

Eligibility for Research Degree Supervision

The University of Leeds Graduate Board

(for appointments made with effect from session 2016/17)

Note: The accreditation Agreement between the University of Leeds (UoL) and Leeds Trinity University (LTU) have been incorporated into this policy.

1. At Leeds Trinity University it is the responsibility of the Director of Postgraduate Research or nominee, or individual to whom responsibility has been delegated to recommend suitable supervisors for appointment to the Graduate Board. Each supervisory team must satisfy the requirements of the [QAA Quality Code](#). The University of Leeds Board encourages the joint supervision of research degree candidates. Where only one supervisor is appointed for a PGR a Mentor/Advisor must also be appointed.
2. The UoL Graduate Board recognises the following key principles in respect of supervisory support:
 - reasonable accessibility of supervisors to Postgraduate Researchers (PGRs);
 - appointment of supervisors who have the appropriate skills and subject knowledge to support, encourage and monitor PGRs effectively;
 - each PGR will have at least one main supervisor, with additional supervisors as appropriate. In all cases a PGR should have an identified single point of contact which will normally be the main supervisor;
 - at least one member of the supervisory team will be currently engaged in excellent research in the relevant discipline ensuring the direction of and monitoring of the PGR's progress is informed by up to date subject knowledge and research developments;
 - the supervisory team will ensure that the PGR receives sufficient support and guidance to facilitate their success.
3. The Graduate Board must be satisfied that a supervisory team can provide an appropriate level of support and guidance to a candidate before confirming the appointment of the supervisor(s). Where co-supervisors are appointed, one is to be identified as the main supervisor. It is not necessarily the case that the main supervisor will be the most senior or experienced member of the team of supervisors.
4. The expectation is that the PGR will be supervised by an individual from within the School in which they are registered. Where two or more Schools are involved in supervising a PGR, the LTU Director of Postgraduate Research (DoPGR) or nominee should agree which is acting as the PGR's

parent School. The DoPGR or nominee should then take full administrative responsibility for the PGR and should ensure that the PGR receives appropriate supervision. Exceptional arrangements may be approved by the Graduate Board's Programme of Study and Audit Group for some CDTs to reflect the interdisciplinary nature of the research programme. In all cases either a supervisor or an advisor from the CDT's parent School will be appointed. The parent school will retain responsibility for the candidature regardless of the home School of the supervisors.

5. Where two or more Schools are involved in a candidature, it is normally expected that the main supervisor will be from the candidate's parent registration school. Permission via the DoPGR must be sought from the Graduate Board's Programmes of Study and Audit Group where this is not the case.
6. The Graduate Board requires members of staff to attend a course on research degree supervision organised by the Staff and Departmental Development Unit or LTU before being recommended for appointment as a supervisor.⁴
7. At least one of the supervisors must be a member of the academic staff holding a permanent appointment of the University of at least 0.5 FTE (with any relevant probationary period having been confirmed. In the case of University Academic Fellows the successful completion of 3 of the 5 years probationary period will satisfy the probation requirement) and who has a minimum of three years previous experience of research degree supervision. The Graduate Board has, however, expressed the view that the preferred level of experience is supporting a doctoral candidate through to successful completion.
8. No member of staff should be appointed as sole supervisor unless
 - 1) they have a reasonable expectation of continuing in post for the duration of the relevant research degree candidature; and
 - 2) it can be shown that adequate provision for supervision will be available should the sole supervisor leave the University; and they fulfil the criteria set out in paragraphs 6 and 7 above.
9. The following categories of staff may not normally be the sole supervisor of a research degree candidate, but may act as a joint supervisor with an individual who fulfils the criteria set out in paragraph 6 and 7 above:
 - Members of staff who are themselves currently registered as candidates for research degrees;
 - Members of academic staff who hold probationary appointments;
 - Research Fellows;
 - Members of staff who have retired or resigned and those who hold research, honorary, part-time or fixed term University posts

- Members of staff who have had less than three years previous experience of research degree supervision.
10. Early-retired members of staff or staff who have been re-engaged on part-time contracts by the University (including those who have had applications to leave the University accepted under the Voluntary Leavers Scheme (2010) may be permitted to act as sole supervisors for existing PGRs proceeding under their supervision. Where new PGRs are commencing study early-retired members of staff may act as joint supervisors with an individual who fulfils the criteria set out in paragraph 6 and 7 above, with full responsibility for the supervision of the PGRs reverting to the other joint supervisor(s) after the conclusion of contracted employment.
 11. External joint supervisors may be appointed provided that:
 - a) the proposed external supervisor is conversant with the level and nature of the research necessary for the degree concerned;
 - b) the external supervisor is made aware of, by the relevant School, the University's expectations of the supervisor's role and are offered the opportunity to engage in developmental activities including LTU or SDDU courses for supervisors;
 - c) , the arrangements for supervision by the University supervisor meet the criteria set out in paragraphs 6 and 7 above.
 12. Recommendations for staff on fixed term contracts to act as sole supervisor are considered on an *ad personam* basis, but if the recommendation is to be approved the individual is normally expected to satisfy the following criteria:
 - a) have been employed as a member of the academic staff of at least 0.5 FTE at Leeds or elsewhere for at least three years or have completed a probationary period at Leeds or elsewhere;
 - b) have obtained a PhD degree;
 - c) have previously acted as a sole or joint supervisor for a period of at least three years;
 - d) have a reasonable expectation of continuing in post for the duration of the relevant research degree candidature.
 13. An honorary member of staff may act as a main supervisor for an MD or DClinPsychol degree candidate provided that:
 - i. they have already acted as a Joint Supervisor at the University of Leeds, whilst having co-supervised with a tenured member of staff;
 - ii. they have attended a recognised training course in the supervision of research PGR provided by SDDU;
 - iii. they have a minimum of three years previous experience of research degree supervision;
 - iv. a co-supervisor is appointed, with at least 0.1 FTE, who satisfies the eligibility criteria set out in 7 above

14. The Graduate Board considers special cases from time to time.

Leeds Trinity University Only

Policy on Maximum Number of PGRs per Individual Supervisor

Under the supervision models of the Accreditation Agreement with the University of Leeds for candidatures towards award of University of Leeds research degrees (PhD, MScRes, MRes), all supervision teams must include one senior 'qualified' supervisor: either a Leeds Trinity supervisor or a University of Leeds co-supervisor. The rules for qualification for such 'Model 1' status are:

- i. Having at least one successful, previous PhD completion
- ii. Having attended the University of Leeds approved supervisors' training course
- iii. Having completed the probationary period of employment at Leeds Trinity
- iv. Having a permanent academic contract of 0.5 FTE or greater at Leeds Trinity
- v. That they can demonstrate that they are research active and have published in peer reviewed journals.

In developing a policy for a maximum number of research students per individual supervisor the following practical considerations need to be borne in mind:

- For each student supervised, 30 hours are credited in the academic workload plan for both the main supervisor and for a co-supervisor.
- Supervision should be by an appropriately qualified person (subject expert) and be approved by Head of School or equivalent.
- All research students, whether undertaking PhD or MbR require the same annual supervision commitment (minimum 10 meetings per annum for full time).
- Part-time students count as 0.6 FTE since they are entitled to a minimum of 6 meetings p.a..
- Students are entitled to supervision until the degree is finally awarded (including any referral period).

It is therefore proposed that Leeds Trinity's policy should be that normally ***no individual supervisor should exceed the supervisory load of 12 FTE***, unless there are very exceptional circumstances.

The policy will be reviewed by the Research Degrees Sub-Committee (RDSC) every 12 months for the start of the academic session, and any cases of members of academic staff with a supervisory load in excess of 12 FTE will be reviewed regularly on an individual basis. Where the supervisor in question is a member of RDSC that person should declare an interest and not take part in the discussion.

Policy agreed by members of the RDSC on 20th September 2017, and in a revised form on 28th September 2017.