



Leeds Trinity  
University

Department: Research

# Leeds Trinity University Code of Practice for Research Degree Candidatures 2025-2026



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## Abbreviations

APR Annual Progress Review

DPGRS Directors of Postgraduate Research Studies

FFPR First Formal Progress Review LTSU Leeds Trinity University Student Union

ORCID Open Researcher and Contributor Identifier

PGR Postgraduate Researcher

PSP Progress Support Process

RDSC Research Degree Sub-Committee

RKEO Research and Knowledge Exchange Office



# University Code of Practice for Research Degree Candidatures (with effect from session 2025-26)

This Code of Practice sets out the University requirements covering school and supervisor responsibilities in relation to research degree study at the Leeds Trinity University. The Code of Practice should be read in conjunction with other PGR-related documents such as the [Research Degrees Handbook](#) and the [PGR Admissions Policy](#). The Dean for research is responsible for the provision of the resources to implement the University Code of Practice. The Research and Knowledge Exchange Office (RKEO) must ensure that the University Code and Annex are made available to PGRs and academic staff.

## 1.0 Introduction

1.1 Postgraduate Researchers (PGRs) are an essential part of the research activity at Leeds Trinity University. Arrangements exist whereby Postgraduate Researchers (PGRs) may be accepted as candidates for research degrees of the University of Leeds (UoL) whilst registered at Leeds Trinity University (LTU). These arrangements are under the general supervision of the UoL Graduate Board.

The Graduate Board is responsible for securing and enhancing the quality and standards of research degree programmes awarded by the UoL. LTU is represented on UoL Graduate Board by the Chair of LTUs Research Degrees Sub Committee (RDSC), and UoL are represented on LTU's RDSC by a designated UoL Professor.

This Code sets out a framework of shared responsibilities between the University, supervisors and PGRs with the aim of delivering successful research degree programmes according to national and international expectations and to inspire all our PGRs to develop their full potential.

### 1.2 Freedom of Speech

Leeds Trinity University ("the University") is fully committed to the principle, promotion, and protection of freedom of speech within the law. This includes the principle of academic freedom for its academic staff. As part of this commitment, the University's Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech and Expression sets out its values and expectations in relation to freedom of speech, the steps the University will take to promote and secure freedom of speech within the law and summarises how the University will ensure compliance with the Code. The Code is available on the University's dedicated webpage [here](#).



## 2.0 Admissions

- 2.1 The minimum requirements for entry to research degree study are stated on the [University web site](#) as well as in the [Ordinance and Regulations for research degrees through UoL](#). Applications for admission to postgraduate research will be considered under arrangements specified by the research Degree Sub-Committee and are specified in full in the [PGR Admissions Policy](#) approved by the RDSC.

## 3.0 Management Structure and Responsibilities

- 3.1 The UoL Dean of the Leeds Doctoral College maintains strategic oversight of the PGR experience and works through the UoL Graduate Board to develop policies that maintain and assure the academic standards of research degree awards and enhance the experience of PGRs. Through the support of the Graduate Board the Dean also works to deliver the PGR Strategic Vision that ensures the continuing enhancement of the experience of PGRs. The Dean of the Leeds Doctoral College also works with the appointed Heads of Faculty Graduate Schools to deliver these strategic aims across the Doctoral College and the University.

At LTU overall strategic responsibility for postgraduate research degrees rests with the University Lead for Research and Knowledge Exchange (LRKE) who chairs the Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee.

LTU nominates one individual to undertake a role equivalent to that of a UoL Director of Postgraduate Research Studies (DPGRS), subject to ratification by the Dean of the Leeds Doctoral College. Deputy DPGRS may be appointed to assist the LTU DPGRS and take responsibility for specific duties in relation to PGRs.

Within LTU, Postgraduate Research Degrees are managed by the Research Degrees Sub-Committee, chaired by the DPGRS, with the assistance of the Research and Knowledge Exchange Office and central Student Admissions staff. The DPGRS has operational responsibility for the administration of Research Degree Programmes (RDPs) at LTU. The DPGRS reports to the Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee (RKEC), a committee of the LTU Academic Board, which is in turn responsible to the Academic Board for the quality of Research Degree programmes. The Research and Knowledge Exchange Office provide secretarial and administrative support to the DPGRS and is responsible for liaising with central Student Administration on behalf of the DPGRS at LTU regarding progression and award. The DPGRS works School/Departmental Research Leads who have broad responsibility for the development of research cultures within their respective Schools.

The collective responsibilities across the LTU PGR related management structures:

- to ensure that an adequate management structure and procedures are in place for handling postgraduate research matters.



- the delegation, where relevant, of responsibilities for postgraduate matters to appropriate individuals (for example Heads of School or Directors of PGR Studies).
- to ensure that minimum standards of facilities are available to PGRs.
- to recommend supervisors to the Graduate Board.
- to make alternative and acceptable supervision arrangements when a supervisor leaves the University.
- to ensure that no supervisor is overloaded with supervisory responsibilities and to review the position regularly.
- to ensure that a comprehensive record of the research degree candidature of all PGRs is maintained.
- to ensure that PGRs are represented on relevant School committees.

### **Director of PGR Studies (DPGRS)**

3.2 The appointment of the Director of PGR Studies comes as a recommendation by the Dean of Research and Knowledge Exchange with the appointment being confirmed by the Graduate Board. The Dean of Research and Knowledge Exchange is directly involved in the recruitment process. The Director of PGR Studies (subject to the overall responsibility of the Dean of Research and Knowledge Exchange) has general responsibility for:

- co-ordinating admissions,
- pastoral care,
- recording and monitoring of progress,
- engagement and attendance of PGRs (with absence being recorded)
- liaison with the Doctoral College through their role on Graduate Board

3.3 Deputy Directors of PGR Studies may also be appointed to share responsibilities, particularly when there is a large cohort of PGRs in a School (i.e. more than 50 PGRs). A Deputy DPGRS is also a member of the research Degree Sub-Committee.

## **4.0 Responsibilities of PGRs and Supervisors**

[The Research Degrees handbook](#) section 4.3 outlines the role of the supervisor and section 6.2 for PGRs which are as follows:

### **Supervisors**

- i. ensuring that the PGR is introduced to the facilities of LTU and the UoL that are relevant to the research and that they are fully aware of relevant Health and Safety regulations.
- ii. assisting the PGR in defining the topic which is to be tackled in the course of the research. It is vital that this should give sufficient scope for investigation appropriate to the degree but not be so large a topic that it cannot be mastered within the normal period of the candidature. Where the



research is sponsored by an outside body, the terms of such sponsorship must be carefully considered.

- iii. assisting the PGR to clarify the research question which the study seeks to address, and to establish details of the research programme, such as resources required and, where appropriate, the experimental design
- iv. ensuring, in consultation with the DPGRS, Head of School and Chair of the Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee, that the PGR has access to the necessary facilities for the research, including access to facilities such as printing, photocopying and facilities commensurate with the requirements of the research.
- v. approving a timetable of work and endeavouring to see that it is followed. Supervisors should emphasise to PGRs that UoL and LTU attach great importance to the timely completion of research.
- vi. conducting, with the PGR, a training needs analysis within one month for full time or two months for part time of commencement of study and agreeing a training plan.
- vii. reviewing the training plan regularly (at least annually) and to assist the PGRs in identifying other training needs and in reflecting upon their personal development;
- viii. where the programme contains subject specific modules, directing the PGR through the relevant programme of courses.
- viii. seeking to ensure that the PGR receives available research training (e.g. by attendance at courses or referral to available resources) which may be necessary or appropriate in the individual case.
- ix. making PGRs aware of, and supporting them with any relevant Research Governance requirements and ethical procedures and ethical review.
- x. making PGRs aware of the relevant LTU's Research Data Management and Information Technology Security policies; information-services-policies-it-and-library
- xi. agreeing a supervisory programme with the PGR and arranging regular meetings with the PGR throughout the programme of study (including any overtime period)
- xii. ensuring that, where appropriate, the PGR is aware of the LTU arrangements for reviewing transfer to full degree registration and that appropriate guidance on preparing for transfer is provided.
- xiii. preparing regular reports on the PGRs progress.
- xiv. ensuring, in partnership with the PGR, that there are written records of formal supervisory meetings.
- xv. commenting within a reasonable time on written work submitted by the PGR;
- xvii. otherwise advising generally on the research and preparation of the thesis.
- xvi. alerting the DPGRS, in a timely manner, to any situation where it may become necessary to request a suspension or extension of study for a PGR.
- xvii. reporting to the DPGRS any suspected instance of research misconduct including plagiarism.



- xviii. ensuring that the PGR receives written feedback on the assessment of progress, and to draw to the attention of the PGR problems when they arise, (where necessary this should be done in writing)
  - xix. taking action to bring to the attention of the DPGRS any concerns about a PGRs unsatisfactory progress.
  - xx. reading and commenting on the whole of the draft thesis prior to submission provided that it is made available by the PGR in reasonable time. It is essential that a timetable for submission of the draft thesis is agreed with the PGR in advance of the maximum time limit which allows the supervisor a reasonable length of time to carry out this duty and for the PGR to act on any comments received. Any planned periods of absence by the supervisor from the LTU or UoL should be taken into account.
  - xxi. keeping the DPGRS informed of any absences likely to impact upon time available for supervisory duties.
  - xxii. sending forward recommendations for the appointment of Examiners to the DPGRS.
  - xxiii. ensuring that the PGR is aware of the UoL arrangements for the examination of research degree theses and the time limits for submission and ensuring that the PGR receives appropriate guidance about the oral examination including, where requested, a “mock viva”.
  - xxiv. reporting to the DPGRS when there has been no contact with an individual PGR or when there has been a pattern of absences which is affecting the PGRs progress or causing concern for the PGRs well-being.
- xxvii. Nominating to the DPGRS, in consultation and communication with the PGR, suitable replacement supervisors where a member of the supervisory team has left the University temporarily (e.g. for 2 months or more) or permanently.

## PGRS

- i. to reach agreement with the supervisor on an appropriate training plan.
- ii. to carry out research effectively, to attend LTU (and where appropriate, the UoL), to present work regularly and to an adequate standard in an appropriate form and against an agreed timescale taking into account any holiday entitlement.
- iii. to prepare issues they wish to discuss at supervision meetings and to seek out the supervisor as problems arise.
- iv. to agree to a supervisory programme, to maintain regular contact with their supervisor(s) and to attend for formal supervision meetings throughout the programme of study (including the overtime period).
- v. ensuring, in partnership with the supervisor, that there are written records of formal supervision meetings.
- vi. to submit, when requested, regular written summaries of overall progress to their supervisors or, where appropriate, DPGRS or Head of School.



- vii. to comply with normal working arrangements in the LTU School.
- viii. to discuss with their supervisor whether any teaching or other work undertaken will adversely affect the time available for the conduct of the research and make appropriate arrangements.
- ix. to comply with Health and Safety requirements.
- x. to comply with any ethical requirements or appropriate Research Governance.  
to comply with the [LTU data management and data security policies](#);
- xii. to take measures to attend appropriate training courses, personal development programmes and research seminars in consultation with their supervisor.
- xiii. to be familiar with the regulations and procedures of the UoL and LTU relevant to research degree candidatures and to comply with them.
- xiv. to ensure that they complete registration and make payment of fees at the appropriate times.
- xv. to make use of relevant facilities provided by the UoL and LTU and abide by the regulations specified for the use of these facilities.
- xvi. to assist the UoL and LTU in keeping their personal record up to date by cooperating fully with administrative procedures.
- xvii. to promptly draw to the attention of the supervisor or DPGRS when there is a situation where it may be necessary to request a suspension or extension of study. If appropriate, documentary evidence should be provided (e.g. medical certificate).
- xviii. to consult with the DPGRS or appropriate senior member of staff within the School, in confidence, if they have serious concerns about the PGR/supervisor relationship.
- xix. to discuss with the supervisor, in good time where possible, should they wish to be away from their research activity for a substantial period (e.g. in the case of a full-time PGR for more than five working days).
- xx. to make available to the supervisor for comment, within an agreed timescale, the whole of the draft thesis prior to submission.

## 5.0 Supervision

### 5.1 Research Degree Supervision Model

At LTU, all those appointed as PGR supervisors must meet the criteria specified by the UoL and must have undertaken appropriate UoL training; this training is now also delivered by LTU. It is the responsibility of the DPGRS to recommend suitable supervisors for appointment to individual supervisory teams by the UoL Graduate Board. One of the supervisors must be identified as the main supervisor.

Supervisors will be provisionally appointed at the time that a PGR receives a formal offer of admission by the UoL, and this will be confirmed or, where appropriate, alternative arrangements made when the PGR registers. LTU does not appoint single/sole supervisors but always a minimum of a Main and a Co Supervisor. It is



normally the responsibility of the Head of the School to ensure that no supervisor is overloaded with supervisory responsibilities and the position of individual members of staff should be reviewed regularly. Supervisory workloads are reported annually to LTU RDSC to provide monitoring.

## 5.2 Eligibility to Supervise

All those appointed as supervisors must satisfy [eligibility to supervise the criteria](#).

In order to be recommended for appointment as a supervisor the UoL Graduate Board requires all potential supervisors to attend the approved UoL 'Effective Postgraduate Research Supervision' course. Experienced supervisors who are new to LTU are also asked to attend the course to update their knowledge of university policy and procedures relating to the supervision of PGRs. It is good practice for current supervisors to attend a refresher course at least every 5 years. Supervision courses are provided in-house by Leeds Trinity University and the UoL Organisational Development and Professional Learning (OD&PL). All supervisory teams must include at least one individual (Model one) who meets the following criteria.

- (i) hold a Doctoral level qualification or have significant experience of research degree supervision.
- (ii) have a minimum of three years previous supervisory experience (at LTU or another University)
- (iii) have completed a probationary period satisfactorily and hold a permanent academic appointment at LTU of at least 0.5 FTE. Any new member of academic staff who has not yet completed their probation period at LTU but are already experienced supervisors with successful supervision and completions at a previous institution may apply for Model One Supervisor status. Please contact the LTU Research Office to obtain an application form. [research@leedstrinity.ac.uk](mailto:research@leedstrinity.ac.uk)
- (iv) are able to demonstrate that they are research active and have published in peer reviewed journals.
- (v) have undertaken the course of effective postgraduate research supervision. Any member of staff wishing to supervise at research degree level should discuss this with their line manager in the first instance and then with their Head of School. They will be required to attend a course on research degree supervision before being eligible to be appointed as a supervisor. To book onto a course please contact the LTU Research Office via [research@leedstrinity.ac.uk](mailto:research@leedstrinity.ac.uk)

## 5.3 Number of Supervisory meetings Each year

Full-time PGRs are entitled to a minimum of 10 formal supervision meetings a year (for part-time research students the equivalent number is 6 meetings). Whilst the pattern and timing of meetings will vary according to the precise stage of the candidature and between subject areas it is expected that meetings will be held regularly throughout the standard period of study with gaps between meetings of no more than 8 weeks for full-time research students (or 12 weeks for part-time).



Attendance on the programme of study, and the recording of this attendance, is a requirement of the University. Failure of the PGR to attend their programme of study, or to document supervisory meetings properly, may result in the termination of the candidature. [Attendance Monitoring Policy and protocol for implementing presumed withdrawn procedure](#). The supervisor will maintain supervisory contact and oversight of progress towards completion of the thesis during the overtime period. It is the responsibility of the supervisor to ensure that written records of formal supervision meetings are maintained. In many cases this involves the PGR preparing draft notes of the supervision meetings for agreement with the supervisor. A signed copy of the supervision meeting must be returned to the RO via [research@leedstrinity.ac.uk](mailto:research@leedstrinity.ac.uk). It should be noted that face-to-face interaction between PGR and supervisor(s) is essential, and a telephone call cannot normally be a substitute for a meeting. Subsequent electronic communication may be used as a further support. Where research students are temporarily carrying out research abroad, on fieldwork or at other institutions in the UK formal supervisory contact may take place by other means (e.g. MS Teams, telephone, email). Records of the contact, e.g. copies of emails, should be kept in these circumstances.

## 5.4 International PGRs on a sponsored student visa

In addition to the formal supervision meetings to comply with UKVI regulations PGRs on an International sponsored student visa are also required to visit the Research Office once a month from the programme start date and for the duration of their programme to present their ID card and sign an attendance register. The Research Office will write to PGRs who miss a scheduled 'sign in' and if no response is received within one week, a second email copied to supervisor(s) will be sent. If no response is received within 1 week the supervisor(s) will commence more formal action via the [PGR attendance monitoring policy and protocol for implementing presumed withdrawn procedure](#).

## Overtime Period and Supervisions

5.5 In order to keep the research on course for submission before the maximum time limit, it is required that supervisory contact will continue during any overtime period after the end of the standard period of study and that the supervisor will continue to monitor progress.

5.6 In this overtime period, the University appreciates that supervision meetings may be in the format of reading and commenting on draft chapters of the thesis prior to submission. Full-time PGRs will continue to be entitled to no fewer than 10 supervision meetings a year (and part-time candidates no fewer than 6 a year). A written record of these meetings must be kept by the RKEO.



## 6.0 Annual Meetings with the Director of PGR Studies

6.1 Along with the usual supervisory requirements for frequent meetings there should be arrangements in place offering PGRs the opportunity to meet with the Director of PGR Studies or Head of School, at least annually, in the absence of the supervisors, to review progress, discuss this with the PGR and to enable the PGR to comment upon the nature of the supervision received and to draw attention to any matters of concern. Where the Director of PGR Studies/Head of School is the supervisor, an appropriate nominee should be appointed.

6.2 There should be a mechanism in place within the School, which is clearly publicised, to enable PGRs to seek independent sources of advice when a PGR/supervisor relationship is not working well.

## 7.0 Progress Monitoring and First Formal Progress review (FFPR)

There are clearly defined procedures for monitoring and reporting on a PGRs progress. The progress of the research student in acquiring sufficient expertise in generic and subject/professional skills will be monitored regularly through review reports as well as in the transfer process. The formal assessment points are:

- First formal progress review (all PGRs).
- Transfer assessment (provisional PhD students only – see below).
- Annual reviews (all PGRs). At an early stage in their candidature research students should make themselves aware of the PhD and MbR Learning outcomes for award of the research degree programme for which they are registered. These are the criteria that will be used by the examiners when examining the thesis at the final examination stage. The progress made by a research student towards meeting [the learning outcomes](#) will be assessed at the transfer stage and during annual reviews

The FFPR will be held shortly after the end of the sixth month for new full-time research students (or shortly after the end of the ninth month for new part-time research students). Annual reviews will take place at twelve-month intervals after the first review meeting for part time Masters by Research and at twelve-month intervals after the transfer for PhD students. The PGR must provide the following documentation, with relevant input from the main supervisor, for each review meeting:

- i. A piece of written work that presents an opportunity to assess academic progress without detracting from completion of the research and thesis writing. The content of the written work is to be agreed between the supervisor and the PGR in accordance with any School requirements and should be appropriate to the point the PGR has reached in their candidature.



- ii. A reflection on progress to date, this might include completed chapters / laboratory work and conference attendance.
- iii. A plan for completion of the research and the thesis within the remaining period of study (e.g. Gantt chart).

[Completed/updated Training Plan Template](#). The PGR has the opportunity to comment on any issues, which may have adversely affected their progress in the Progress Report for Review

- 7.1 Where PGRs are not progressing or engaging as expected, the [Progress Support Process \(PSP\)](#) should be instigated to ensure that the PGRs is informed of the risk to their academic progress and support identified. Under the procedure the PGR will be interviewed, normally by the Director of PGR Studies and the supervisor, and specific instructions and objectives given. Where academic engagement or progress concerns are judged to be sufficiently serious or prolonged, and/or there are concerns that the PGR may be at risk of not successfully completing their degree, the process can lead to a more formal review stage with the possibility of withdrawal or transfer to a lower degree. The PGR must be advised that failure to meet requirements may lead to a recommendation for withdrawal or transfer to a lower degree.
- 7.2 All doctoral PGRs are initially registered as provisional doctoral researchers and are subject to a formal transfer assessment process within a specified timescale. Fulltime PGRs are required to complete the whole transfer process, including the oral examination and any potential revisions to the transfer report, within 12 months of their start date (24 months for part time students). If successful in this assessment, the PGR is transferred to a specific degree category after the initial provisional stage. Masters by Research are not required to undergo a transfer assessment, however, progress should be reviewed on an annual basis, after the first formal progress review, in the same way as for PhD students. The assessment at the transfer stage is intended to identify whether the individual PGR and the research project have the potential for research at doctoral level and also to assess whether completion of a thesis within the standard period of study for the programme concerned is a reasonable expectation. It will also consider whether the PGR has made satisfactory progress with the agreed training plan. Practice-led research degree PGRs should also refer to the additional requirements for transfer assessment as outlined in Code of Practice for Research Degree Candidatures (see Annex for revised arrangements to code of practice). The Independent Assessor(s) are chosen by supervisors and should be a member of the academic staff of either Leeds Trinity University or the University of Leeds who is not directly involved in the PGR's research supervision or mentorship. Nominations are subject to approval by the DoPGRS/Deputy DoPGRS. The Assessor's name and the date of the transfer viva should be set prior to the PGR submitting the transfer report and notified to the Research Office via [research@leedstrinity.ac.uk](mailto:research@leedstrinity.ac.uk). It is the supervisor's responsibility to arrange the date and time of the transfer, once a date and time is agreed the supervisor



should inform the Research Office who will arrange the venue and inform the PGR of the date, time and location. Transfer Assessment Process

- 7.3 Progress Report: Pre-transfer Stage A Progress report pre transfer stage form should be completed by the PGR and supervisory team immediately prior to the transfer stage and this will be considered by the Transfer Assessment Panel. The report requires an assessment of the progress by the PGR progress against the training plan and an assessment of English language ability in addition to ethical and data storage requirements. The PGR will complete their section of the form first and then pass it to the main supervisor. It is expected that the main supervisor will normally complete the form on behalf of the supervisory team.
- 7.4 Transfer Submission Requirements Transfer submissions should normally be submitted within 10 months (22 months for part- time students) and as a minimum would normally include:
- i. A progress report, covering work carried out to date, a description of their key research question and how this has been refined, and a proposal of how the research and thesis will be completed.
  - ii. A planned schedule for completion of the thesis (for example using a Gantt chart) within the standard period of study (three years full-time, six years parttime, or five years part-time study in the case of Provisional PhD students on UoL research degrees.).
  - iii. A Transfer statement of academic integrity
  - iv. A Transfer report of around 10,000 words, which should as a minimum, contain the following elements:
    - Outline of the proposed research project, identifying clearly the proposed title, the main research questions and sub questions.
    - A discussion of the methodology to be employed to answer the research question, including reference to the sources to be used, the potential problems inherent in these resources, and the way the research process will be designed to overcome them.
    - A critical analysis of the proposed research and indicating how it is hoped it will contribute to existing debates or understandings.
    - A brief schedule, identifying how it is proposed the work will be undertaken and completed.
    - A sample of writing which draws on initial research activities and demonstrates the PGR's ability to present research findings and draw appropriate conclusions from them.
    - A bibliography of resources to be used for the research.
    - An appendix containing any other relevant materials (e.g. questionnaires, ethical approvals) Where appropriate, and necessary to give the Transfer panel a sufficient view of the nature, scope and practicality of the project, and the PGR's ability to undertaken it, additional materials might be added by the PGR to these minimum



requirements. This may include a short presentation by the PGR (e.g. PowerPoint).

7.5 If the PGR is pursuing a practice-led research project then the submission must include evidence of creative practice which, depending upon the nature of the practice, might be a creative writing component, the staging of an exhibition of visual work, a live performance, or the documentation of creative practice/performance in a retainable form. This should be accompanied by:

- a sole-authored written piece of at least 5,000 words that critically reviews, analyses and/or contextualises the practice (work that has been co-authored is not permissible for transfer assessment purposes).
- Evidence of ethical approval (for example final approval letter) or evidence of adequate progress towards ethics approval
- Training Plan and record of training undertaken; vii. Reports on the student's progress from the supervisor(s) (the first formal progress and transfer stage reports). PGRs will be assessed by the Transfer Assessment Panel, in the form of an oral examination. It is important that the prescribed time limits for transfer decisions are adhered to. It is expected that PGRs will be present at Leeds Trinity for their transfer assessment. This equally applies to any second or repeat transfer assessment should one be required.

7.6 The recommendations that may be made by Transfer Assessment Panels are:

- transfer to full PhD registration.
- transfer to MPhil registration:
- on the first occasion only, and provided that the University's prescribed time limit allows, deferral of a decision about transfer for a limited period to permit the work to be revised and then reassessed. If a transfer decision is deferred, a final decision must be made with 18 months of the start date (30 months for part time PGRS). Programme completion dates do not change where a decision to defer a transfer is made.
- a decision that the PGR withdraw from the research degree. Transfer Assessment Panel reports and recommendations will be considered and approved by the DoPGRS or nominee. In all cases, the PGR will receive a copy of the decision made by the Transfer Assessment Panel from the RO. The transfer assessment report will provide the following information:
  - a) whether the student should now be registered for the degree of PhD.
  - b) the names of the members of the supervisory team.
  - c) the draft title of the thesis.



d) confirmation that the PGR has made satisfactory progress on the agreed training plan, appropriate ethical review arrangements are in place and that data storage and safeguarding issues have been addressed; e) any other factors which the supervisor(s) wish to draw attention to. In addition, for PGRs registered on practice-led programmes: a) details of the work that will contribute to their final submission.

The RKEO will maintain a comprehensive record of the PGRs candidature, including notes of supervision meetings, reports, the agreed training plan and records and other information (for example, medical certificates) which have a bearing on the PGRs progress. These records will be maintained in accordance with GDPR. PGRs progress is reported to and monitored by the Research Degrees Sub Committee.

## 8.0 PGR Representation, Feedback and Channels of Communication and Complaints

- 8.1 The University welcomes feedback from PGRs and there are a number of opportunities for this provided. The DPGRS will inform PGRs of the local arrangements.
- 8.2 University includes PGR representation on relevant committees that cover PGR in their remit. These opportunities are for a one-year period and are arranged in consultation with PGRs.
- 8.3 The DPGRS will invite PGRs, through the RKEO, to serve as representatives on the postgraduate or other relevant school staff-student committee and that adequate opportunity is given to discuss issues affecting them. PGR representatives will not be involved in the consideration of matters relating to individual PGR cases.
- 8.4 If a PGR has a material complaint, for example, they are dissatisfied with any aspect of their studies, including their supervision or with the facilities for their research, the University has a process by which this can be raised and reviewed. A PGR should be encouraged to consult, as appropriate, their supervisor, DPGRS, the Dean of research and KE or other senior member of staff. A PGR might also contact the RKEO. If following consultation they remain dissatisfied they should consult the LTU [student complaints policy and procedure](#). The Student Complaints Policy and Students Complaints Procedure enable registered LTU students to raise a complaint about a course or teaching, or about the services and facilities provided by the University.
- 8.5 Independent advice and support is also available for PGRs from Leeds Trinity Student Union LTSU in relation to both Complaints and Appeals. Their service for PGRs is confidential and independent from the university.



- 8.6 The University has in place a [procedure](#) governing the consideration of appeals against adverse academic decisions which is published on the University website.
- 8.7 The University regularly surveys PGRs about their experience and satisfaction with arrangements and facilities for research degrees and all PGRs are invited to participate.

## 9.0 Minimum standards of facilities provision for full-time PGRs

- 9.1 As a general principle, the Graduate Board has specified that access to facilities such as printing, photocopying and common room facilities for PGRs should be commensurate with the requirements for the research. It is the responsibility of the Dean of research and KE (or where they have been delegated to DPGRS) to ensure that minimum standards of facilities are available to PGRs. PGRs registered on a research degree at the University should have appropriate access to facilities irrespective of their mode of study.
- 9.2 All PGRs in attendance at the University (full time or part time) should where possible be provided with a designated area for study with appropriate desk space, computing/IT resources to embark on, pursue and complete their research degree. Requirements may therefore vary over this period as a PGR engages with each stage of their research.
- 9.3 When resident in Leeds similar facilities should be made available for those PGRs studying under split site / dual PhD, distance learning or part-time arrangements, where appropriate.
- 9.4 Disability Services will discuss arrangements with PGRs who have a disclosed disability so they can determine their requirements for support as well as any reasonable adjustments for their studies and assessments through their research degree. Disability Services will then liaise with, advise and support the supervisor(s) and communicate the RKEO to put the adjustments in place.

## 10.0 Quality assurance processes for research qualifications

- 10.1 The Graduate Board prescribes arrangements whereby the criteria, regulations and learning outcomes for the award of different types of research degrees are clear, rigorous and widely available. At LTU the DPGRS ensures these are implemented to align with UoL regulations.
- 10.2 The Graduate Board publishes eligibility criteria for the appointment of Examiners. As a minimum two appropriately qualified Examiners are appointed for each candidate with at least one Examiner being external to the institution. Internal Examiners are required to complete a university training course before



acting in this capacity. No member of staff who has been substantially involved in the research may serve as an Internal Examiner. Responsibility for the consideration and review of recommendations from Schools for the appointment of Examiners is delegated by the Graduate Board to its PGR Progression and Examinations Group, which monitors the frequency of appointments of examiners.

- 10.3 In order to ensure consistency within the examination process Examiners receive written instructions on the relevant University procedures together with the criteria for the recognition of different levels of achievement.
- 10.4 After the submission of the thesis all candidates for research degrees are required to undergo an oral examination which will be conducted in English with the appointed Examiners and:
- the examination should normally take place within a maximum time scale of three months from the date of the dispatch of the thesis to the Examiners.
  - the Examiners must prepare separate, independent written reports before the viva and, following the viva, a joint report which contains a recommendation in accordance with the stipulated University criteria.
  - a supervisor may be an observer at the examination at the request of the PGR and if not present must be contactable if required.
  - the Examiners should advise the candidate informally of the recommendation being sent forward, normally within 24 hours of the completion of the oral examination. The details will depend upon the precise recommendations being sent forward. Where appropriate, information about the University appeals procedure should be provided to the candidate.
- 10.5 LTU RKEO reports its examination arrangements and outcomes to Graduate Board which requires its PGR Progression and Examinations Group to monitor and review all aspects of the examination, including the selection of examiners, the implementation of the procedures, the nature and details of the reports and the overall performance of candidates and staff within Schools and Faculties.
- 10.6 The Graduate Board also requires its PGR Programmes and Quality to periodically review research degree provision of each school as part of a cycle of activity along with annual review of research related activities. At LTU this is typically completed by an annual accreditation meeting and/or a periodic review (the latter last completed in 2023).



## 11.0 Annex

### Revised Arrangements for Practice-Led and Masters by Research Degrees - Specific Information

Revised arrangements to those stated above are required for:

#### Practice-led Research Degrees

Practice-led research degrees are currently only available at Leeds Trinity University in the School of Computing and Creative Industries in the following discipline areas:

- English Creative Writing
- Media, Film and Culture

#### Masters by Research Degrees

Candidates may undertake study for the degree of Master by Research in one of the following categories:

- Master of Arts by Research MA
- Master of Education by Research Med
- Master of Science by Research
- MSc Master of Science (Engineering) by Research MSc (Eng)

#### 2.0 Admissions

##### **Practice-led Research Degrees**

\*It is important to distinguish practice-led applicants from the outset to ensure that candidates (and their supervisors) are aware of the arrangements for practice-led candidatures, as set out in this document.

\*Upon application, the School is responsible for identifying and ensuring practice-led candidates are recorded under the specified codes. The Research Office at LTU will ensure that candidates registered for practice-led research degrees are recorded as such under specified codes set up in SITS. The Leeds Trinity research degrees application form will also be revised to include an option to indicate the candidate is applying for a practice-led research degree.

##### **Masters by Research**

\*Due to the particular nature of the MA, MEd, MSc and MSc (Eng) by research and the requirements for completion within the specified time periods applicants for admission should normally have at least an upper second-class honours degree or previous research experience.



\*The research project for candidates for the degrees of MA, MEd, MSc and MSc (Eng) by research must be clearly designed and planned at the time of application to enable submission within the limited time available. The proposed project must be submitted for approval by the relevant committee prior to acceptance of any applicant.



## 7.0 Progress Monitoring and First Formal Progress review (FFPR)

### **Practice-Led Research Degrees**

\*Within one month of registration the training needs of practice-led PGRs will be assessed through completion of a training needs assessment in consultation with the supervisor(s). The requisite training will be provided in-house (generic training workshops and research methods training) together with specific media skills/creative writing training by prescription of the supervisor(s). In addition, Leeds Trinity PGRs will have access to training events offered by University of Leeds Organisational Development and Professional Learning (OD&PL); attendance at these training courses will be negotiated and publicised by the Leeds Trinity DPGRS.

LTU PGRs will also have access to the University East Anglia's online training. Any needs that fall outside of the available generic training provision should be identified at interview.

### **Confirmation of practice-led status**

\*At transfer stage, the candidate and School are required to clarify that the research project is still defined as practice-led.

\*PGRs registered at Leeds Trinity University will undergo transfer from provisional PhD to PhD according to the standard University of Leeds timescale and procedure, as detailed in Leeds Trinity Protocol for the Implementation of Research Degree Candidatures. The Leeds Trinity Director (or Deputy) Director of Postgraduate Research (DoPGR) will oversee transfer reviews for Practice-led PhDs and will inform Graduate Board of the outcome of such reviews. Any requests for deferment of the decision on academic grounds will be made via the Leeds Trinity DoPGR. \*Following successful "transfer" it is not possible for PGRs to change to a practice-led research degree. However, if a candidate wished to change from a practice-led research degree, a case could be presented to the Graduate Board (or one of its Groups). A case would usually be presented by the supervisor to the DoPGR in the first instance.

### **Transfer Assessment**

\*A practice element should be a mandatory submission requirement at transfer assessment, which is indicative of the practice in question. This could be a contained performance, small installation, example piece of written work or concept to demonstrate practice. The PGR must be required to demonstrate the ability to link practice with the written analysis.

### **Defining the final submission**

\*It is important to identify at transfer stage if the candidate intends to include live performance or practice as part of the final submission and, if this will take place prior to submission of the written element, to facilitate arrangements for the early appointment of examiners. An intention stated at the transfer stage to include live



practice in the final examination will not be binding. If research determines that a live element is no longer required (or dates change), this should be reported as soon as possible and will not have any adverse consequences for the PGR.

However, PGRs who do not declare an intention to include live practice at transfer stage will not be permitted to include live practice as part of the final submission.

In addition to the usual requirements for transfer, a practice-led candidate must set out what he/she expects to include for assessment as the final submission. This must meet the regulations for alternative submissions as set out in the University of Leeds [Ordinances and Regulations and Programmes of Study for Research Degrees](#). A standard form is available from the Student Education Service [website](#) at the University of Leeds.

#### Deferral

\*In accordance with regulations for a PhD, PGRs could be offered more time to rethink or redo the practice elements. A case for deferral of the transfer decision would have to be made on academic grounds to the Graduate Board by the DoPGR. The period of any extension is normally no more than three months and, in any event, cannot be more than six months.

\*For candidates commencing study on or after 01 September 2020 [the Practice-led Research Degree Exam Entry Form](#) must be completed and returned to the Research and Knowledge Exchange Office (RKEO) for referral on to Post-graduate Research and Operations (PGR&O) a minimum of **3 months prior to the date of the first live practice** (where Examiners are required to view live practice). Where there is no examined live practice event, then the form must be returned a minimum of 3 months prior to the expected submission date of the thesis.

\*The record of practice will normally be submitted for examination in the form of digital media. In cases where an alternative format is essential to the objectives of the research this must be agreed between the supervisor(s) and the Leeds Trinity DoPGR who will then seek the agreement of Graduate Board. However, final digital copies of such non-digital media will be required to maintain a permanent record of the submission as an appendix to the e-thesis.

#### Assessment of Live Practice/ Early Appointment of Examiners

\*Where it is considered to be part of the final submission, examiners are normally expected to view live practice. *However, all practice for assessment must be recorded in an appropriate format as a permanent record.*

\*Candidates should indicate at transfer stage the intention for live practice to be included in the final assessment and as soon as possible provide details of date, venue and time. As this will need to be negotiated and agreed with potential examiners, it may therefore be necessary to identify and appoint examiners at an early stage.

\*A practice-led exam entry form must be submitted to PGR&O **at least 3 months prior to the date of the first live practice**. PGR&O will oversee the appointment of examiners once approval has been given for the assessment format by the



Graduate Board. Examiners will be appointed by the Examinations Group following instruction from LTU RKEO. The letter of appointment to examiners will include details of any live practice indicated by the School on the examination entry form which will form part of the submission.

\*Once examiners have been appointed, the LTU RKEO is responsible for ensuring examiners receive detailed information of date, venue and time of any live practice to be assessed. Please note in some instances this may include more than one event, as outlined and agreed at transfer. It is recommended that the School (and candidate) consider examiners availability when arranging live practice.

### **Alternative Submission**

\*Candidates undertaking practice-led research may be granted permission by the relevant committee to present for examination an alternative form of thesis. Details of alternative submissions are provided in the Ordinances and Regulations and Programmes of Study for Research Degrees under Regulation 26(a) for PhDs and 37 for MPhils.

### **The degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

\*Except from UoL Ordinance and regulations for Research Degrees

Candidates in certain disciplines and staff candidates by published work may be granted permission by the relevant committee to present for examination an alternative form of thesis as follows:

For practice-led research: a body of work demonstrating an original contribution to knowledge and scholarship, which comprises of a substantial body of creative practice produced by the candidate in pursuit of the degree, displaying critical understanding and being worthy of public presentation, together with a written submission, which provides an exploration of the research question(s) and indicates the manner in which the research is embodied in the practice, which will normally be between 15,000- 50,000 words.

### **The degree of Master of Philosophy**

\*Candidates in certain disciplines may be granted permission by the relevant committee to present for examination an alternative form of thesis as follows:

For practice-led research: a body of work demonstrating an independent contribution to knowledge and scholarship, which comprises of a substantial body of creative practice produced by the candidate in pursuit of the degree, displaying critical understanding and being worthy of public presentation, together with a written submission, which provides an exploration of the research question(s) and indicates the manner in which the research is embodied in the practice, which will normally be between 10,000-30,000 words.



### **Format Regulations**

\*All practice for assessment must be recorded in an appropriate format as a permanent record, which complies with archiving requirements set out by the University of Leeds Library (including any live practice that has been assessed). PGRs are reminded that appropriate written permissions (consent) must be obtained from other people involved in the performance and recording of live practice and that they must comply with [Leeds Trinity University's ethical procedures](#) and legal requirements of the Leeds Trinity University's guidance on [General Data Protection Regulation](#).

### **Thesis length**

\*A minimum word limit of 10,000 for MPhil and 15,000 for PhD and maximum word limit of 30,000 for MPhil and 50,000 for PhD is applicable to all practice-led PhDs across all Schools.

\*It should be noted that the maximum limits are not intended to be interpreted as a requirement for the length of the thesis and that in certain disciplines the thesis may be considerably shorter.

### **Format for submission**

\*Where the final submission comprises of practice for assessment, in addition to the written thesis, all assessed (and associated) documentation must be presented in the following format:

### **Submission of documentation prior to examination**

\*An electronic copy of the following documents must be submitted electronically to the UoL Examinations Group at the following email address:

[rp\\_examinations@adm.leeds.ac.uk](mailto:rp_examinations@adm.leeds.ac.uk)

- The documentation (written submission and all other submitted material) should normally be submitted as an electronic record of the work comprised of the thesis in line with what was previously agreed.
- The written submission should accord with the "[Guide to the thesis examination process](#)";
- A record of the practice for assessment and associated documentation, should be presented in an appropriate format for archiving purposes.
- A table of contents should be included describing the agreed submission format in addition to the body of the thesis.

### **\*Submission of final documentation after successful examination**

- One copy of the final approved thesis must be submitted electronically to Postgraduate Research and Operations after successful examination (and after amendments where appropriate) along with a completed [Thesis Deposit Form](#)
- *Submission of the e-thesis:* All PGRs are now required to submit their successful thesis for retention by the Library in electronic form.



- The final submitted thesis should be uploaded to “[White Rose eTheses Online \(WREO\)](#)”
- A guide to thesis submission can be found at:  
[https://library.leeds.ac.uk/info/1406/researcher\\_support/71/submit\\_your\\_ethesis](https://library.leeds.ac.uk/info/1406/researcher_support/71/submit_your_ethesis)
- An exact replica of all final documentation submitted after a successful examination, must also be provided in appropriate electronic files (for example pdf, jpeg, mp3), presented in accordance with the instructions given in the Guidance on Ethesis Preparation, Copyright and Publication, published on the Student Education Service website at the University of Leeds  
<http://students.leeds.ac.uk/info/10125/assessment>

Leeds Trinity University has additional format regulations for alternative submissions, and these are as follows:

\*The record of practice will normally be submitted for examination in the form of digital media. In cases where an alternative format is essential to the objectives of the research this must be agreed between the supervisor(s) and the Leeds Trinity DoPGR who will then seek the agreement of Graduate Board. However, final digital copies of such non-digital media will be required to maintain a permanent record of the submission as an appendix to the e-thesis.

#### **Advice for examiners**

\*Practice must be integral within the methodology and dissemination of a practice-led research degree, and the final assessment should consider the submission as a whole (practice and written element). In reaching a decision upon the quality of a practice-led submission it is important that examiners do not assess practice and written elements separately.

#### **Assessment of live practice**

\*There must be no formative feedback by examiners prior to the viva; feedback should be given after the final viva-voce examination. Any notes taken at a live practice/performance must not be disclosed and must be retained by the examiner until included in the preliminary report, immediately prior to the final viva-voce examination.

#### **Guidance for preliminary report**

\*As noted above, examiners should consider the submission as a whole. Where live practice is held on the same day as the viva, examiners may wish to add notes to the end of the preliminary report prior to the viva.

#### **Guidance for referral**

\*Current regulations allow examiners at either examination or at a resubmission to ask candidates to pass any tests which they prescribe to demonstrate knowledge. Therefore, for instance, examiners are permitted to ask a candidate to reproduce live performance or a similar task to demonstrate any aspect of practice.



### **Award**

- \*Successful candidates will be awarded PhD or MPhil. Reference to the practice-led nature of the research programme is included in the Diploma Statement and Supplement, which is issued to each successful candidate as an accompaniment to the degree certificate.

### **Masters by Research**

#### **Progress and Monitoring**

\*Candidates accepted directly to the degrees of MA, MEd, MSc and MSc (Eng) are not required to undergo formal assessment for transfer to a definite degree category. However, there should be regular reports by the supervisor on the PGR's progress. As a minimum, there should be a report at the mid-point of the first year and, in the case of part-time candidates, the end of the first year and at least annually thereafter.

\*Candidates accepted directly to one of the Masters degrees by research may be permitted to transfer registration to the degree of Provisional PhD by special permission of the relevant committee.

Candidates wishing to transfer registration to the degree of Provisional PhD must submit a request for the transfer, which must be considered and approved by the relevant committee by no later than 9 months from the date of commencement of full-time Master by Research study (or 18 months of part-time study).

\*The period of study registered on the Master by Research programme will be counted towards the doctoral candidature. The PGR will undergo a formal, rigorous assessment procedure for transfer to full PhD status in accordance with normal practice for transfer to doctoral registration. This should take place before the end of 12 months of full-time study (or 24 months of part-time study), which includes the period of registration for the Master by Research. The decision to transfer to full PhD status will be considered by a Transfer Assessment Panel and based on the submission of a transfer report and oral examination.

#### **Examination and Assessment**

\*Candidates for one of the Masters degrees by research must present a thesis (30,000 words maximum) on the subject of his/her research which must contain matter at a level suitable for publication and must satisfy the examiners as specified in Ordinance X and its associated Regulations.

\*In the case of the degrees of Master of Education, Master of Science and Master of Science (Engineering) the language of the thesis shall be English. In the case of the degree of Master of Arts, in the area of modern languages, the language of the thesis shall normally be English, although, if the particular subject so demands, the relevant committee may be prepared to give permission at the time of the applicant's



acceptance as a candidate for the MA degree by research for a thesis to be submitted in a language other than English.

\*Candidates for the degrees of MA, MEd, MSc and MSc (Eng) by supervised research will not be permitted to submit their thesis for examination before completion of either one calendar year of fulltime study or two calendar years of part-time study.

\*For the degrees of MA, MEd, MSc and MSc (Eng) the last date for the submission of the thesis shall normally be at the end of the prescribed period of research. In exceptional circumstances this may be extended by not more than three months by prior permission of the relevant committee.

### **Following examination**

\*If the thesis is not considered to be of sufficiently high standard to recommend the award of the degree but there is evidence of the potential of a successful Mastership by research submission, then on the recommendation of the examiners the candidate will be granted permission to resubmit the work in a revised form for the degree of Master by research within a period of nine months, on one occasion only and on payment of an additional fee.

\*Under the delegation of responsibilities agreement, the recommendation of the examiners is subject to confirmation by the LTU Director of Postgraduate Research or nominee and submitted to UoL Graduate Board's Examinations Group for information.