subject-specific), normally of at least upper second class honours standard, or equivalent;
- In addition for Professional Doctorates, normally the equivalent of at least two years verifiable relevant practical experience of working in the field in a professional capacity, excluding any experience gained as part of the first degree studies;
- Where English is not the applicant's first language a minimum International Language Testing System (IELTS) score of 6.5 is required with a minimum score of 6.0 in all components (a higher score may be required for particular disciplines)[1].

6.3   Authority for admitting students to the University is exercised by the Pro-Vice Chancellor of the Faculty (or those staff charged with this responsibility by the Pro-Vice Chancellor of the Faculty at Grade 8 or above). Faculties report to Graduate School Committee the names of staff responsible for Postgraduate Research admissions in an annual report.

6.4   Before admitting students, the Pro-Vice Chancellor of the Faculty or nominee takes advice swiftly from designated, trained subject experts. Faculties report to Graduate School Committee on how this is done in an annual report.

6.5   Applicants are formally interviewed by two academic staff members. Where face to face meetings are not possible, interviews may be conducted via video or telephone conference. Faculties report to Graduate School Committee on how this is done in an annual report.

7.	Higher Education providers define and communicate clearly the responsibilities and entitlements of students undertaking research degree programmes.

---

[1] Applicants with an IELTS score of below 6.0 will not normally be considered. Applicants with an IELTS score above 6.0 may be considered for pre-sessional English.

7.1   Faculties issue to the applicant the standard University Postgraduate Research offer letter which provides full information and summarises student responsibilities/obligations with enclosures and/or web references (including the Postgraduate Research Code of Practice). These cover:

Academic	*Financial*	*Other*
• Student responsibility for the degree • Attendance requirements • Duration • Progress • Supervision requirements (indicating that supervision is a two-way process engaging both student and supervisors) • Enrolment requirement • Degree for which registered • Milestone report • Academic requirements	• Fees & Fee Payment *Student Entitlements* • Resources • Supervision • IT facilities	• Requirements of any third party/sponsors, together with relevant support arrangements that satisfy both the underlying collaborative contract and the Postgraduate Research Code of Practice. • Ethics requirements • Health & Safety requirements • Welfare support facilities • Teaching re six hours/contract • University policies & strategies • Opportunity for effective student representation • Special Educational Needs & Disabilities Act

8.   Research students are provided with sufficient information to enable them to begin their studies with an understanding of the environment in which they will be working.

8.1   All publicity material associated with postgraduate research programmes is clear, accurate and of sufficient detail to inform student choice.

8.2   All students use standard University Postgraduate Research enrolment procedures on admission, and agree to abide by the University's regulations.

8.3   Students have access to all the information which they require to commence and progress their studies with an understanding of the academic and social environment within which they will be working. All students receive the standard offer letter; and are given appropriate electronic access to the University IT network.

8.4   Each student engages in formal induction at Faculty and Department levels. Induction is compulsory within one month of the start date. Faculties report to Graduate School Committee on how induction is done in an annual report.

8.5   Students commence their programme of studies at set entry points throughout the year, normally in October or March. Exceptionally, funding or visa arrangements may require the approval (by the Faculty PGR Director) of a different entry point.

	SUPERVISION
9.	Higher Education providers appoint supervisors with the appropriate skills and subject knowledge to support and encourage research students, and to monitor their progress effectively.

9.1   At admission, the Pro-Vice Chancellor of the Faculty (or nominee):

- Nominates the Principal Supervisor
- Undertakes to provide a full supervision team

All Faculties use the standard University form to track admissions and confirm the Pro-Vice Chancellor of the Faculty's commitment to provide each Postgraduate Research student with the required resources.

9.2   All Postgraduate Research students are supervised by a team of supervisors, appointed by the Pro-Vice Chancellor of the Faculty (or nominee) on the advice of the Faculty PGR Committee, to provide subject expertise, research experience and supervision skill. All Faculties use standard processes which address the following criteria for supervisor appointment:

- Current subject expertise
- Current research experience
- Skill/experience to monitor, support and direct Postgraduate Research students (e.g. Principal Supervisor to have one successful supervision and attended a Regulations Update session every three years).
- Individual supervisor's workload is not excessive.

9.3   Faculties report to Graduate School Committee in an annual report:

- a register of names of supervisors who meet the criteria; and
- their broad subject areas (REF UOA)

9.4   All supervisors are trained to the required level specified by the University as follows:

- New supervisors are required to attend the New Supervisor Workshop
- All current supervisors are required to attend a Regulations Update session every three years.

Faculties report to Graduate School Committee in an annual report on the training undertaken by supervisors.

9.5   Contact with the student is maintained on a regular and frequent basis, by the Principal Supervisor, and appropriately by the rest of the Supervision Team. (NB Students and supervisors share responsibility for maintaining contact.) Faculties confirm to Graduate School Committee that contact between student and supervisor has been maintained at the appropriate level:

- The Principal Supervisor has regular formal contact with the student. As a minimum, this will be at least 10 times per year (full time students) / 6 times a year (part-time students).
- The full supervision team meets with the student at least every six months. (This includes programmes governed by a collaborative contract with a third party, where additional special arrangements are required for contact with non-academics).

9.6   Attendance of each student at the University, whether Home/EC or International, is formally monitored and recorded at formal supervision meetings between the student and their Principal Supervisor. Where students are not based full-time on campus, monthly contact between students and their supervisor should be by appropriate means, e.g. phone/email.

9.7   At the conclusion of each formal supervision meeting, and as part of their academic and personal
development, each student completes the on-line "Supervision Record" and submits it to their Principal Supervisor in a timely manner.

9.8   For International Students based on the University campus, the completed " Supervision Record" forms part of the attendance monitoring process for international students, as required by the UK's Home Office regulations. Where an international student fails to complete their report, the University is required by law to report this to the UK Visa and Immigration as 'non-attendance 'at the University.

9.9   Supervisors are supported by Faculties, through mentoring, in a collegiate context. Faculties report to Graduate School Committee on how this is done in an annual report.

10. Each research student has a supervisory team containing a main supervisor who is the clearly identified point of contact.

10.1   All Postgraduate Research students are supervised by a team of supervisors. The different roles of supervisors are:

10.2   Role of Principal Supervisor:

- To direct the programme
- To oversee/arrange training programme
- To help the student access the diverse support facilities provided by the University where needed, including pastoral services
- To maintain regular and frequent contact with the student, in accordance with the academic regulations.
- To monitor the required level of the student's academic achievement and timely progress and to feedback to the student regularly to help the student to meet University requirements for Project Approval, Annual Progression, and Thesis submission in accordance with the Academic Regulations.

10.3   Role of Additional Supervisor/s:

- To provide advice specific to the on-going project
- To act as part of the supervision team, led by the Principal Supervisor

10.4   Supervision teams may be changed, provided that the quality of the supervision team is maintained in accordance with the regulations. All Faculties use standard processes and forms, signed off by the Chair of the Faculty PGR Committee.
Requests for change may come from the student, members of the supervision team, Director of Postgraduate Research, Associate Pro-Vice Chancellor (Research and Innovation) or the
Pro-Vice Chancellor of the Faculty (e.g. to provide backup to cover such contingencies as illness
or study leave); a request for change will not unreasonably be denied. In particular, where a Principal Supervisor is absent for more than six weeks, appropriate arrangements will be made to ensure continuity of supervision.

11. Higher Education providers ensure that the responsibilities of research student supervisors are readily available and clearly communicated to supervisors and students.

11.1 Responsibilities of students and supervisors are published on the Graduate School Intranet Pages.

> 12.   Higher Education providers ensure that individual supervisors have sufficient time to carry out their responsibilities effectively.

12.1   An individual supervisor's workload does not exceed six PGR students (for the Principal Supervisor). Faculties confirm the number of students supervised by each Principal Supervisor to Graduate School Committee in an annual report.

> **PROGRESS AND REVIEW ARRANGEMENTS**
> 13.   Higher Education providers put in place clearly defined mechanisms for monitoring and supporting research student progress, including formal and explicit reviews of progress at different stages. Research students, supervisors and other relevant staff are made aware of progress monitoring mechanisms, including the importance of keeping appropriate records of the outcomes of meetings and related activities.

13.1   The supervision team monitors student progress in timely academic achievement towards   the appropriate level required by the award (i.e. progress against the aims of the student's programme and against the requirements for Project Approval and Annual Progression, in accordance with the Academic Regulations) and then feeds back to the student both formally and informally his/her assessment of the student's performance.   Faculties confirm to Graduate School Committee in an annual report that this has been done, and how.

13.2   Supervisors have a constant monitoring role, which entails: consistently assessing satisfactory academic progress throughout the duration of the programme in the course of routine supervision, and communicating this regularly to the student.

The provision of formal feedback to students, following meetings/contact with the Principal Supervisor, on the student's progress against the aims of his/her research degree programme and against the University's requirements for Project Approval and Annual Progression. Faculties confirm to Graduate School Committee in an annual report that this has been done, and how.

13.3   Assessment at Annual Progression constitutes the key, formal progression points for research degree students.

> **DEVELOPMENT OF RESEARCH AND OTHER SKILLS**
> 14.   Research students have appropriate opportunities for developing research, personal and professional skills. Each research student's development needs are identified and agreed jointly by the student and appropriate staff at the start of the degree; these are regularly reviewed and updated as appropriate.

14.1   Within four months of the start date, each PhD or MPhil student submits for approval an initial outline of their research programme (in a Project Approval document), to demonstrate a coherent research programme which can be completed in the time available and meets the level required of the award. Within the Project Approval (PA) submission, students record details of completed and proposed Professional Development and Research Training.

14.2   For Professional Doctorate programmes, at the end of the taught component, each student submits for approval a module assessment which includes an initial outline of their research programme to demonstrate a coherent research programme which can be completed in the time available and meets the level required of the award. Students record details of completed and proposed Professional Development and Research Training in the on-line Professional Development and Research Training task. (Some programmes may require completion of the online Project Approval e-Vision task).

14.3   The details of the Professional Development and Research Training undertaken by the student are updated regularly by the student in their on-line record in preparation for the appropriate milestone.

EVALUATION MECHANISMS

15.	Higher Education providers put in place mechanisms to collect, review and respond as appropriate to evaluations from those concerned with research degrees, including individual research students and groups of research students or their representatives. Evaluations are considered openly and constructively and the results are communicated appropriately.

14.4	Within the Annual Progression process, students submit (for approval) details to show that the Professional Development and Research Training specified at the Project Approval stage is on-going and has been completed satisfactorily to date and an appropriate planned and relevant programme is in place.

15.1	Staff/Student liaison groups are established in each Faculty to facilitate student feedback and improve the overall learning experience. Faculties report to Graduate School Committee in an annual report on the work of liaison groups.

15.2	Feedback from students is formally sought at various points during their registration (e.g. following induction or training sessions).

15.3	In addition, the University fully engages with the Higher Education Academy's Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES). The results of each biennial survey are analysed and presented to the Graduate School Committee. Faculties are then required to provide the Graduate School Committee with formal proposals to address any areas of development identified from the Survey; the Graduate School also uses the PRES results to address any areas of development identified in its role in supporting Postgraduate Research students. An appropriate University- wide action plan is prepared and actions taken in response to Postgraduate Research students' comments are subsequently publicised to all Postgraduate Research students.

15.4	A University-wide system of Postgraduate Research student representation ensures an appropriate route for Postgraduate Research student feedback. Information about this is published at
	 http://mynsu.northumbria.ac.uk/adviceandrepresentation/academic_reps/researchreps/

ASSESSMENT

16.	Higher Education providers that are research degree awarding bodies use criteria for assessing research degrees that enable them to define their academic standards and the achievements of their graduates. The criteria used to assess research degrees are clear and readily available to research students, staff and examiners

16.1	Assessment criteria for the award of the degrees of MPhil, PhD and Professional Doctorate are set out in the University's Academic Regulations for those awards

	See regulations at the Graduate School Intranet Pages and website

17.	Research degree final assessment procedures are clear and are operated rigorously, fairly and consistently. They include input from an external examiner and are carried out to a reasonable timescale. Assessment procedures are communicated clearly to research students, supervisors and examiners.

17.1	On completion of the student's programme of research, Postgraduate Research assessment comprises: examination of the student's submission, followed by a viva voce (oral) examination of the student. For Professional Doctorate programmes, a submission may be either a thesis or a portfolio.

17.2	The Graduate School reports annually to assure Graduate School Committee that the operation of Postgraduate Research examinationsare in accordance with the University's regulations and the Postgraduate Research Code of Practice.

17.3 At least three months before the end of the student's period of active research, Faculties: verify that all outstanding procedural requirements have been met and appoint examiners who are:

- In accordance with the regulations for MPhil/PhD or for Professional Doctorates;
- Appropriate to the subject matter of the thesis/portfolio (for which the final title and abstract has been confirmed with the student); and
- Whose expertise in the academic field is current.

Where circumstances require (according to the Academic Regulations for Research Awards section 9) appoint an Independent 'non-examining' Chair, whose role is to facilitate a professional and authoritative setting for the viva voce (oral) examination, and to ensure that the assessment process is conducted rigorously, equitably, appropriately, fairly and consistently, in accordance with the University's regulations and procedures.

17.4 For Professional Doctorate programmes: Each examiner is experienced in research in the general area of a student's submission and, where practicable, has experience as a specialist/professional practitioner in the topic(s) to be examined.

17.5   Faculties use standard University processes and forms to:

- Facilitate the submission of the final title of the student's research programme;
- Provide an Abstract of the student's thesis;
- Submit examiner nominations to the Research Degrees Committee for appointment;
- Confirm progression towards the examination for the student.

17.6 If more than two years elapse between appointment and first examination, the appointment of examiners is reconfirmed.

17.7 Assessment processes are clear, and are operated rigorously, fairly, transparently, consistently and supportively. Standard University processes safeguard the integrity and independence of the examination through:

- Guidance notes on individual roles within the examination process;
- Briefing for examiners and independent 'non-examining' chairs in advance of the examination;
- Direct oversight of examinations by the Graduate School Committee;
- Direct administration for examinations by the Graduate School (including normally routing all examination communication through the Graduate School);
- Support for the student during the examination from the Principal Supervisor, who can attend the viva voce (oral) examination as an observer (at the request of the student), and is required to attend (with the candidate) for de-briefing and feedback by examiners immediately after the viva voce (oral) examination has concluded; and
- Where applicable (see Academic Regulations for Research Awards section 9) the appointment of an Independent 'non-examining' Chair, whose role is clearly defined.

17.8 The viva voce (oral) examination normally takes place within two months of the student's submission being received in the Graduate School.

17.9 Examiners, students and Faculties use standard University process and forms which ensure a clear and sequential outcome of both stages of the examination process, to identify and address problems at the earliest opportunity.

17.10 Support is provided to Postgraduate Research students to submit in a timely manner. Faculties report to Graduate School Committee in an annual report on how this is done.

17.11 A student may apply for an extension of up to 4 weeks to submit for Project Approval, Annual Progression or Thesis Submission if there are personal circumstances which are unforeseen

and unpreventable and have a serious effect on the students' ability to submit by the appropriate deadline.

Throughout the programme, in the event that a Postgraduate research student encounters any circumstance, for personal, technical or research-based reasons, which they, and potentially their supervisor, feel may affect their ability to perform as normal within assessments or for extensions longer than 4 weeks, the process for submitting a PGR Circumstances Affecting Progress form should be followed. The form documents the circumstances which it is felt affect the student's current progress on the research programme, and the adjustment requested, accompanied by supporting evidence (accompanied by evidence from the student or supervisor as appropriate). The student must have full knowledge of this form being submitted.

The form must be submitted in advance to the Graduate School, who will determine follow-up actions. Graduate School Committee monitor student progression against milestones via standard reports.

17.12 Submission earlier than three months before the standard duration requires approval of the Faculty Research Degrees Sub-Committee. Faculties and students use standard processes to ensure that:

The student must put forward a reasoned case for early submission which is
- Supported by the Principal Supervisor
- Considered for approval by the Faculty PGR Committee Chair.

RESEARCH STUDENT COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS
18. Higher Education providers put in place and promote independent and formal procedures for dealing with complaints and appeals that are fair, clear to all concerned, robust, and applied consistently. The acceptable grounds for complaints and appeals are clearly defined

18.1 Complaints

Formal complaints are addressed via the University's Student Regulations, which contain dedicated regulations for research degree students.
(See the Graduate School Intranet Pages.) Students can seek independent advice from an appointed Postgraduate Research Counsellor (a Director of Postgraduate Research independent of the Faculty in which the student is based), if difficulties arise which cannot be addressed within ordinary supervision or Faculty arrangements. Details of Postgraduate Research Counsellors are published at the Graduate School Intranet Pages.

18.2 Appeals

Students use standard University procedures for appeals with regard to both examinations/assessment decisions and the requirement to withdraw from the University for Unsatisfactory Academic Progress. Procedures for research degree students are set out in the Student Regulations (see the Graduate School Intranet Pages). Throughout the year, Faculties report all appeals to Graduate School Committee immediately.