

Leeds Trinity University Protocol for Initiating the Presumed Withdrawn Procedure (from 2020/21)

This document aims to provide a transparent process for initiating the Protocol for initiating the “Presumed Withdrawn” procedure in line with the University of Leeds (UoL) requirements.

This protocol should be used in conjunction with the [Postgraduate Research Progress Support process](#) (PSP)

Introduction

Attendance monitoring is recognised as an important element in supporting both Postgraduate Researcher (PGR) retention and performance. Regular and appropriate attendance has been a University requirement for many years as stipulated in the [Research Degrees handbook](#) section 6.4. This procedure describes the process for initiating the presumed withdrawn procedure when attendance requirements have not been met by the PGR. This document refers to those PGRs who have successfully registered.

1.0 Withdrawals

PGRs wishing to withdraw permanently from the University should complete a [withdrawal form](#) which should also be signed by the Director of Postgraduate Research Studies (DoPGRS) and returned immediately to the Leeds Trinity University (LTU) Research and Knowledge Exchange Office (RKEO) research@leedstrinity.ac.uk for submission to the UoL Doctoral College Operations.

If you know that a PGR has left, then whilst best practice is to get the PGR to complete a [withdrawal form](#), if there is any delay with a PGR holding a sponsored student visa, then please notify student administration records@leedstrinity.ac.uk immediately (and forward any emails whereby the PGR has confirmed that they have left) in order that LTU can make a timely report to the Home Office.

2.0 Presumed withdrawn

A PGR may be presumed withdrawn if they do not attend supervision meetings or respond to University correspondence. The presumed withdrawn procedure is described below:

Step 1: DoPGRS or supervisor(s) contact the PGR in writing (letter/email) advising them to contact the University. See appendix 1.1 for example template.

Step 2: Where no response is received within 1-week of the initial contact the DoPGRS makes a further attempt to contact the PGR in writing. See Appendix 1.2 for example presumed withdrawn email/letter.

Step 3: RKEO instigates Presumed Withdrawn process where no response is received. RKEO informs the UoL Doctoral College Operations (DCO) via email dcprogs@leeds.ac.uk that the Presumed Withdrawn process has been actioned and attaches the two written communications from the School to the PGR.

Step 4: The RKEO writes to the PGR informing them that they are now presumed to have permanently left the University.

Step 5: RKEO updates the central research records and informs LTU student administration in order that central LTU records be updated to a permanent leaver 10 working days after the letter described in step 2 is sent. Colleagues in Information technology (IT) to be informed and closure of IT accounts to commence after serving of required notice period.

Step 6: Where a PGR queries the letter the DoPGRS will liaise with the PGR and Supervisor(s)

2.1 Reporting withdrawals

In the case of withdrawn international PGRs who are present in the UK as sponsored students (formerly Tier 4) of the Home Office Points-based Immigration system, a report will be submitted to the Home Office by student administration, and the PGR will be required to leave the UK unless they intend to submit a further, valid immigration application for further leave to remain. The PGR will be informed of the report to the Home Office and advised to contact the International Student Advice Team for advice.

Appendix 1.1 Example email/letter to a PGR who is identified as potentially absent without permission

Example email/letter: from the supervisor to a PGR who is absent without permission. The letter should be tailored to suit the individual circumstances.

Dear XXXX

I am writing to ask you to make contact with your supervisory team by return email to arrange a supervisory meeting. We are concerned that we have not heard from you and may be in a position where you are not able to engage in your studies. If there are circumstances or events which are preventing you from progressing your research (eg ill-health, personal difficulties etc) you should let us know so we can work with you to take the steps necessary to safeguard your academic position whilst you address any difficulties you are facing. This may involve requesting a period of suspension to your studies. Please could you make contact with us as a matter of urgency? If we do not hear from you in the next 7-days we will have to refer the matter to the Director of Postgraduate Research Studies (DoPGRS) and this may result in the initiation of the “presumed withdrawn” procedure which ultimately could terminate your studies at Leeds Trinity University.

I hope to hear from you very soon.

Best Wishes

Appendix 1.2 Example email/letter to a PGR who is absent without permission

Example email/letter: from a school to a PGR who is absent without permission. The letter should be tailored to suit the individual circumstances.



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PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

Prof Martin Barwood

Director of Postgraduate Research Studies

Telephone: 0113 2837100 EXT 249

E-mail: m.barwood@leedstrinity.ac.uk

Date:

**Re: Presumed Withdrawn Procedure
ID Number:**

Dear XXXX

I understand from your supervisor(s) that you have not responded to requests to engage in supervision meetings with an initial request sent by email on XXXX. Your supervisory team also inform me that you have not submitted work to the timetable agreed.

Please could you make contact with the University through mechanisms outlined below as a matter of urgency? If there are circumstances or events which are preventing you from progressing your studies (eg ill-health, personal difficulties etc) you should let us know so we can work with you to take the steps necessary to safeguard your academic position whilst you address any difficulties you are facing. This may involve requesting a period of suspension to your studies.

If a suspension to your studies is necessary it is important that you make such a request without delay as the University will not normally grant retrospective periods of suspension of more than one month and you will lose the time available to complete your studies.

I would like to make you aware that postgraduate researchers (PGRs) may seek advice and support on the Presumed Withdrawn Procedure by contacting the Student Advice Centre, Leeds University Union, where experienced staff are available to provide guidance. Further information is available at <http://www.leedsuniversityunion.org.uk/helpandadvice/> If you wish to seek support from the Student Advice Centre, LUU you should do so immediately.

Alternatively, LTU PGRs may wish to seek further information from the LTU Students' Union where experienced staff are available to provide guidance. Further information is available at <https://www.leedstrinity.ac.uk/student-life/students-union/> If you wish to seek support from the Student Advice Centre, LTU you should do so immediately.

If you do not respond to this email and make contact with the University by 4.30 pm on XXXX (within 10 working days of the date of this letter) the University will have no alternative but to presume that you have withdrawn from your studies and your candidature will be terminated immediately.

The University wishes to avoid this course of action and urges you to make contact with any of the following individuals within the University:

Director of PGR Studies; Prof Martin Barwood (M.Barwood@leedstrinity.ac.uk), the Research and Knowledge Exchange Office (research@leedstrinity.ac.uk) or your supervisory team; XXXX

I hope to hear from you in the near future

Yours sincerely

Prof Martin Barwood (BSc, PhD, FHEA Director of Postgraduate research Studies

cc: Supervisor(s), University PGR Administrator on research@leedstrinity.ac.uk