



**Code of Practice for
Research Degree Programmes
2021-22**

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Important Notice – additional guidance concerning Covid-19

Due to Covid-19 it may be necessary to make changes to some standard procedures at short notice. Please check these webpages regularly for updates to guidance:

- the [Covid-19 FAQs](#) for research students;
- [Queen Mary Ethics of Research Committee](#) Conducting research with human participants (outside the NHS) and other information provided by Queen Mary’s Research Services and Joint Research Management Office

Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes

Introduction and scope

1. This Code of Practice (the Code) provides a framework of procedures and practices to support research students and their supervisors. It outlines the commitment made between Queen Mary University of London and research students for the provision of programmes leading to the award of a research degree (such as MPhil, PhD, MD (Res), EngD) and professional doctorates. This edition of the Code of Practice takes precedence over previous versions.
2. Compliance with the Code of Practice is mandatory. The Code should be read in conjunction with the [Academic Regulations for Research Degree Programmes](#) and with related procedures approved by Senate or its delegated authority. In any issues of interpretation of the Code, the Academic Regulations always take precedence.

UK Quality Code for Higher Education

3. The Code takes into account the [UK Quality Code for Higher Education](#) (the Quality Code) Advice and Guidance on Research Degrees, in particular the Expectations and Core Practices of the Quality Code.
4. This document aims to meet the Quality Code's Guiding Principle 1 for research degrees that "provision of information is clear and accessible to research students and staff". This includes the availability of specific regulations and codes of practice for research degrees that are clear, regularly reviewed and accessible to research students and staff, including examiners.
5. The Secretary of State has designated the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) to carry out the quality and standards assessment functions set out in the Higher Education and Research Act on behalf of the Office for Students. The QAA is a founding member of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), the umbrella body for quality agencies in the European Higher Education Area. A review to check compliance against [European Standards and Guidelines](#) at least every five years is a condition of membership. The ENQA review of the QAA in 2018 found QAA to be fully or substantially compliant in all areas.

Framework for governance and quality assurance of research degrees

6. This section sets out the responsibilities for research degree programmes at Queen Mary. It identifies the roles and committees involved in making decisions about research degree programmes and those responsible for assuring the quality of the provision to research students and the academic standards of research degrees.

Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation) and the Queen Mary Senior Executive Team

7. The Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation) is responsible for providing strategic leadership on, and the delivery of, the research and innovation elements of the [Queen Mary Strategy 2030](#). The Vice-Principal's remit includes postgraduate research. The Vice-Principal is the Executive Chair of the Queen Mary Doctoral College. The Vice-Principal represents postgraduate research at the Queen Mary Senior Executive Team. The Queen Mary Senior Executive Team, chaired by the Principal, is the academic senior management team. It advises the Principal on the management of day-to-day business as well as the university's long-term future, and is responsible for the development and implementation of the [Queen Mary Strategy 2030](#).

Dean for Postgraduate Research and Director of the Doctoral College

8. The Dean for Postgraduate Research is responsible for providing strategic leadership on postgraduate research and all research student matters. The Dean is appointed for a three-year term of office, with the possibility of extension. The Dean is a member of the Vice-Principal's Research Advisory Group.
9. As Director of the Doctoral College, the Dean is responsible for the operational activities of the Doctoral College and reports to the Vice-Principal (Research). The Director is supported by the Doctoral College Team and the Research Degrees Office. The Doctoral College oversees recruitment and admissions strategy, doctoral training, and the student experience. The Doctoral College works with the Research Degrees Office to assure the quality of research degree programmes and the examination of Queen Mary research students. The Doctoral College also works in partnership with academic schools and institutes, the Queen Mary Students' Union and Professional Services departments. The Doctoral College Management Group (DCMG) advises on this work and reports regularly to the Vice-Principal's Research Advisory Group. The Doctoral College Management Group is chaired by the Dean. The other members are the Faculty Deputy Deans for Research (Postgraduate Research), the Doctoral College Manager, and the Assistant Registrar (Research Degrees).

For information about the Doctoral College see <http://www.doctoralcollege.qmul.ac.uk/>

Faculty Deputy Deans for Research (Postgraduate Research)

10. There are three academic faculties: Humanities and Social Sciences; Science and Engineering; and the School of Medicine and Dentistry. There are also many interdisciplinary institutes spanning the faculties and disciplines. Academic departments are called Schools in the Faculties of Humanities and Social Sciences and Science and Engineering, and Institutes in the School of Medicine and Dentistry. The academic Schools and Institutes providing research degree programmes are organised

within the three faculties. Each Faculty has a Dean for Research, responsible for the oversight and co-ordination of research activity in their respective Faculty. The Dean for Research delegates authority for postgraduate research to the Deputy Dean for Research (Postgraduate Research). The delegation cannot be transferred further to another individual. The Deputy Dean has specific responsibility for research degree students and programmes in their Faculty, and provides training and advice to academic staff.

11. The Deputy Deans work closely with the Dean for Postgraduate Research and are part of the Doctoral College. They are key members of the Doctoral College Management Group and the Research Degrees Programmes and Examinations Board.

Senate and the Research Degrees Programmes and Examinations Board

12. Senate is the committee with primary responsibility for oversight of the academic activity of Queen Mary including, amongst other things, academic standards, academic freedom and research. For information about Senate see <http://www.arcs.qmul.ac.uk/governance/senate/>
The Dean and the Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation) attend the Senate.
13. The Research Degrees Programmes and Examinations Board (RDPEB) has delegated authority from Senate to approve the appointment of examiners and the award of research degrees following the completion of the procedures for these processes, and applications for the interruption of studies and extension of registration. The Board also considers proposals for new research degree programmes, and reviews annually the Academic Regulations for research degrees and this Code of Practice. The Board is chaired by the Dean for Postgraduate Research, supported by staff in the Research Degrees Office. The members are the Faculty Deputy Deans for Research and a second representative from each Faculty from amongst the Directors of Graduate Studies. The Doctoral College Manager is in attendance for the part of the meeting considering policies and processes.

Schools and Institutes

14. At School/Institute level, the Head of School/Director of Institute is responsible for the quality of the student experience. Each School/Institute has a designated individual who takes responsibility for research and research student matters, typically a Director of Research. The responsibilities of the Director of Research for research student matters and decision-making are usually delegated to one or more School/Institute Directors of Graduate Studies. A School/Institute may appoint a Deputy Director of Graduate Studies to lead on a specific aspect of research degree matters, who reports to the Director of Graduate Studies. Delegated responsibilities cannot be transferred further to another individual without the approval of the Head of School/Institute.
15. Each School and Institute has identified members of Professional Services staff who are available to advise and support research students, and to support their School/Institute Director(s) of Graduate Studies.

Research Degrees Office

16. Regulations for research degrees, studentship stipend payments and operational processes, including enrolment, management of student records and the examination and award process, are handled by the Research Degrees Office in conjunction with the Dean for Postgraduate Research, the Faculty Deputy Deans for Research, and the Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation). Policy documents, guidelines and other information can be found on the [Research Degrees Office webpages](#).
17. Research studies programmes that involve collaboration with other institutions or organisations are governed by any additional requirements set out in the agreements for such collaborative provision.

Research environment

18. Schools/Institutes are responsible for providing their students with a sufficiently supportive and active research environment. Schools/Institutes wishing to accept research students must satisfy the following criteria:
 - [a] at least five research-active staff (academic staff and Principal Investigators);
 - [b] a target of a 4-year thesis submission rate (and equivalent for part-time students) in line with the Queen Mary Strategy.
19. New research studies programmes should be initiated and developed within Schools/Institutes that fulfill the above criteria.
20. The Faculty Deputy Deans for Research work with the Dean for Postgraduate Research, their Faculty Dean for Research and School/Institute Directors of Graduate Studies within their Faculty to ensure the provision and enhancement of an appropriate research environment for research students.

Selection and admission of students

21. Applications for admission to Queen Mary are considered in line with the [Admissions policies](#). General and programme-specific requirements for entry to Queen Mary are approved by the Senate, or its delegated authority. Entry requirements may be adjusted as Queen Mary deems appropriate, and shall be published annually by the start of the relevant admissions cycle.

Enrolment and registration

22. A student is required to enrol with Queen Mary at the start of their research degree programme and to register for the research studies programme. Research degree students may, with the agreement of their School or Institute, enrol at any one of the defined entry points during the year. The main enrolment points are in September,

January and April. Exceptionally a student may enrol at other defined dates through the year at the request of their School/Institute. In such cases a student would be permitted to enrol on the first working day of a particular month with the approval of their School/Institute and the Admissions Office. The situations in which an exception might be made include: restrictions on external funding start and end dates; SMD Clinical Research Fellows release dates from clinical duties; and delayed visa decisions so long as the applicant had applied to Queen Mary and for their visa in sufficient time to allow these to be processed before the programme start date.

23. Exceptionally, a student may be permitted to enrol as an associate student and undertake a period of guided study and/or research, normally for a period of up to six months (and not exceeding twelve months) with specified conditions to be met for admission to the research studies programme. This period does not count towards the minimum registration period required for award. Where the conditions of admission to the research studies programme are not met, the student is normally required to terminate their studies at the end of the period of registration as an associate student.
24. Students are required to re-enrol each academic year for the duration of the programme of studies (including during the period of writing-up of the thesis and examination) regardless of the mode of attendance and until their degree is awarded. Failure to re-enrol results in termination of registration. Research students are directed to review Queen Mary regulations and policies at the point of enrolment.
25. The minimum and maximum registration periods are specified in the [Academic Regulations](#).
26. Following submission of the thesis for examination a student continues to be enrolled fully on their programme of study until the degree is awarded or registration is terminated. The period of enrolment under examination is usually seven months, assuming an outcome of minor corrections and approval of the corrected thesis by the examiner(s). This period would be longer for outcomes requiring a longer period to make corrections.

Induction

27. Responsibility for student induction is shared between the School/Institute and the Doctoral College. Both the Doctoral College and Schools/Institutes should provide induction to their students.
28. The Doctoral College induction will cover:
 - [a] introduction to the overarching governance of research degree programmes at Queen Mary;
 - [b] introduction to the Doctoral College and its activities and support for students;
 - [c] introduction to the general structure of research degree programmes and arrangements for the monitoring of progression;
 - [d] introduction to the support available from the Research Degrees Office;
 - [e] introduction to research and professional/technical support services;

- [f] details about opportunities and requirements for research and transferable skills development, and the training provided by the Researcher Development Team in the Queen Mary Academy;
 - [g] expectations on attendance, hours of work and holiday arrangements;
 - [h] arrangements in the event of inadequate progress;
 - [i] who to contact in the event of a problem or complaint;
 - [j] introduction to policies and procedures on research integrity and ethics, plagiarism and research misconduct; and
 - [k] advice on Queen Mary services including central library and computing services, and support services such as Advice and Counselling, and the Careers Service.
29. Schools and Institutes must also provide appropriate and complementary induction activities for research degree students, including:
- [a] introduction to the structure and research portfolio of the School/Institute;
 - [b] introduction to research and professional/technical support services in the School/Institute;
 - [c] introduction to the School/Institute structure of the research studies programme and arrangements for supervision and the monitoring of progression;
 - [d] wider academic opportunities (seminars, journal clubs, research networks) including opportunities for meeting other research students and staff and opportunities to present research to peers;
 - [e] teaching opportunities;
 - [f] skills training available within and outside the School/Institute;
 - [g] mechanisms for providing feedback to the School/Institute, including opportunities for representation on relevant committees such as Staff Student Liaison Committees.
 - [h] health and safety procedures;
 - [i] advice on personal safety and security;
 - [j] how to raise concerns and/or make a complaint within the School/Institute.
30. It is the School/Institute's responsibility to provide a handbook or guidance notes for research students and to review the handbook each year to ensure that it reflects any changes in regulations or policies relating to research degrees. Information related to induction must be included in the handbook for research students.
31. Students will have an initial meeting with their primary supervisor as soon as possible following the beginning of their programme. This meeting will cover:
- [a] the nature of the supervisory relationship and composition of the supervisory team, including responsibilities and expectations;
 - [b] discussion of the research topic proposed, initial routes of enquiry and objectives;
 - [c] identification of initial training needs and formulation of a training plan;
 - [d] recording supervision meetings using the Supervision Log on MySIS; and
 - [e] how the student's progress will be assessed.

Attendance

32. Full-time students are expected to undertake a full study week of 35 hours on their research studies.
33. Part-time students should reach an agreement with their supervisors at the start of their registration as to the proportion of time they will spend on their research degree programme to enable them to submit within the prescribed period. The Academic Regulations for Research Degrees state that the workload of a part-time student is deemed to be 50% of that of a full-time student. It is recognised that the time a part-time student may spend on their studies may vary through the course of the programme. Any arrangement agreed should not compromise submission time within the prescribed maximum period of registration.
34. A student is expected to continue in the same mode of study for which they originally registered (full-time or part-time study). Requests from students to transfer between full-time and part-time status are approved by the Director of Graduate Studies. The request should usually be to make a permanent change to mode of study.
35. All students should agree their holiday periods with their primary supervisor. For full-time students the annual holiday entitlement is 30 working days plus the eight UK public holidays and the four Queen Mary closure days. Holiday entitlement is pro rata for part-time students and for parts of a year. Students working in collaboration with non-academic partners are expected to bear in mind their obligations to those partners in planning leave. Excessive absences must be reported to the Head of School/Institute and the Director of Graduate Studies via normal progress report procedures.
36. Students may not be absent without permission from their supervisor. In cases of illness or injury, the student should inform their supervisor(s) and the School/Institute of absence from studies. On the eighth day of the student's sickness (including non-working days) the student should supply a doctor's certificate for any further absence and provide this to the School/Institute research student administrator. Where a student is expected to be absent for more than one month, whether consecutively or cumulatively, the student must apply to interrupt their studies (see 75-84 below).
37. If a student is experiencing difficulties in their general attendance or their submission of work does not meet the School/Institute requirements, this should be discussed with the supervisory team, and the Director of Graduate Studies if appropriate, to see what support might be offered to the student to resolve any study difficulties.
38. If a student consistently misses supervision meetings or other School/Institute activities that they are expected to attend and/or does not submit work or misses deadlines as agreed with their supervisory team then a student's registration with Queen Mary may be reviewed by the School/Institute. Queen Mary may terminate the registration of a student who fails to meet the progression requirements for the research studies programme or where their general attendance or submission of work and/or completion of required activities fails to meet the stated requirements.
39. International students with student immigration permission (including Tier 4) sponsored by Queen Mary may be at risk of having their visa curtailed if they do not

engage regularly and consistently with their research studies programme. The Advice and Counselling Service provides support to international students on immigration matters. Please see <https://www.welfare.qmul.ac.uk/international> for further information.

Supervision

40. The School/Institute's Director of Graduate Studies is responsible for establishing supervision arrangements for each student that conform to this Code, and may be required to report on these arrangements to the Faculty Deputy Dean for Research.

The Supervisory Team

41. Each research student will have an identified primary supervisor who is their main point of contact with the School/Institute and must be a member of academic staff at Queen Mary (whether Teaching & Research, Teaching & Scholarship, or Teaching & Professional Practice), as part of their supervisory team.
42. Each supervisory team must normally include at least two members of academic staff from Queen Mary, of which either the primary or secondary supervisor or both must be research-active. The primary and second supervisors' contract periods will normally extend to cover at least the expected duration of the student's research programme. Additional members of the supervisory team can include members of post-doctoral research staff, industrial partners or other external collaborators. The division of roles and responsibilities between members of the supervisory team will be clearly set out and agreed with the student at the start of the research programme, and when any changes are made to the team.
43. If the primary supervisor identified for a student has not previously been part of a successful supervisory team (supervising a student to a timely completion) then co-supervision arrangements must be put in place and the second academic supervisor must have experience of supervising a research student through to timely completion. Together the co-supervisors will jointly undertake to ensure that the responsibilities of supervisors are met. Only one supervisor can be designated as the primary supervisor.
44. Supervisors will normally have a maximum of 8 research students for whom they act as primary supervisor. Allocation of supervisory responsibilities will take into account other duties and professional commitments. Supervisors should have sufficient time for adequate contact with each of their research students to carry out their responsibilities effectively.
45. If the primary supervisor leaves Queen Mary the School/Institute must appoint a suitable replacement, normally the existing second supervisor. A departing primary supervisor may continue as an external member of the student's supervisory team, but in all cases a replacement primary supervisor must be appointed to act as the main point of contact with Queen Mary as well as a new second supervisor if appropriate.
46. Temporary arrangements will be made by the Director of Graduate Studies to cover periods of prolonged absence on the part of supervisors (for example, parental or sick or

unpaid leave). During periods of research leave (sabbatical or otherwise), it is the normal expectation that supervisors continue in their role. Supervisors should discuss this matter with their Head of School/Institute as part of the approval process for their leave application, and inform their Director of Graduate Studies in good time if leave has been granted. In very exceptional circumstances, where adequate supervision would not be possible during research leave and the other member(s) of the team are unable to take a leading role in supervision, the Director of Graduate Studies will make temporary alternative arrangements. Their nature will also take into account the length of the leave.

47. Any problems with the operation of the supervisory team or the supervisory relationship in general should be reported to the Director of Graduate Studies in the first instance. If the student does not wish to discuss the matter with the Director of Graduate Studies, the student may report the matter to the Head of School/Institute or the Faculty Deputy Dean for Research.

Supervision meetings and the Supervision Log

48. For the purposes of paras. 48-50 a supervision is defined as a sustained conversation between supervisor(s) and a student about the student's research and research training. The nature of different disciplines means that supervisory practice will take a variety of forms. Supervision may include for example, one-to-one meetings, telephone conversations or video-link/online meetings. Opportunities are also made available for research students and supervisors to meet informally. Research group meetings, lab meetings and email conversations are not supervision meetings.
49. There should be a minimum of ten supervisory meetings per academic year for full-time students (pro rata for part-time students) held at regular intervals up to submission of the thesis for examination. This is broadly equivalent to one meeting per month for full-time students and one meeting every two months for part-time students, taking into account holiday periods. Supervision meetings may be held with any member of the supervisory team. Meetings should normally take place in person, but may take place via other means as described in para. 48 if all participants are in agreement.
50. Keeping a record of supervisions which students and supervisors may refer to quickly and easily is key to successful supervision. Under the requirements of the UK Quality Assurance Agency, and for international students, UK Visas and Immigration, Queen Mary must also be able to demonstrate that students are receiving sufficient supervision and that they are engaged in their studies. To fulfil both of these responsibilities, students and supervisors must use the on-line Supervision Log, accessed through MySIS. Students must record supervision reports on the log. It is the responsibility of both students and supervisors that supervisions are recorded on the log at: <https://mysis.qmul.ac.uk> in the Research Student Data area (guidance notes are available in MySIS).
51. Full-time research students should enter a minimum of ten reports on the Supervision Log per academic year. Part-time students should enter a minimum of five reports on the log per academic year. Reports should also be recorded on the Supervision Log during a period of making corrections to the thesis identified by the examiners. Failure to use the log in line with the recommendations in the Code may be taken as evidence of

lack of engagement with studies when reviewing a student's academic progress and continued registration on their programme.

Responsibilities of supervisors

52. Primary supervisors will:

- [a] be sufficiently knowledgeable in the student's area of research and the research ethics and ethical matters specific to this area to provide advice for the duration of the student's studies, including a period of revision when a student has been required to make corrections to their thesis after the examination;
- [b] arrange the first meeting with the student as soon as possible following initial enrolment on the programme, and thereafter meet the student according to a mutually-agreed schedule, to monitor progress and review the programme for future work;
- [c] respond to student reports on supervision meetings with the primary supervisor through the Supervision Log, ideally within one week of the student logging a report. This responsibility is shared with other members of the supervisory team. Any member of the supervisory team may respond to a report;
- [d] advise the student to be aware of, and that they should comply with, Queen Mary policies on health and safety applying to their research, and provide information on any School/Institute policies and guidance;
- [e] give advice on scheduling work and longer-term planning towards timely submission of the research thesis and completion, and to provide advice and help when difficulties occur;
- [f] request written work as appropriate according to an agreed timetable, and provide honest and constructive criticism, either orally or in writing. Written work should normally be returned according to a mutually agreed timetable, and students should be advised at the time of submission if other responsibilities will prevent this being achieved;
- [g] assist the student in identifying research and other training needs at the beginning of the research programme, and in reviewing these needs over the course of the programme's duration. This assessment and review should be done by completing the Skills Assessment and Personal Development plan with the student at the start of their research studies. The plan should be reviewed before every annual progression meeting. To download the plan click here: <https://www.qmul.ac.uk/queenmaryacademy/researcher-development/resources-frameworks--surveys/phd-students/personal-development-plan/> }
- [h] provide supervision and arrange access to facilities during a period of revision when a student has been required to make corrections to their thesis after the examination;

- [i] be sufficiently knowledgeable of the research ethics and ethical matters specific to the student's area of research to be able to advise the student on Queen Mary policies on research integrity, including whether the student should obtain research ethics approval and, if necessary, to do so before the project begins, a Disclosure and Barring Check (DBS) or undertake a risk assessment before the research in question is undertaken. Information about Queen Mary research policies is available from the Queen Mary [policy zone](#) and the [Queen Mary Ethics of Research Committee](#).
 - [j] advise the student on discussing work or sharing any data with third parties (bearing in mind the need to maintain confidentiality), and introduce them to other scholars in the field;
 - [k] monitor the student's progress and inform them if it is not satisfactory, and report issues on student progress to the Director of Graduate Studies if appropriate;
 - [l] inform the School/Institute Director of Graduate Studies, the Research Degrees Office, and any funding body if the student ceases to attend regularly, or fails to progress over a prolonged period;
 - [m] approve examination entry on MySIS and submission of the thesis for examination which requires the supervisor to sign the thesis submission form;
 - [n] nominate through MySIS potential internal and external examiners for the student's final examination and arrange a mutually convenient date and place for the oral examination;
 - [o] respect and adhere to the Queen Mary Charter "[Our Community](#)" and the [Dignity at Work and Study policies](#), behaving honestly and with integrity at all times.
53. If the primary supervisor changes part way through a student's studies or in the later stages of writing the thesis, the responsibilities of the new primary supervisor may be different to those required earlier in the student's research studies. The role of the new primary supervisor will be considered in relation to the stage of the student's research studies and the contribution of the second supervisor and the supervisory team as a whole. The role of the primary supervisor may change from leading advice on research studies to guiding the student through the writing and examination process and other members of the supervisory team will provide the subject expertise, or the departing primary supervisor may continue as an external member of the student's supervisory team. If the revised supervisory team considers that the stage of the student's studies requires research specialist knowledge and this is not available within Queen Mary, the Director of Graduate Studies may be asked to consider if input from an external with research specialist knowledge of the student's research field may be arranged. The division of roles and responsibilities between members of the supervisory team will be clearly set out and agreed with the student when any changes are made to the team.
54. The second supervisor is an integral and essential part of the supervisory team. Their precise role and input will be different for each student, and is dependent on circumstances surrounding the project, the student and the relationship with the first supervisor. The general expectations of the second supervisor are that they:

- act in an advisory role to both the student and, if required, the first supervisor;
- may have oversight of the research programme with respect to the progression and development of the student (particularly where the first supervisor may not have substantial supervision experience);
- act as a point of contact for the student on academic and pastoral issues;
- may complement the expertise of the first supervisor in driving the research project forward; and
- provide continuity of supervision in the event of the first supervisor leaving Queen Mary or being absent.

55. All new supervisors must undertake the training for this role provided by the Doctoral College. All supervisors must undertake ‘refresher’ training, which may be provided at Faculty or School/Institute level, every two years. Attendance at supervisor training is recorded on HR staff records.

Responsibilities of students

56. Students will:

- [a] work diligently on the programme of research and aim to complete the programme and submit the thesis within the agreed time frame. For example:

Programme length	Thesis submission deadline from initial date of enrolment
Four years full-time	3 years 364 days
Five years full-time	4 years 364 days
Seven years part-time	6 years 364 days

Students who have changed their mode of study from full-time to part-time (and vice versa), interrupted their studies, or have been granted an extension to their period of registration will have a different thesis submission deadline to the guide above. Each student’s thesis submission deadline is shown in their MySIS details page. Please contact the Research Degrees Office with any queries about the thesis submission deadline.

If the thesis submission deadline falls on a Saturday, Sunday or UK Bank Holiday, the two bound copies of the thesis must be submitted by 4.00 p.m. of the final working day before the deadline¹. [Please see footnote 1 below.]

- [b] take overall responsibility for their research and the work produced;

¹ The Research Degrees Board has agreed to continue the exception, due to Covid-19 related issues, that in the 2021-22 academic year a student may submit their thesis for examination by email to the Research Degrees Office at researchdegrees@qmul.ac.uk. The two bound copies are not required. An electronic copy of the thesis will be sent to the examiners. Please see the RDO webpages and Covid-19 FAQs for research students.

- [c] carry out research in compliance with Queen Mary and School/Institute health and safety policies;
- [d] take a pro-active role in discussing with the supervisory team the type of guidance and comment that is most helpful at different points in the progress of the research;
- [e] agree a schedule of meetings with the supervisory team, and attend these promptly;
- [f] full-time research students must submit a minimum of ten reports on the Supervision Log per academic year. Part-time students must submit a minimum of five reports on the log per academic year. Reports should cover topics discussed at supervisory meetings and include any relevant training undertaken/courses attended;
- [g] submit written material as required to a timetable agreed with the supervisor for comment and discussion, and respond honestly and constructively to comments and suggestions (although this does not alter the student's overall responsibility for the work);
- [h] attend any programme(s) of researcher development and research skills training, taught classes and research seminars as agreed with the supervisory team, or required by the School/Institute and the student's funding body;
- [i] record evidence of engagement with research and skills training on the Skills Points System. Students who complete 210 points of training by the submission of their thesis for examination will receive the Queen Mary Diploma in Researcher Development (see http://www.doctoralcollege.qmul.ac.uk/?page_id=55);
- [j] conform to all Queen Mary policies on research integrity, and associated processes, including submitting an application for ethical approval for their research where necessary or a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) application. Information about Queen Mary research policies is available from the Queen Mary policy zone at <http://www.arcs.qmul.ac.uk/policy/index.html>;
- [k] inform the supervisory team of any problems or difficulties when they arise;
- [l] submit reports for assessment and other work to inform decisions about their progress as required;
- [m] enrol as a student of Queen Mary at the beginning of the programme of study, and re-enrol subsequently at the start of each academic year until the degree is awarded;
- [n] monitor their @qmul.ac.uk email address issued to them at enrolment to ensure they are receiving all formal communications from Queen Mary. Official emails relating to periods of re-enrolment, progression or status transfers etc. will only be sent to this address, regardless of whether the student subsequently receives an additional departmental email address. It is the student's responsibility to set up forwarding from their official account to other addresses as needed / appropriate;

- [o] respect and adhere to the Queen Mary Charter [“Our Community”](#) and the [Dignity at Work and Study policies](#), behaving honestly and with integrity at all times.

Responsibilities of Directors of Graduate Studies

57. The Head of School/Director of Institute delegates responsibility for research student matters through the Director of Research usually to the Director(s) of Graduate Studies to carry out the following duties as appropriate:

Oversee and monitor provision within the School/Institute

- [a] Oversee the admissions process for research degrees. The DGS or designated lead for graduate admissions will ensure before recommending an offer that the topic identified is appropriate for a research degree, that the necessary research facilities and research training can be provided, and that appropriate supervision is in place for the expected duration of the programme. The DGS or other designated lead for research student admissions should approve all admissions offers.
- [b] Directors of Graduate Studies are responsible for all research students with primary registration in their School/Institute. In cases of co-supervision across schools, the DGS in the School/Institute in which the student is registered approves decisions, liaising with the DGS in the other School/Institute as appropriate.
- [c] Ensure that an appropriate primary and second supervisor or supervisory team is appointed for each student.
- [d] Ensure that all research students are aware of pastoral care arrangements within the School/Institute.
(Directors of Graduate Studies are encouraged to attend the Queen Mary courses on Student Support, and Supporting Mental Health and Wellbeing in PGRs: guidance for supervisors.)
- [e] Ensure that all staff appointed as supervisors are appropriately trained for their role.
- [f] Monitor levels of supervision and reports on the use made of the Supervision Log.
- [g] Ensure that internal examiners with limited examination experience are appropriately trained for the role, on the request of the Faculty Deputy Dean for Postgraduate Research or the Research Degrees Programmes and Examinations Board.
- [h] Monitor issues arising from reports from research degree examiners and recommend appropriate action.
- [i] Attend appropriate Faculty and School/Institute committees, for example the Graduate Studies Committee and/or Directors of Graduate Studies Forums, and disseminate information back to Schools/Institutes.
- [j] Carry out an annual review of research degree programmes for their School/Institute, meeting with the Faculty Deputy Dean for Research.

Develop and review School/Institute policy on progression requirements

- [k] Oversee the monitoring of student progress in accordance with the Academic Regulations and the Code of Practice.

- [l] Liaise with the Research Degrees Programmes and Examinations Board, via their Deputy Dean for Research, as appropriate, with regard to interruptions of study, extensions of thesis submission dates, nomination of examiners and examination outcomes, and withdrawal and de-registration from Queen Mary.
- [m] Approve formal progress and status reviews on behalf of the School/Institute.

Develop and review School/Institute policy regarding student feedback and complaints

- [n] Receive and deal with student complaints and problems in the first instance.
- [o] Ensure suitable alternative supervision arrangements in the case of breakdown of relations between a supervisor and the student or where a change of supervisor is desirable. In case of absence or the departure of the primary supervisor or secondary supervisor, ensure that adequate arrangements are made for the student's continuing supervision.
- [p] Ensure that appropriate student feedback mechanisms are in place within the School/Institute, for example research student representation on the Student Staff Liaison Committee and/or Research Committee and encourage engagement with, and review results of, student surveys.
- [q] Ensure that each School/Institute has, as a minimum, at least one research student Course Representative to attend Student-Staff Liaison Committees or equivalent.

Oversee and monitor research training and skills development

- [r] Oversee and encourage student engagement with School/Institute research training programmes, and all other research and professional development training.
- [s] Ensure that all students receive appropriate training before commencing any teaching.
- [t] Encourage students to use the Skills Points System to record training and research activities.
- [u] Ensure that supervisors are completing the Skills Assessment and Personal Development Plan at the start of their student's research studies and reviewing this annually with each of their students. The plan should be discussed at annual progression review. Information is provided at <https://www.qmul.ac.uk/queenmaryacademy/researcher-development/resources-frameworks--surveys/phd-students/personal-development-plan/>

Progression and review

58. The supervisor is responsible for regular reviews of student progress and will inform the student and Director of Graduate Studies if progress is not satisfactory.
59. The Academic Regulations for Research Degrees outline the parameters for each of the progression points and outcomes, including transfer to writing-up status. It is the responsibility of the Director of Graduate Studies to ensure that students' progression is assessed in accordance with the Regulations and published procedures.

60. The requirements for progression are set by each School/Institute. These should usually include the submission of written work by the student, a training needs analysis review using the Skills Assessment and Personal Development Plan (<https://www.qmul.ac.uk/queenmaryacademy/researcher-development/resources-frameworks--surveys/phd-students/personal-development-plan/>) jointly prepared by the student and their supervisory team, a written report by the primary supervisor and/or supervisory team, and an oral examination. Other requirements for certain programmes may be specified in School/Institute guidance. Progression decisions are made by the Director of Graduate Studies following a report on the student's progress and recorded on MySIS.
61. First year progression is a formal process that permits a student to continue to the next stage/period of their research studies programme. For a full-time student on a PhD, MPhil, MD(Res) or EngD programme this takes place between 6 to 9 months after registration on the research studies programme. For a part-time student on a PhD, MPhil, MD(Res) or EngD programme this takes place between 12 to 18 months after registration on the research studies programme. A progression panel is set up to discuss and review progress with the student. The panel must include at least two people. At least one member of the progression panel should be independent of the student's supervisory team. Decisions on progression must be taken by members of the panel who are independent of the supervisory team. A student who fails to progress on the first assessment will be allowed a second attempt. Students may be deregistered if they have not achieved progression after two attempts.
62. Schools/Institutes also put in place arrangements for the regular monitoring and assessment of student progress after first year progression. For full-time students there should be a formal annual review of progress in each year of study following first year progression; for part-time students there should be a formal biennial review of progress (i.e. every two years). It is recommended that part-time students should complete an annual review in the intervening years. The requirements for each research degree programme are specified in School/Institute guidance. Reports on progress are made to the Director of Graduate Studies to consider and approve.
63. Progression for students on Professional Doctorate programmes (DrPS, DPsych and DCLinDent programmes) is assessed as outlined in School/Institute guidance.
64. The outcomes of formal progress reviews are recorded on MySIS by Schools and Institutes so that the student's central record is updated appropriately.

Transfer to writing up status

65. Transfer to writing up status is an academic progression point. In order to transfer to writing up status, a student is required to have completed all experimental work or collection of material related to their thesis², to have passed second year progression (or

² In the academic year 2021-22 Schools and Institutes have the flexibility to waive the requirement that a student must have completed all experimental work or collection of material related to their thesis before applying to transfer to writing-up status where the delay in research progress has been due to the impact of Covid-19 on a student's research studies. Students should discuss the progress of their research studies with

equivalent for part-time students) and, in the judgement of the supervisor, be in a position to submit the thesis within 12 months. Schools/Institutes may stipulate additional requirements for approving transfer to writing up status. A student can apply to transfer to 'writing up' status only if they have completed the minimum period of study and not exceeded the maximum period of study. A student registered for MPhil/PhD can only be transferred to writing up status if they have completed the process of being assessed from MPhil to PhD registration status. The maximum period for 'writing up' is one calendar year regardless of the mode of attendance of the student. In exceptional circumstances the writing up period may be extended. The transfer to writing up application form is available through the student MySIS portal.

66. A student who submits their thesis for examination and has not applied for transfer to writing up shall be transferred to writing up status with effect from the date of submission of their thesis. A new 'examination' status is to be introduced for students who have submitted their thesis for examination.

Termination of registration

67. The Academic Regulations outline the reasons for which a student's registration may be terminated. Schools/Institutes may recommend that a student's registration be terminated on the grounds of insufficient academic progress. This recommendation may follow a formal progress review but may also be made at other points during the programme of study. A recommendation to terminate studies outside of the formal annual progression process should only be made after the student has been given two written warnings that they are at risk of de-registration unless specified objectives are met within a clear timeframe.
68. Recommendations for termination of registration on the grounds of insufficient academic progress outside of the formal annual progression process must be approved by the School/Institute's Director of Graduate Studies and the Faculty Deputy Dean for Research and must be communicated to the Research Degrees Office.
69. The formal procedures for de-registration, and for appeals against decisions to de-register a student, are outlined in the Academic Regulations and related policies/procedures. These are available on the Research Degrees Office website. Information about how to make an appeal is available at <http://www.arcs.qmul.ac.uk/students/student-appeals/appeals/index.html>

Interruption of study

70. The Director of Graduate Studies is responsible for receiving and considering student requests for interruption of studies. Requests should normally be supported by the supervisor and Director of Graduate Studies, and submitted to the Research Degrees Office to refer to the Research Degrees Programmes and Examinations Board.

their supervisor and make an assessment of the outstanding experimental work or collection of material and timetable for completing the thesis before making an application. This policy will be reviewed in 2021-22 for the 2022-23 academic year.

71. Interruptions may be requested at any point throughout the period of study and throughout the period of writing up. More than one application may be submitted during the research studies programme.
72. During an interruption of study a student remains registered on their programme of study but ceases to be an enrolled student of Queen Mary. This has consequences for student status, funding, and immigration permission for international students. Depending on the reason for the interruption, studentship funding may be suspended during this period. Interruptions to the course of study may be permitted in accordance with the [Interruptions Policy](#) for a number of reasons such as illness, personal and family reasons, pregnancy or pregnancy-related illness, paternity leave, adoption leave, financial difficulties. The Research Degrees Programmes and Examinations Board may also grant interruptions for other reasons it considers acceptable. Placements and internships that contribute directly to a student's research studies and from which data/results will be used in the thesis, or which are a formal part of the programme requirements, are not eligible for an interruption of studies (and a change to the thesis submission deadline). Corroborating evidence must be provided to match the period of interruption being requested as set out in the guidance on the Research Degrees webpages. Interruptions will not be granted solely on the grounds of lack of progress.
73. Research degree students are permitted to interrupt their studies for whole months only and must resume their studies and re-enrol at the approved re-enrolment point.
74. Students may only interrupt for a minimum of one month at a time. Students are permitted to interrupt their research degree programme for up to one year in the first instance. The maximum permitted period of interruption is 24 months in total. Applications that would exceed the maximum total period of interruption will be granted only in exceptional circumstances with the approval of the Research Degrees Programmes and Examinations Board and the Academic Registrar.
75. A student may interrupt their registration on the grounds of primary carer leave for up to one year per child. This may cover pregnancy and related illnesses, and/or caring responsibilities. Periods of interruption for primary carer leave shall not count towards the maximum of two years permitted for interruption, but in all other respects the standard interruption procedures shall apply. Secondary carers wishing to take an extended period of leave shall do so under the standard interruption procedures.
76. Students are liable for payment of tuition fees up to the date that they withdraw or interrupt their studies. Students are liable for payment of tuition fees from the date they resume their programme. For further guidance regarding fee liability please contact the Finance Office.
77. Students may continue to work personally on their research during interruptions of study and have access to the library with limited borrowing rights. Any arrangements for contact between a student and their supervisory team during a period of interruption should be agreed in advance of the period of interruption, for example to keep in touch and to plan the return to study. During a period of interruption students should not have access to laboratories or carry out fieldwork.

78. All requests for interruptions should be notified to the Research Degrees Office in advance of their commencement for referral to the Research Degrees Programmes and Examinations Board to consider. Interruptions cannot normally be applied retrospectively. Students may be de-registered if they do not resume studies at the end of the approved period of interruption or are absent from their studies without requesting an interruption of study or an extension to an approved period of interruption. Queen Mary may require a student due to return from interruption to produce medical evidence of their fitness to study. If this evidence is not produced, or is found unsatisfactory, the student shall not be permitted to return. In such cases a student may be permitted to extend the interruption of study (where an interruption allowance remains), or else the student may be deregistered from the programme of study.
79. For further information please refer to the [student guide on interrupting studies](#) provided by the Advice and Counselling Service.

Extension of registration

80. The Director of Graduate Studies is responsible for receiving and considering student requests for extension of study beyond the maximum registration period for students who have not submitted their thesis for examination. Requests should normally be supported by the supervisor and Director of Graduate Studies, and submitted to the Research Degrees Office to refer to the Research Degrees Programmes and Examinations Board.
81. Extension of study beyond the maximum registration period is permitted in exceptional circumstances, normally due to unforeseen circumstances beyond the student's control, which would make it extremely difficult to submit the thesis within the programme timeframe. If a student is not able to work on their research programme at all for a period of time it may be more appropriate to apply to interrupt studies.
82. Students may request an extension of their thesis submission deadline of up to one year. Extensions are normally granted in periods of whole months and on one occasion only. Extensions can normally only be authorised for students who are in their fourth year of study or have writing up status. They must normally be applied for at the latest three months before the programme end date. Applications that exceed the maximum permitted extension to the registration period of 12 months will be granted only in exceptional circumstances with the approval of the Research Degrees Programmes and Examinations Board and the Academic Registrar.
83. Students must provide evidence of progress to date and the ability to submit within the requested time period.
84. All requests for extensions should be notified to the Research Degrees Office in advance of their commencement for referral to the Research Degrees Programmes and Examinations Board.

Disability and Dyslexia Service

85. The [Disability and Dyslexia Service](#) (DDS) offers support for all students with disabilities, specific learning differences and mental health difficulties at Queen Mary.
86. The team offers advice, guidance and support in the following areas:
- Diagnostic pathway for students who may have a specific learning difference, e.g. dyslexia;
 - Support in applying for funding through the Disabled Students' Allowances (DSA) scheme;
 - Arranging DSA assessments of need;
 - Accessing loaned equipment (e.g. digital voice recorders);
 - Specialist one-to-one study skills tuition;
 - Guidance and support in securing access to teaching materials, e.g. access to course materials in alternative formats;
 - The provision of non-specialist human support, e.g. note-takers;
 - Specialist mentoring support for students with mental health difficulties and conditions on the autistic spectrum;
 - Advice about planning research and writing the thesis in the expected duration of the programme, including preparation for the viva;
 - Examination Access Arrangements, e.g. additional time.
87. The DDS can advise students and their School/Institute on reasonable adjustments to studies. Students supported by the Disability and Dyslexia Service can expect to access the following reasonable adjustments:
- Examination Access Arrangements;
 - Library concessions, e.g. a waiver on some library fines;
 - A 'cover note' for students with specific learning differences, which advises academic colleagues on best practice when reviewing work produced by students with specific learning differences;
 - Permission to record lectures;
 - Advocacy when making requests to schools and faculties;
 - A viva guideline cover note for SpLD/Autistic Spectrum Condition students, to provide suggested reasonable adjustments for their viva and guidance to examiners as to their approach.
88. Any agreed reasonable adjustments are provided throughout the study period including during the writing-up period.
89. An extension to the thesis submission deadline is not normally granted for a declared disability. Students are encouraged to meet with the DDS team early in their studies to discuss what support they might need and to put in place mechanisms to help with drafting the thesis well in advance of the final thesis submission some 3-4 years after enrolment at Queen Mary. Please refer to the above sections on interruption of study and extension of registration for examples of the type of situation that would require an interruption or an extension. In cases of late diagnosis of specific learning difficulties in the final year of study, the Research Degrees Programmes and Examinations Board will consider requests on a case by case basis.

90. Students may submit a statement declaring their disability – along with any support they require access to - with their thesis at the time of submission. Statements can be obtained from the Disability and Dyslexia Service and will take the form of a “Student Support Summary” (these are generated through MySIS by the Disability and Dyslexia Service).

Research training and skills development

91. All students will have access to training in appropriate research methods and relevant researcher development skills provided by their School or Institute, the Doctoral College, Doctoral Training Centres/Partnerships, and the [Researcher Development Team](#) in the Queen Mary Academy.
92. The individual programme of research training will be discussed at the student’s initial meeting with the supervisory team. The student and supervisory team should complete the Skills Assessment and Personal Development Plan available here <https://www.qmul.ac.uk/queenmaryacademy/researcher-development/resources-frameworks--surveys/phd-students/personal-development-plan/> The Skills Assessment and Personal Development Plan should be reviewed regularly during the course of the programme, particularly at formal progress reviews.
93. All students must complete the training requirements of their School/Institute and funding body.
94. Every research student is expected to take part in at least 210 hours of development activities over the course of their studies. This is roughly equal to two weeks’ training and development for each full-time year of study.
95. Students are expected to record evidence of engagement with research and skills training and development activities on [the Queen Mary Skills Points System](#). Points are awarded for different activities. Students who record 210 points of training by the submission of their thesis for examination will receive the Queen Mary Diploma in Researcher Development.
96. Students may be given the opportunity to contribute to teaching through lecturing, seminars, demonstrating practical classes, project supervision, marking and taking tutorials according to the teaching practices in the Schools/Institutes for which the teaching is being undertaken. All students must receive appropriate training before commencing any teaching. Please see this [information](#) about training requirements for research students undertaking teaching.
97. Any teaching undertaken by the student must be agreed by their supervisor(s) and must be in line with the terms and conditions of a student’s funding if appropriate.

Paid work

98. All full-time students are expected to undertake a full week of study of at least 35 hours on their research degree programme and pro rata for part-time students. Students may undertake paid teaching or demonstrating work with the approval of their supervisor. For full-time students it is recommended that this is normally no more than six hours per week averaged over the year, including preparation and marking. If a student wishes to undertake paid work for Queen Mary for more than 6 hours per week, this should be approved by their supervisor and the School/Institute Director of Graduate Studies. The work must be supported by appropriate training. Students in receipt of scholarship funding must comply with any conditions concerning paid work set by their funding body. The total time spent (including preparation and marking) should not interfere with the progress of the student's research studies. Teaching work is paid at the Queen Mary standard rates for the type of activity. Schools and Institutes issue contracts to students for paid work.
99. In considering paid work outside Queen Mary, full-time students should bear in mind the need to work full-time on their research. Paid work should not delay or interfere with research training and the timely submission of the thesis. If a student is in receipt of a stipend from Queen Mary, stipend payments will be suspended if a student takes up full-time work during the period of the studentship, for example to undertake an external placement, internship and any other work that is not a formal requirement of the degree programme. If a student wishes to take-up full-time work they should discuss with their supervisor making an application to interrupt their studies.
100. International students studying full-time in the UK with student immigration permission (including Tier 4) may take up limited work. International students who have student immigration permission (including Tier 4) for part-time study are not permitted to work at all in the UK. Please see this [guidance](#) provided by the Advice and Counselling Service.

Internships and placements

101. In some programmes of study there may be opportunities for students to undertake an internship or placement with an external organisation or within Queen Mary. If the internship is linked directly to the research studies programme there is no change to the programme length. If the opportunity is not directly related to the student's research studies it may be necessary to apply for an interruption of studies. For students in receipt of external funding, the guidance on internships and placements may take precedence if they differ from Queen Mary guidance. Decisions will be made by the Research Degrees Programmes and Examinations Board. International students with Tier 4 immigration permission should check the implications for their immigration permission with the Advice and Counselling Service.

Research Ethics and Research Integrity

102. Students must comply with Queen Mary policies on research integrity and ethical review of research. Students and supervisors will familiarise themselves with Queen Mary's policies on research with human participants and research integrity and

associated procedures for the ethical review of research, and consider whether the student's research requires research ethics approval from the [Queen Mary Ethics of Research Committee](#). An application for approval should be submitted to the committee if necessary at the appropriate point before the research is undertaken. Please visit the [QMERC website](#) for further information or email research-ethics@qmul.ac.uk to discuss an upcoming application.

103. The Research Degrees Office can assist with applications to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) for research studies involving human participants. Information about the DBS requirements can be found at [GOV.UK](#). Please email researchdegrees@qmul.ac.uk to discuss a DBS application.
104. Information about Queen Mary research policies is available from the [Queen Mary policy zone](#). Please check the policies each time you need to use them as the university may publish or revise the policies from time to time.
105. Allegations that may constitute student misconduct are managed under the [Code of Student Discipline](#).

Intellectual Property

106. Students and supervisors must adhere to the [Queen Mary Intellectual Property Policy](#). They must ensure that they implement and adhere to this policy throughout their research and in any interactions, whether in person or through electronic media, with parties external to Queen Mary.

Collaborative arrangements

107. Collaborative arrangements for the supervision and award of research degrees are considered and approved by the Research Degrees Programmes and Examinations Board in accordance with the policy and procedures established by Senate for that purpose. Information about setting up a collaborative programme is provided at <http://www.arcs.qmul.ac.uk/quality-assurance/collaborative-provision/>
108. Students may study at an accredited host institution in accordance with the Academic Regulations. Arrangements will be put in place for such students to ensure that the requirements of this Code are adhered to, particularly regarding supervision arrangements and progression monitoring.

Feedback mechanisms

109. All Schools/Institutes must offer opportunities for research students to provide feedback to them. Students must be advised during the induction period of the mechanisms for providing feedback to the School/Institute, including opportunities for representation on relevant committees such as Student-Staff Liaison Committees.

Examinations and awards

110. The Research Degrees Programmes and Examinations Board is responsible for the examination of research degrees and approves the award of research degrees.
111. The criteria for assessment of research degrees are outlined in the [Academic Regulations](#) and the [Guidelines for Research Degree Examinations](#).
112. The procedures for examination entry and the examination process are outlined in the [Procedures for Research Degree Examinations](#)

Panel of examiners

113. A Panel of Examiners is established for each individual examination of an MPhil, PhD, MD(Res), EngD, DrPS, DPsych and DClinDent.
114. The Panel of Examiners comprises a minimum of two examiners appointed by the Research Degrees Programmes and Examinations Board on behalf of the Senate.
115. Examiners may be nominated as follows:
 - Either
 - one internal examiner from the academic staff of Queen Mary University of London who has not been involved in the candidate's work and has not been a member of the candidate's progression panel(s); and
 - one external examiner;
 - or
 - where the criteria above for an internal examiner cannot be met or a School/Institute considers it to be academically desirable two external examiners may be appointed.
116. If the candidate is a member of Queen Mary staff normally two examiners who are external to Queen Mary shall be appointed.
117. In some cases, an independent chair may be appointed to the Panel of Examiners. The independent chair must be a senior member of academic staff (Senior Lecturer, Reader or Professor) with experience of examining at least one UK PhD (or equivalent for other awards). The independent chair may be from the same School or Institute but should not have had any prior involvement with the project or with the student. They should also be from a different area in the School/Institute and not from the same research group / sub-department or unit / centre. In such cases, the responsibility of the chair is to manage the process and ensure adherence to the regulations. The chair does not contribute to the decision regarding whether or not the standards for award have been met.
118. The candidate may invite their supervisor to attend the examination but the supervisor may not participate in the examination and must absent themselves when the decision

regarding the outcome of the examination is to be made. If the candidate does not wish the supervisor to be present, he/she should make this clear at the time of examination entry.

Criteria for examiners

119. Examiners for MPhil, PhD, MD(Res), EngD, DrPS, DPsych and DClinDent normally fulfil the following criteria:

- [a] Examiners should be experts in the field of the thesis but not necessarily in all parts of the precise topic.
- [b] The examiners should have examined at least five research degrees of the same or equivalent level between them, of which a minimum of three examinations should have been for a research degree in the UK. For the MD(Res), at least one examiner should have previous experience of examining for the MD(Res).
- [c] Nominated examiners must have had no direct involvement in the candidate's research or any close connections or extensive recent (within the past five years) collaborations with either the supervisor(s) or student including joint publications or research grants that might compromise the examination. They must not have taken an active role in considering the student's progression and/or transfer of status from MPhil to PhD.
- [d] An external examiner should not normally be appointed more than once during a given academic year by members of the same School/Institute.
- [e] An examiner who is a member of Queen Mary staff may be appointed up to three times during a given academic year.
- [f] NHS Consultants or the equivalent in the NHS who are not Queen Mary or University employees may be appointed as examiners but they should hold an Honorary Senior Lecturer or above contract with a College or University. Other professional experts may be appointed as external examiners, but the normal requirements for examining experience across the examination team will apply.
- [g] Individuals who were previously members of staff, students or other members of Queen Mary University of London must not be appointed as an external examiner until a period of three years has elapsed.
- [h] Individuals who have retired from academic positions at Queen Mary University of London or another higher education institution may be appointed as internal or external examiners (subject to the provisions in 124[g] above) if they remain active in their field of research.
- [i] Overseas examiners are appointed as external examiners only in exceptional circumstances and where it is considered that such an appointment is necessary.

120. The Research Degrees Programmes and Examinations Board will monitor issues arising from reports from research degree examiners and recommend appropriate action.

Complaints and appeals

121. Students are encouraged to raise any concerns they may have about their research studies with their supervisor or Director of Graduate Studies in the first instance. If a student has a problem regarding their supervision or other research support or Queen Mary services they should address their concerns to their supervisor first and keep a clear record of this. If the situation is not resolved or concerns remain regarding supervision then students are expected to raise their concerns with their School/Institute Director of Graduate Studies. Raising concerns promptly will provide staff with the opportunity to address these matters, and to reduce the impact on students as much as possible. Try to seek informal resolution of concerns where possible. Many problems can be solved informally, without the need for a formal complaint.
122. The Student Complaints Policy provides guidance on raising concerns or complaints about both academic and non-academic services provided by Queen Mary. Students who wish to make a complaint about any aspect of their research programme should refer to the [Queen Mary Student Complaints Policy](#) which outlines the procedures to be followed.
123. Students who wish to appeal against the outcome of the recommendation of examiners or the outcome of a progression review should refer to the [Appeal Policy](#) which outlines the procedures to be followed. Students are advised to talk to their supervisor or another member of staff in their department before submitting an appeal. Please note that an appeal against the academic judgment of the examiners is not valid grounds for an appeal.
124. A formal concern about the conduct of another student (for example bullying, harassment and discrimination) would be investigated under the [Code of Student Discipline](#).
125. Further information is available at <http://www.arcs.qmul.ac.uk/students/student-appeals/index.html>

Contacts

126. **Research Degrees Office**

The Research Degrees Office (RDO) is based on Mile End Campus in the Graduate Centre, room GC213, on the second floor. The office is open for in person support and phonecalls, and we are able to assist online by email and MS Teams meetings.

The names and phone numbers of contacts can be found at:

<http://www.arcs.qmul.ac.uk/research-degrees/contacts/index.html>

Office opening hours for in person visits:

Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday: 10.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m.

Tuesday: 11.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m.

Please email researchdegrees@qmul.ac.uk to ask us a question.

127. **Doctoral College**

The Doctoral College team can be contacted at

doctoralcollege@qmul.ac.uk

For further information please see

<http://www.doctoralcollege.qmul.ac.uk/>

The Research Degrees Office and the Doctoral College Team are located together on the second floor of the Graduate Centre on the Mile End Campus.

Please see building 18 on the map at <http://www.qmul.ac.uk/docs/about/26065.pdf>

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