



## **CODE OF PRACTICE**

*for*

*Postgraduate Research Degrees at Partner Institutions*

**LIVERPOOL HOPE UNIVERSITY AWARDS**

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## **A: Regulatory Framework**

- A1** The Code of Practice supplements the formal regulations by providing detailed guidance on a variety of issues including a commentary on how the regulations are to be interpreted.
- A2** The Code of Practice is formally approved by Liverpool Hope University's Research Committee, and ratified by Senate, on an annual basis.
- A3** The principles in the Code of Practice are binding. However, the detailed implementation of the principles may legitimately but marginally vary across Partner Institutions, and across Departments within an Institution. Normally, the only body empowered to authorise a procedure or outcome contrary to a principle in the Code of Practice is Liverpool Hope University's Research Degrees SubCommittee. However, the Code of Practice may identify principles that may be violated only with the authority of the Chair of Liverpool Hope University's Research Committee following a recommendation from Liverpool Hope University's Research Degrees SubCommittee.
- A4** Liverpool Hope University's Research Degrees SubCommittee is the only body responsible for resolving any uncertainty or disagreement on how the principles set out in the Code of Practice may be applied at a Partner Institution.
- A5** Except where indicated otherwise, all elements of this Code shall apply equally to students based at the Partner Institution and those admitted under a "Distance Supervision" arrangement.

## **B: Handbooks and other Guidance Materials for Students, Staff and Examiners**

- B1** Liverpool Hope University shall produce a Handbook for Postgraduate Research Students at Liverpool Hope University, and supplementary guidance for Postgraduate Research Supervisors and Postgraduate Research Examiners at all institutions offering Liverpool Hope Research Degrees. The handbook and associated guidance shall summarise key elements of the Regulations and Code of Practice, explain them in an easily understood format, and provide a direct link, for reference, to the underlying Regulations and Code.
- B2** Each Partner Institution shall produce a special version of the handbook described in B1, suitable to the context of that institution. The handbook shall be approved by the Chair of Liverpool Hope University's Research Degrees Sub Committee, following a recommendation from the Liverpool Hope University Moderator, and shall summarise key elements of the Regulations and Code of Practice, explain them in an easily understood format, and provide a direct link, for reference, to the underlying Regulations and Code. The handbook shall also contain information on the campus and facilities available at the Partner Institution and Liverpool Hope, a calendar of key events (including but not limited to the contact details of the person or body at Liverpool Hope to whom complaints can be made), contact details for the Supervisory Team, appeals and complaints procedure, dates of Summer Schools or other key events, details of supervisory arrangements and Programme management.
- B3** No guidance material shall contradict any element of the Regulations or Code of Practice.
- B4** The materials referred to in B1-B3 above shall normally be updated annually, and made available to students, supervisors and examiners no later than the start of the academic session.

## **C: Marketing of Research Degree Programmes**

- C1** In order not to encourage false expectations, the advertising and promotional information provided by the Partner Institution on research opportunities will be clear and comprehensive and include general guidance on the following:
- the personal, professional and educational experience and qualifications required for admission as a postgraduate student of the University, including English Language requirements;
  - the time normally required for completion of the degree concerned, and the level of commitment required;
  - the dual registration of each student at both the Partner Institution and Liverpool Hope University, and the fact that students read for awards of Liverpool Hope;
  - the resources, including supervision and support services, that are made available to research students;
  - current levels of fees;
  - whether a Department [or Route within the Professional Doctorate programme] is able, exceptionally, to offer Distance Supervision arrangements, enabling international student to undertake their research from their home country;
  - the standard progression points, notably annual progress reviews, the formal “confirmation of registration” event for PhD students, and the need for students registered for Professional Doctorates to formally progress from Part One to Part Two.
- C2** In order for the University to discharge its obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act, promotional materials will indicate any instances where research programmes are not suitable for a student with special needs. If possible, suitable alternative research programmes will be indicated.
- C3** The Partner Institution will indicate in promotional material that it will normally confirm within 2 weeks that an application for admission has been received, and that a decision will normally be made, and issued by Liverpool Hope University, within 4 weeks of the receipt of the full set of required documents.
- C4** The Partner Institution will indicate in promotional material how applicants may contact the relevant Head of Department for an initial discussion [cf paragraph D1 below, and how the applicant should proceed if they are not sure which Department would be the most suitable.
- C5** All marketing material produced by a Partner Institution must be developed in liaison with the Liverpool Hope University Moderator, and formally approved by the Chair of Liverpool Hope University’s Research Degrees SubCommittee.

## **D: Selection, Admission and Registration of Research Students**

### **D1 Initial Discussion**

#### **D1.1 Applicants to Undertake Specific PhD projects for which the Partner Institution has indicated that it wishes to Invite Applications**

D1.1.1 Before a formal application is submitted, the applicant is advised to hold an initial discussion with the Principal Investigator.

#### **D1.2 Other Applicants**

D1.2.1 Before a formal application may be submitted, the applicant shall normally hold an initial discussion with the Head of Department [or equivalent] at the Partner Institution.

D1.2.2 The discussion may be held in person or by electronic means, and shall focus primarily upon ascertaining the relationship between the student's proposed research topic and the research interests of potential supervisors, to enable the Head to judge whether, if an application was successful, the Department would have the capacity to provide appropriate supervisory support.

D1.2.3 Following the discussion, the Head shall confirm to the applicant in writing whether he/she supports the application "in principle".

### **D2 Submission of the Application**

D2.1 Applications must be made using an amended version of the University's Application Form and an accompanying document [EITHER a Written Sample for applicants to undertake specific PhD projects for which the University has indicated that it wishes to Invite applications, OR a Research Proposal for other PhD/MPhil applicants, OR an outline of the broad area of research interest and how it relates to the professional context for Professional Doctorate applicants], both of which shall be submitted, together with additional materials specified in D2.1.1 below, to the Partner Institution.

#### **D2.1.1 The Application Form**

The form shall require the applicant to supply, *inter alia*, the following:

- an indication of whether the application is to read for an MPhil, a PhD, or a specified Professional Doctorate [eg EdD];
- for applicants to undertake specific PhD projects for which the University has indicated that it wishes to invite applications: the title of the project;
- for other PhD/MPhil applicants, a single sentence summarising the topic of the proposed research,
- a list of all the applicant's formal higher education qualifications, including, for each qualification, the subject[s], the year awarded, the awarding body, and either, as appropriate, the classification, or whether the award was made with Merit or Distinction;
- formal transcripts, with University authorisation, of marks obtained in previous higher education programmes;
- a copy of any degree certificates;

- for applicants to undertake specific PhD projects for which the University has indicated that it wishes to invite applications: the names and contact details of three academic referees;
- for other applicants: the names and contact details of two academic referees who are prepared to comment upon the applicant's suitability for admission to the programme or route concerned;
- proposed starting date;
- for MPhil/PhD applicants, whether the research would be undertaken on a full-time or part-time basis;
- for MPhil/PhD applicants other than those applying to undertake specific PhD projects for which the University has indicated that it wishes to invite applications: a confirmation that the University's Ethical Policy has been consulted, and an indication of whether the research would use human participants, thereby requiring approval by a Faculty Ethics Committee;
- for MPhil/PhD applicants, whether the students wish to follow the normal practice of attending supervision and training sessions in Liverpool, or, exceptionally, be offered Distance Supervision, supplemented by a mechanism [normally an annual Summer School] to provide necessary skills development;
- an indication of any special needs or disabilities;
- for applicants other than those applying to undertake specific PhD projects for which the University has indicated that it wishes to invite applications: a copy of the confirmation from the Head of Department that the application is "supported in principle"
- an indication of the applicant's existing research skills;
- a sample of academic writing, normally from a previous programme of study;
- an indication of potential sources of funding.

#### D2.1.2 The Written Sample [for applicants to undertake specific PhD projects]

- The sample shall aim, in no more than 3,000 words, to demonstrate the applicants' skills as a researcher and/or show skills in organising and presenting research findings.
- Applicants are not restricted to a defined format for their statements, but the following structure is suggested.
  - *Introduction*
    - A brief overview of the applicant's academic/personal background [including their path leading to the decision to apply for the PhD, and why they have chosen this project].
    - Rationale for applying for the PhD [including their previous postgraduate level research experience, and their relevant personal and academic skills.
  - *Research*
    - References to relevant understanding of the research topic.
    - Alignment with the relevant Research Centre/Department.
    - Intellectual influences [eg key theorists, books or concepts which have influenced the applicant's thinking.
  - *Commitment*
    - Statement of personal commitment to a substantial period of high level study.
    - Relevant skills and experience to make the transition to postgraduate research.
    - Career plans.
  - *Final Summary*
    - Any other information which the applicant would like to be considered.

D2.1.3 The Research Proposal [Other PhD/MPhil Applicants]

- The proposal shall outline, in approximately 5000-6000 words, the problems to be studied and the aims of the intended research
- The proposal shall normally include the following numbered sections:
  1. Project Description: The research topic(s) to be studied, including the nature of the problem, why is it problematic, and how it is significant. The general aims of the research and how these differ from previous published work in the field. A summary of academic research already undertaken in this area of research, and how the intended research will build upon the existing research.
  2. Research Methods: An explanation of the main concepts and theories relevant to the research and the proposed methods of investigation. A summary of methodologies considered, and authors who have influenced this consideration. A statement of the most useful methodology to adopt in the research, the kinds of data this will yield and how the data might be analysed.
  3. A Research Plan: This should indicate the main research tasks (e.g. literature review, research and writing) and timescales.
  4. Ethical Approval: A summary of ethical issues arising from the proposed research, how they would be addressed, and how the tackling of the issues would relate to the University's Ethics Policy.
  5. An Indicative Bibliography: This should cite, using the standard referencing system used in the discipline, the main works of reference consulted in developing the proposal. The bibliography should be no longer than three pages.
- Ant publicity produced individual Department at the Partner Institution shall provide guidance to applicants outlining, within the broad framework outlined above, any special Departmental requirements for the research proposal, together with advice about how to complete the 6 sections.
- An applicant who wishes to receive assistance before submitting the proposal shall consult the Head of Department [or equivalent] at the Partner Institution or a potential supervisor.

D2.1.4 The summary statement indicating how undertaking study at EdD level relates to the applicant's professional context [Professional Doctorate applicants];

- The outline shall, in approximately 1500-2000 words, provide an articulate and informed description of the proposed links to the professional context and rationale for applying.
- The outline shall be written in a professional manner, including the professional use of a standard referencing system used in the relevant discipline.
- The publicity for each professional doctorate route shall provide guidance to applicants, outlining, within the broad framework outlined above, any special requirements, and explaining that students will be admitted to Level M[7], and will only progress to Level 8 [Part Two] if their performance in Part One indicates that they have demonstrated potential to succeed in doctoral research.
- An applicant who wishes to receive assistance before submitting the proposal shall consult the Head of Department [or equivalent], or a nominee, or a potential supervisor.
- An applicant who wishes to receive assistance before submitting the proposal shall consult the Award Director [or equivalent] in the partner institution, or a nominee.



### **D3 Detailed Consideration of the Application**

#### **D3.1 Appointment of a Proposed Supervisory Team and a Team of Scrutineers**

The Head of Department [or equivalent] at the Partner Institution shall identify:

- [for PhD/MPhil applicants] the staff who would, if the application was successful, form the Supervisory Team, and
- at least three members of academic staff [and, where appropriate, an external reviewer] to form a Team of Scrutineers, to scrutinise the proposal in detail, and make a recommendation about the suitability of the candidate to be admitted to read for a research degree.

In the case of a cross-disciplinary proposal, the Head of Department [or equivalent] or nominee shall identify staff in liaison with one or more Heads of Department, as appropriate.

All Scrutineers must have been recognised by Liverpool Hope University as Approved Research Supervisors, and have undergone training in assessing applications. One Scrutineer shall normally be the Head of Department, and [for PhD/MPhil applicants] at least one Scrutineer must be a member of the proposed Supervisory Team, and at least one Scrutineer must not be a member of that Team.

#### **D3.2 The Detailed Scrutiny of the Application, and the Forming of Recommended Outcomes**

D3.2.1 All Scrutineers shall:

- a) confirm whether the applicant's formal qualifications meet the thresholds stipulated in the regulations....
  - i. if an applicant for MPhil/PhD holds a Masters degree without Merit or Distinction, the Scrutineers shall ask the Registrar at Liverpool Hope University to determine, if necessary, whether the applicant would have satisfied Liverpool Hope University's requirements for the award of a Masters degree with Merit;
  - ii. if there is any doubt about the authenticity of the transcripts or certificate supplied by the applicant, the Scrutineers shall ask the Student Administration unit at Liverpool Hope University to explore the matter,
- b) [if an applicant does not meet the formal qualification in "a"), judge whether the applicant's research experience [or, for Professional Doctorates, experience of leadership in a relevant professional area ] might warrant admission notwithstanding their lack of formal qualifications;
- c) confirm that the applicant has a sufficiently high level of written and spoken English in order to cope with the requirements of reading for a research degree [see paragraph D5 below];
- d) form a judgement, on the basis of the written material supplied, about whether the applicant appears to have the potential for meeting the University's criteria expected for the award of an MPhil or PhD degree or a Professional Doctorate [see Appendix One];
- e) judge whether, in so far as can be predicted, proper supervision can be provided, and can be maintained throughout the research period, including any periods of study leave for the Director of Studies, or time spent by the student away from the Partner Institution;

- f) for MPhil/PhD applicants, judge whether, in so far as can be predicted
  - i. the proposed programme of work is capable of being studied to the depth required to obtain the degree for which the candidate is to be registered,
  - ii. it might reasonably be expected that the programme of work could be completed within the timescale designated for it,
  - iii. the appropriate necessary resources (e.g. library, computing, laboratory facilities, and technical assistance) will be available;
- g) confirm [in liaison with the relevant Support Service at the Partner Institution] that the institution would be able to provide such support as is necessary in view of an applicant's special needs;
- h) [*in the case of an application to be admitted under distance supervision arrangements*], confirm, in liaison with the relevant University Services at Liverpool Hope, that [i] the student would have appropriate access to email, [ii] there is evidence [eg a letter from a librarian] that the student would have appropriate access to other electronic and other resources, including library resources, and [iii] a site approved by Liverpool Hope University would be available for the holding of Confirmation/Transfer Interviews and Oral Examinations;
- i) interview the applicant to confirm the impressions gained from the written materials. [In cases where it is not practicable to ask the applicant to attend for interview, an interview via Skype may be held instead.]

- D3.2.2 Scrutineers shall prepare an agreed recommendation for each applicant as follows:
- application to read for a PhD unconditionally accepted;
  - application to read for a PhD accepted subject to the applicant meeting specified conditions;
  - application to read for an MPhil unconditionally accepted;
  - application to read for an MPhil accepted subject to the applicant meeting specified conditions;
  - application to read for an PhD rejected, but applicant may be unconditionally admitted to read for an MPhil;
  - application to read for an PhD rejected, but applicant may, subject to meeting specified conditions be admitted to read for an MPhil;
  - application to read for a professional doctorate unconditionally accepted;
  - application to read for a professional doctorate accepted subject to the applicant meeting specified conditions;
  - application to read for a Professional Doctorate rejected, but applicant may be unconditionally admitted to read for a Professional Masters;
  - application to read for a Professional Doctorate rejected, but applicant may, subject to meeting specified conditions be admitted to read for a Professional Masters;
  - application rejected – applicant may not be admitted to read for a research degree.

- D3.2.3 Scrutineers shall also agree a written rationale for the recommendation.
- For all cases in which an application has been at least partially rejected, the rationale shall include a statement classifying the reasons for rejection into one or more of the following categories:
    - the applicant's did not meet the threshold;
    - the applicant's proposed programme of research [OR Written Sample, OR outline of the broad area of research interest and it relates to the professional context] was unsatisfactory;
    - the applicant's performance in interview [or equivalent] was unsatisfactory;
    - one or more referees did not fully support the application;
    - the applicant was insufficiently competent in written and/or spoken English.
  - For all cases in the recommendation is that an applicant should be admitted, the rationale shall include:
    - the proposed Start Date;
    - confirmation that the proposed Supervisory Team is sufficient in view of the nature of the proposed research;
    - [for International Students], confirmation of the supervisory arrangements;
    - an outline of any special adjustment that will need to be implemented in view of an applicant's special needs.

### D3.3 Approval of Recommendations, and Communication of the Outcome

- D3.3.1 The recommendation, plus a rationale agreed by all Scrutineers indicating, where relevant, the grounds for rejection, shall be submitted to the Head of Department [or equivalent] for confirmation.
- D3.3.2 The Head of Department [or equivalent] shall forward the recommendation to the Research Committee or equivalent] in the Partner Institution, together with a coversheet indicating:
- the intended award [eg PhD or MPhil] to which the student would be admitted;
  - the names, roles and weightings to the supervisory load of all members of the proposed Supervisory Team
    - [where, in accordance with paragraph N2 below, the Team includes an External Adviser, a CV demonstrating that the person satisfies relevant aspects of the University's general "requirements for approval as an Adviser should be appended]; and
  - the names of the scrutineers;
  - the proposed Start Date;
  - whether the student would be full-time or part-time;
  - whether the applicant is an international applicant;
  - [in the case of students admitted under Distance Supervision arrangements] whether the Confirmation of Registration Interview, Transfer Interview and/or the Oral Examinations are to be held in the Partner Institution or elsewhere and, if the latter, how staff travel costs, and other necessary expenditure, would be covered.

- D3.3.3 The University Moderator shall submit the coversheet signed by the Research Committee or equivalent] in the Partner Institution, and the other documents relating to the application, to the PGR Degrees Admissions Group of Liverpool Hope University's Research Degrees SubCommittee for final approval, as follows.
- [a] The Group shall comprise the Chair of Research Degrees SubCommittee, the University Registrar, the Associate Dean for Postgraduate Research, the University Moderator, a representative from the Partner Institution, and the Admission and Registration Manager from Student Administration.
  - [b] The group is tasked with ratifying the recommendation from the Faculty, not with reviewing the application in detail. The Group shall focus primarily upon:
    - whether all information specified in paragraph D4.3.2 has been supplied;
    - whether all members of the proposed Supervisory Team have been approved by the University at the appropriate level;
    - whether the application has been considered by due process;
    - whether the applicant has already met the University's formal requirements for admission to the programme;
    - the feasibility, in relation to University procedures and external regulatory constraints, of the proposed Start Date;
    - whether the applicant should receive an Unconditional Offer or a Conditional Offer;
    - the most appropriate REF Unit of Assessment.
- D3.3.4 Following the decision of the PGR Degrees Admissions Group, the Admission and Registration Manager shall arrange for a formal record to be created on the University's student database, and for the student to be issued electronically with a letter formally notifying the outcome, as follows.
- [a] In all cases, the letter shall be generated from the student's record on the University's student database, and shall be copied to the Research Office [or equivalent] in the Partner Institution;
  - [b] In the case of applicants who are not to be admitted, the letter shall include a summary of the reasons for rejection.
  - [c] In the case of successful MPhil/PhD applicants who are to be given an Unconditional Offer of a place to the programme for which they had applied, the letter shall include, *inter alia*:
    - a confirmation of the topic of the research project and the department within which it will be based;
    - an outline of the supervision arrangements, including the names of all members of the Supervisory Team;
    - an outline of the requirements for annual monitoring and related events;
    - the Start date and the deadlines by which the thesis must be submitted;
    - the date by which the applicant should confirm (or otherwise) acceptance of the offer;
    - [where appropriate] all relevant financial information;
    - brief details of the Skills Training requirements;
    - [in the case of students admitted under Distance Supervision arrangements]:
      - whether the Confirmation of Registration Interview, Transfer Interview and/or the Oral Examinations are to be held in this University or elsewhere and, if the latter, how travel costs, and other necessary student expenditure, would be covered,
      - the mechanism [for example an annual Summer School] to provide Skills Training].

- [d] In the case of applicants who are to be given an Unconditional Offer of a place on a Professional Doctorate programme, the letter shall include:
  - the start date, the modules to be taken in part One, and the normal date for completing Part One;
  - the date by which the Part Two thesis must normally be completed;
  - the need to formally progress from Part One before commencing Part Two;
  - the date by which the applicant should confirm (or otherwise) acceptance of the offer;
  - all relevant financial information.
  
- [e] In the case of applicants to a doctoral programme who are to be given an Unconditional Offer of a place on the MPhil or MEd programme, the letter shall include, *inter alia*:
  - a summary of the reasons why the applicant may not be registered directly for a doctorate;
  - an indication that it will be possible to apply to transfer registration to a PhD or EdD at a later point, and
  - all points in “c” or “d” above.
  
- [f] In the case of applicants who are to be given an Conditional Offer of a place, the letter shall include, in addition to information referred to in clauses “c” to “e” above:
  - an explanation of the conditions attached to the offer, and the deadline by which the conditions must be met in order to enable the student to be admitted by the proposed Start Date.

D4.3.6 On receipt of a student’s acceptance of an offer, the Admission and Registration Manager shall arrange for the student to be formally registered.

#### **D4 Timescale for Considering Applications**

It is expected that the formal outcome will normally be communicated to applicants no more than 4 weeks after the complete application has been received.

#### **D5 Criteria for Judging an Applicant’s Competence in Written and Spoken English**

- D5.1 Liverpool Hope University expects all international students for whom English is not their first language to provide formal evidence of their competence, via an International English Language Testing System [IELTS] score of at least 6.5 [including 6.5 in reading and writing] or equivalent.
  
- D5.2 Notwithstanding an applicant’s IELTS score, the Scrutineers may judge, on the basis of the application form or interview, that an applicant is insufficiently competent in written and/or spoken English.

## **D6    Admission Dates**

- D6.1 PhD/MPhil students shall be admitted on two dates each year, normally 1<sup>st</sup> October and 1<sup>st</sup> February.
- D6.2 Professional Doctorate students shall be admitted on two dates each year, normally 1<sup>st</sup> October and 1<sup>st</sup> February.

## **D7    Initial Registration and Induction of Successful Applicants**

- D7.1 Successful applicants will be expected to register, and pay the first instalment of fees, on-line. The University expects that this process will be completed no later than the agreed Start Date.
- D7.2 Any student who has failed to register, or pay the first instalment of fees, by 4 weeks after the agreed Start Date will be issued with a formal warning by Liverpool Hope University's Student Administration unit indicating that they are in danger of being withdrawn from the University. Any student who has still not registered and/or paid the first instalment of fees 2 weeks after the warning was issued shall be deemed to have withdrawn from their studies, and shall be informed of this outcome by the Student Administration unit, the student retaining the right to appeal via the University's standard procedures.
- D7.3 Registered students will be eligible to use Liverpool Hope University's IT facilities, and will be issued with a University email address which they will be expected to use instead of private emails for communicating with Liverpool Hope University throughout the duration of their studies.
- D7.4 Newly registered students must attend Institution-wide and Departmental induction programmes as specified by the Research Committee [or equivalent] at the Partner Institution.
- D7.5 Newly registered international students must participate in special registration activities, and provide relevant documents, as are specified by the Partner Institution in order to fulfil the requirements of UK Visas and Immigration.

## **E: Duration of PhD and MPhil Programmes**

### **E1 “Typical” Durations**

- E1.1 The Regulations specify minimum and maximum limits to the time between initial registration and the submission of the thesis. However, the University expects that a “typical” student admitted without advanced standing will submit according to the following guidelines:

Full time PhD	three years from initial registration
Part time PhD	five years from initial registration
Full time MPhil	two years from initial registration
Part time MPhil	three years from initial registration

- E1.2 Students wishing to submit before the “typical” duration has elapsed should be advised only to do so if the Supervisory Team confirms that the student has progressed more quickly than usual, and are, in effect, already at the point that a “typical” student would be expected to reach by the timescales in E1.1. [No such advice would constitute a guarantee, or prediction, about the outcome of the final examination.]
- E1.3 Students wishing to submit after the “typical” duration has elapsed should be advised to make sure that they are on track for submitting by the Maximum durations specified in the regulations.

### **E2 Students Admitted with Advanced Standing**

#### **E2.1 General**

Inevitably, the durations will vary across students, depending upon the amount of advanced standing they bring. The Regulations specify general rules about minimum and maximum durations, and specify that the Code of Practice will provide further guidance to Liverpool Hope University’s Research Degrees Subcommittee; this guidance is shown below.

#### **E2.2 Minimum Durations**

The Regulations imply that normally, no student admitted with Advanced Standing shall be allowed to submit their thesis in less time than the periods shown below

Full time PhD	one year from initial registration at Hope
Part time PhD	two years from initial registration at Hope
Full time MPhil	six months from initial registration at Hope
Part time MPhil	one year from initial registration at Hope

#### **E2.3 Maximum Durations**

The Regulations imply that normally, no student admitted with Advanced Standing shall be given more time to submit their thesis than the periods shown below

Full time PhD	three years from initial registration at Hope
Part time PhD	five years from initial registration at Hope
Full time MPhil	two years from initial registration at Hope
Part time MPhil	three years from initial registration at Hope

#### E2.4 Calculating Minimum and Maximum Durations for Individual Students

The durations shall be primarily governed by the amount of time the student has already been given to undertake their research, as opposed to the amount of progress they have made. For example, if a PhD student has undertaken one year's full-time study at another university, their Minimum, Maximum and "Typically Expected" Durations should be one year less than those for standard full-time PhD students at Liverpool Hope University.

### E3 Extended Durations

E3.1 The Regulations impose general limits to the amount of additional time that Liverpool Hope University's Progression and Award Board may grant a student to submit their thesis. The University understands that such extensions may typically be granted by Chair's Action, the outcomes being reported to the next formal Board meeting.

Liverpool Hope University expects that judgements about extending the submission date for a "typical" student admitted without advanced standing will be made according to the following guidelines. These guidelines refer to extensions over and about those given, in accordance with the University's academic regulations, to students who have interrupted studies.

#### E3.2 Grounds for Granting an Extension

There are two potential grounds as follows.

##### 3.1.1 *Factors Beyond the Student's Control which led to the Research Proceeding more slowly than would have been Expected*

This means that, although there were no medical problems or other personal circumstances which prevented the student from devoting adequate time to undertaking their research, the student was prevented from doing so according to the planned schedule due to factors beyond their control. Examples might include, *inter alia*, unexpected delays in obtaining access to research participants, ethical clearance from an external body, or documents crucial for library-based research.

##### 3.1.1 *Personal Mitigating Circumstances*

This means that, although there were insufficient medical problems or other personal circumstances to warrant interruption of studies, the student's personal circumstances did prevent the student from making progress according to the agreed schedule.

#### E3.3 Evidence Required

In order for a claim to be accepted, the student must normally:

- [a] provide documentary evidence in support of the claim [the nature of the evidence might legitimately vary depending upon the nature of the claim], and
- [b] establish that the delays could not reasonably have been avoided. For example, a delay in obtaining ethical clearance would not be a valid case for an extension if it transpired that ethical clearance could have been obtained earlier if the student had applied for such clearance earlier, the student having had no good reason for having failed to do so.



## E4 Summary of Key Deadlines

### *PhD Full-time*

Entry Date	First annual Review	Final Deadline for Confirmation of Registration event	Final deadline for submitting Intention to Submit form	Final deadline for submitting thesis	Earliest date on which Intention to Submit form may be submitted	Earliest date on which thesis may be submitted	Typical date on which Intention to Submit form is submitted	Typical date by which thesis is submitted
1 Feb Year X	June Year X	31 Jan Year X+2	30 Nov Year X +3	31 Jan Year X+4	30 Nov Year X+1	31 Jan Year X+2	30 Nov Year X+2	31 Jan Year X+3
1 Oct Year X	June Year X+1	30 Sep Year X+2	31 Jul Year X+4	30 Sep Year X+4	31 Jul Year X+2	30 Sep Year X+2	31 Jul Year X+3	30 Sep Year X+3

### *PhD Part-time*

Entry Date	First annual Review	Final Deadline for Confirmation of Registration event	Final deadline for submitting Intention to Submit form	Final deadline for submitting thesis	Earliest date on which Intention to Submit form may be submitted	Earliest date on which thesis may be submitted	Typical date on which Intention to Submit form is submitted	Typical date by which thesis is submitted
1 Feb Year X	June Year X	31 Jan Year X+4	30 Nov Year X+5	31 Jan Year X+6	30 Nov Year X+3	31 Jan Year X+4	30 Nov Year X+4	31 Jan Year X+5
1 Oct Year X	June Year X+1	30 Sep Year X+4	31 Jul Year X+6	30 Sep Year X+6	31 Jul Year X+4	30 Sep Year X+4	31 Jul Year X+5	30 Sep Year X+5

### *MPhil Full-time*

Entry Date	First annual Review	Final Deadline for Transfer of Registration event	Final deadline for submitting Intention to Submit form	Final deadline for submitting thesis	Earliest date on which Intention to Submit form may be submitted	Earliest date on which thesis may be submitted	Typical date on which Intention to Submit form is submitted	Typical date by which thesis is submitted
1 Feb Year X	June Year X	31 Jan Year X+2	30 Nov Year X+2	31 Jan Year X+3	30 Nov Year X	31 Jan Year X+1	30 Nov Year X+1	31 Jan Year X+2
1 Oct Year X	June Year X+1	30 Sep Year X+2	31 Jul Year X+3	30 Sep Year X+3	31 Jul Year X+1	30 Sep Year X+1	31 Jul Year X+2	30 Sep Year X+2

### *MPhil Part-time*

Entry Date	First annual Review	Final Deadline for Transfer of Registration event	Final deadline for submitting Intention to Submit form	Final deadline for submitting thesis	Earliest date on which Intention to Submit form may be submitted	Earliest date on which thesis may be submitted	Typical date on which Intention to Submit form is submitted	Typical date by which thesis is submitted
1 Feb Year X	June Year X	31 Jan Year X+3	30 Nov Year X+3	31 Jan Year X+4	30 Nov Year X+1	31 Jan Year X+2	30 Nov Year X+2	31 Jan Year X+3
1 Oct Year X	June Year X+1	30 Sep Year X+3	31 Jul Year X+4	30 Sep Year X+4	31 Jul Year X+2	30 Sep Year X+2	31 Jul Year X+3	30 Sep Year X+3

<b>F:     Holidays</b>
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**F:1    Entitlement****F1.1    General**

Liverpool Hope University does not specify working hours or term dates for research students, and students are expected to take a professional approach to their studies, which may involve working during weeks specified as vacations for students on taught programmes.

**F 1.2    Full-time Students**

Notwithstanding paragraph H1.1, full-time research students are entitled to take up to 35 days holiday each calendar year. There is no expectation that the full 35 days must be taken each year, or that days can be carried over from one year to the next, or that taking the full entitlement would provide grounds for an extension.

**F 1.3    Part-time Students**

Notwithstanding paragraph H1.1, part-time research students are entitled to take up to 18 days holiday each calendar year. There is no expectation that the full 18 days must be taken each year, or that days can be carried over from one year to the next, or that taking the full entitlement would provide grounds for an extension.

**F 2     Procedures**

F 2.1 Holiday dates must be agreed in advance with the Director of Studies. In considering a request, the Director of Studies is expected to take into account the research-related activities that would be scheduled for the proposed holiday period. For example, requests to take a holiday which would result in absence from an Annual Monitoring Interview, or a compulsory Research Skills session, would not normally be approved.

F 2.2 Agreed holiday dates must be logged electronically in a format that would enable the Partner Institution, in the absence of the Director of Studies, to determine whether a student is taking an authorised holiday on a specified date.

## **G: Supervision and Skills Training**

### **G1 Eligibility for Supervision and Training**

No student shall be eligible to receive supervision or undergo training until they have registered and paid the first instalment of fees. [In the case of Professional Doctorates, students must have registered for Part Two and paid the first instalment of related fees.]

### **G2 Skills Training**

G2.1 In order to ensure that all postgraduate research students acquire the essential skills required by the national framework of the Joint Research Councils, each Partner Institution shall, under the direction of Liverpool Hope University's Associate Dean for Postgraduate Research, either operate the "Liverpool Hope University Research Skills Scheme" [LHURSS] or develop and operate a comparable scheme.

G2.2 All postgraduate research students are expected to:

- complete the LHURSS [or equivalent] before submitting their thesis;
- keep a continuously updated Personal Development Record, in order to monitor, with evidence, their progress towards the acquisition of the necessary research skills, and confirming, with evidence, that particular skills have been acquired.

G2.3 Directors of Studies are expected to:

- routinely monitor, via the formally recorded supervision meetings, their supervisees' progress towards achieving the necessary research skills and completing the LHURSS [or equivalent];
- assist their supervisees in undertaking a Skills Audit during the first month after initial registration, in order to identify the skills training required by the student in addition to attendance at any mandatory workshops.

G2.4 Liverpool Hope University's Associate Dean for Postgraduate Research is expected to provide assurance to Liverpool Hope University's Research Degrees SubCommittee that:

- the LHURSS [or equivalent] continues to fulfil national expectations,
- mechanisms are in place to provide exemption from specified parts of the LHURSS [or equivalent], based on evidence of relevant prior learning or experience.

G2.5 The Liverpool Hope University's Moderators are expected to:

- undertake regular audits of training needs in the Partner Institution to which they have been assigned
- ensure that opportunities are provided for students to develop the necessary skills, via, *inter alia*:
  - workshops set up by the Partner Institution or Liverpool Hope University;
  - participation in events run by external agencies.

### **G3 Meetings of Students and Supervisors**

#### **G3.1 Frequency of Meetings**

- 3.1.1 All research students must have a **minimum** of eight formally recorded meetings with their supervisory team per annum [typically on a monthly basis from October to May inclusive].
- 3.1.2 It is normally expected that the formally recorded meetings will take place on a face-to-face basis. However, in the case of students admitted via Distance Supervision arrangements the meetings may take place via email, telephone or other media. In all cases, however, the planning and recording of the meetings shall be in accordance with paragraph J3.2.
- 3.1.3 For PhD/MPhil students, the formally recorded meeting held around one month after initial registration shall, consider, *inter alia*, the student's general wellbeing and adjustment to the working pattern expected of a research student.
- 3.1.4 Where a student is required to resubmit their thesis following the oral examination, formally recorded meetings shall take place as necessary, to be determined by the Director of Studies.
- 3.1.5 It is expected that in most cases, students and supervisors will meet more frequently than the minimum requirements. [Additional meetings may be informal or formal and recorded as required.]
- 3.1.6 International students must, in addition to fulfilling the requirements in paragraphs 3.1.1 to 3.1.5, attend any further supervisory meetings as may be specified by the university in order to fulfil the requirements of UK Visas and Immigration.

#### **G3.2 Planning and Recording of Meetings**

- 3.2.1 The formally required meetings outlined in paragraph J3.1.1, and the post-examination meetings outlined in paragraph J3.1.4, must be formally planned and recorded.
- 3.2.2 For each formally required meeting outlined in paragraph J3.1.1, the student must submit to the supervisor both an agenda and targets for the formal meeting. This forms the basis of the meeting. During the meeting, the student and supervisor(s) agree further outcomes and targets. A summary of [a] progress made since the previous meeting, [b] the main points discussed in the meeting, and [c] agreed action points, is produced and formally signed off by the supervisor, the report of the meetings forming the agreed formal Supervisory Log, for consideration as part of the Annual Monitoring process each year.

#### **G3.3 Use of Meetings to Identify Unsatisfactory Process**

- 3.3.1 Where a student fails to attend a scheduled meeting without explanation, or otherwise is deemed by the Supervisory Team not to be making satisfactory academic progress, the Director of Studies shall formally write to the student, warning that their progress is not satisfactory, and setting targets for the student to achieve.

- 3.3.2 Where the student fails to respond, or fails, without providing evidence of valid mitigating circumstances, to meet targets that have been set, the student shall be invited to an interview with the Liverpool Hope University Moderator and two other Approved Research Supervisors at the Partner Institution. The reasons for the student's lack of progress shall be explored, and the student shall be allowed to make a written submission. The Director of Studies shall also attend, in an advisory capacity. Following the interview, one of the following outcomes shall be agreed.
- The student is allowed to continue on the research programme, with a final opportunity to improve performance, according to specific targets and timescales.
  - The Liverpool Hope University Moderator recommends to the Chair of Liverpool Hope University's Progression and Award Board that the student be required to terminate studies. The Chair's decision shall be published by Liverpool Hope University's Student Administration team, and the outcome communicated to the Director of Studies and formally reported to the Board. The student shall be entitled to appeal in accordance with the regulations
- 3.3.3 Where the student fails, without providing evidence of valid mitigating circumstances, to meet targets that have been set, in accordance with paragraph 3.3.2, the Liverpool Hope University Moderator shall recommends to the Chair of Liverpool Hope University's Progression and Award Board that the student be required to terminate studies. The Chair's decision shall be published by Liverpool Hope University's Student Administration team, and the outcome communicated to the Director of Studies and formally reported to the Board. The student shall be entitled to appeal in accordance with the regulations

## **H: Annual Monitoring Reviews**

### **H1 Timing**

The process shall normally take place from 1 June each year, with the recommendations being submitted to the July meeting of Liverpool Hope University's Progression and Award Board for Postgraduate Research Students.

### **H2 Students to be Monitored**

Each year's Annual Monitoring process shall apply to all registered full-time and part-time PhD/MPhil students, the only exceptions being students who:

- had interrupted studies for a period including the whole of June in that calendar year;
- had, before 1 June in that calendar year, been placed on a "Submission Pending" Mode of Attendance, following the submission, to Liverpool Hope University's Registrar, of a valid "Intention to Submit a Thesis" form.

The process shall also apply to all students registered for Part Two of a professional doctorate programme, the only exceptions being students who:

- had initially registered for Part Two on or after 1 April in the that calendar year;
- had interrupted studies for a period including the whole of June in that calendar year;
- had, before 1 June in that calendar year, been placed on a "Submission Pending" Mode of Attendance, following the submission, to the University Registrar, of a valid "Intention to Submit a Thesis" form.

### **H3 Summary of the Process**

The process shall normally take place in the following stages.

#### **H3.1 Formal Communication to the Student of the Deadline by which Submissions are Needed, and the Nature of the Required Submission**

Information shall, by October each year, be included in the Partner Institution's annual Research Students Handbook, and advertised via the institution's website.

Supervisors shall ensure that their supervisees are aware of the deadline and of requirements specific to their Department.

#### **H3.2 Appointment of an Annual Monitoring Panel**

The Chair of the Institution's Research Committee [or equivalent] shall, in liaison with the Liverpool Hope University Moderator, determine who shall serve as independent reader for each student, and who shall serve as Chairs for the Panel, in accordance with the following rules:.

- [a] each student's documentation shall be read by the supervisory team and an independent reader, who is not a member of the student's supervisory team, but has been recognised by Liverpool Hope University as an Approved Supervisor;
- [b] the Chair of the Panel shall have been recognised by Liverpool Hope University as eligible to be a Director of Studies, and the Chair shall rotate so that no person chairs the consideration of their own supervisee.

### H3.3 Submissions from the Student

The student shall submit to the Panel two forms of evidence demonstrating their progress during the year:

- the Personal Development Record [cf H3.2.2 above]
  - *this shall indicate, with evidence, the student's progress towards achieving all elements of the "Liverpool Hope University Research Skills Scheme";*
- the Supervisory Log [cf H3.2.2 above]
  - *this shall comprise the recorded content and outcomes of supervision meetings;*
- a written report
  - *this shall be determined by the Director of Studies, but may be a draft chapter of the thesis;*
  - *guidance about the content and structure of the report shall be issued annually by Liverpool Hope University's Research Degrees SubCommittee.*

### H3.4 The Annual Review Interview

The student shall normally be required to attend an interview to discuss their progress. The record of the interview shall be made available to the Panel.

- *Guidance about the content, structure and recording of the interview shall be issued annually by Liverpool Hope University's Research Degrees SubCommittee. In principle, however, it may take place within a scheduled meeting with the Supervisory Team.*

### H3.5 Scrutiny of the Submission and Production of the Recommended Outcome

H3.5.1 The Panel shall be required to complete, and jointly sign, an Annual Monitoring Report Form, which shall require the Panel to confirm that, on the basis of the written documents and the interview:

- the submitted documents are agreed by the Director of Studies as an accurate record of the student's activity;
- [for PhD/MPhil students] the student is on track to complete the LHURSS before the thesis is submitted;
- the student is on track to complete their research in time to submit the thesis by the due deadline;
- the student has taken all necessary steps to secure any necessary ethical approval;
- the student appears to be on track for fulfilling the University's expectations associated with the level of their intended award [cf Appendix One].

H3.5.2 The Panel shall be required to allocate the student, via the Form, to one of the following outcomes as specified in the Regulations:

- [a] progress satisfactory: *eligible to re-register for the coming academic session;*
- [b] progress not yet satisfactory: *reassessment required in order to become eligible to re-register for the coming academic session [where necessary, the student may be allowed to re-register temporarily, pending the outcome of the reassessment];*
- [c] progress not satisfactory: *studies terminated* or, in the case of a student whose registration at PhD level has previously been confirmed in accordance with L4.2 below, recommendation to re-register at MPhil level and submit within the timeframe outlined in E1.1 above.

- H3.5.3 In arriving at their decision, the Panel shall be guided by the following conventions:
- [a] Progress Satisfactory
    - this is the most likely outcome;
    - if the Panel agrees with this outcome, the outcome simply needs to be recorded on the form – no further investigation is needed EXCEPT THAT, if the student is registered for an MPhil, the Panel should indicate whether the student and/or the research appears to demonstrate potential for reaching the university's expectations for doctoral work.
  - [b] Progress Not Yet Satisfactory
    - this outcome is likely to result from either the student providing insufficient evidence [*in extremis*, failing to make any submission] or from one or more weaknesses in the submission that are judged by the Panel to be redeemable sufficiently redeemable to enable the student to get back on track by the start of the next academic session;
    - if the Panel agrees with this outcome, the Panel needs not only to agree the outcome per se, but also to append to the form a comprehensive list of what the student needs to do to get back on track.
  - [c] Progress Not Satisfactory
    - this outcome is likely to be rare, but could reflect one or weaknesses in the submission that are judged by the Panel to be so serious that the student would not be able to get back on track by the start of the next academic session;
    - if the Panel agrees with this outcome, the Panel needs not only to agree the outcome per se, but also to [i] indicate whether the recommendation is for Termination of Studies or [in the case of a student registered for a PhD] a re-registration for MPhil, and [ii] append to the form a comprehensive list of why the Panel judges that the student will not be able to achieve their intended award.

### H3.6 Approval of the Recommended Outcome, and Communication to the Student

- H3.6.1 The University Moderator shall arrange for their Faculty Research Administration to enter the Panel's recommendations to the sheets for the next meeting of Liverpool Hope University's Progression and Award Board for Postgraduate Research Students. The Board shall confirm the outcome for each student and, in the case of students in the *Progress Not Yet Satisfactory* category, specify a date, no later than 30 September in the same year, by which the student is required to resubmit.
- H3.6.2 Liverpool Hope University's Student Administration unit shall formally communicate the confirmed outcome to the student, and, where appropriate, arrange for the student to re-register for the following academic session.
- H3.6.3 The Director of Studies shall arrange for the student to receive a copy of the completed Annual Monitoring Report Form, and shall ensure that the student understands the rationale for the outcome.

### 3.7 Reassessment of Students whose Progress was Deemed to be "Not Yet Satisfactory"

This shall proceed in the same was as for the initial assessment, except that:

- recommendations shall be submitted to the autumn meeting of the Progression and Award Board:
- the "Progress Not Yet Satisfactory" category shall not normally be available.



## **I: The Confirmation of Registration Event [PhD Students only]**

### **I1 Initiation of the Process**

- I1.1 In order to initiate the process, the Director of Studies shall submit to the Liverpool Hope University Moderator a formal notification that they wish their supervisee to undergo the Confirmation of Registration Event. The Moderator shall inform their Faculty Research Administration; the Administrator shall record the initiation to the documents for the next Progression and Award Board meeting.
- I1.2 The process shall normally be initiated at the point at which the Director of Studies judges that the student has made sufficient progress to enable a Panel to assess whether the student is on track towards achieving the University's expectations for doctoral work [cf Appendix One].
- I1.3 Irrespective of the Director of Studies' judgement of the progress made by the student, the process shall normally be initiated in time for it to be completed within timescales stipulated in the regulations.

### **I2 Appointment of a Confirmation Panel**

The Liverpool Hope University Moderator shall appoint a Panel comprising the Supervisory Team and an independent reader, who shall serve as Chair. The reader shall not necessarily have expertise in the area of the research, but shall normally have been formally recognised by Liverpool Hope University as an Approved Research Supervisor, and shall have prior experience of successful supervision to completion of research at doctoral level in the discipline; in exceptional circumstances, the reader may not be an employee of Liverpool Hope University or any Partner Institution. The Panel may be the same as the student's Annual Monitoring Panel.

### **I3 The Student Submission**

The Chair of the Panel shall invite the student to submit a formal Confirmation Proposal, presenting a case to demonstrate that the work which the student has done so far indicates that they are capable of carrying out research at doctoral level. The invitation shall specify the required content and length of the proposal. The requirements shall be broadly consistent with the following guidelines, but the detailed requirements may legitimately vary across academic disciplines:

#### **I3.1 Length**

The typical length is likely to be around 20,000 words (although the precise length is dependent upon the discipline).

#### **I3.2 Content**

##### **[a] *Literature Review***

- A discussion of the existing literature in the area.
- This should be presented in sufficient detail to demonstrate that the student is developing the ability to "systematically acquire and understand a substantial body of knowledge which is at the forefront of an academic discipline or area of professional practice".

- [b] *Aims of the Research Project*
  - An articulation of the aims of the study, how they have evolved, and how they will enable the student to extend previous knowledge.
  - This should be presented in sufficient detail to demonstrate that the student is developing the ability to “conceptualise a project for the generation of new knowledge, applications or understanding at the forefront of the discipline, and to adjust the project design in the light of unforeseen problems”.
- [c] *Methodology of the Research Project*
  - A discussion of the methodology [including theoretical and analytical frameworks] which is being used, the ethical issues which are being addressed, and how the proposed methodology has evolved.
  - This should be presented in sufficient detail to demonstrate that the student is developing the ability to “design and implement a project for the generation of new knowledge, applications or understanding at the forefront of the discipline, and to adjust the project design in the light of unforeseen problems”.
- [c] *Interim Findings and Outcomes*
  - A discussion of the findings obtained so far, how they are influencing the developing project overall, and any publications [or material submitted for publication] that have emerged, ranging from internal seminar presentations to referred journal articles.
  - This should be presented in sufficient detail to demonstrate that the student’s research has the potential for generating “new knowledge, applications or understanding at the forefront of the discipline”, of a “quality to satisfy peer review”.
  - Any publications [or material submitted for publication] should be included in full, in an Appendix].
- [d] *Bibliography*
  - Full references to primary and secondary sources which have been used so far, as well as those still to be accessed.
- ②
- [e] *Proposed Structure of the Thesis*
  - A draft structure for the study, including chapter headings and a short summary of content for each chapter.
  - This should be presented in sufficient detail to demonstrate that the scope of the research will be sufficiently substantial to warrant consideration for a doctoral award.
- [f] *Proposed Programme for Completion of the Research*
  - A timetable for completion of the research, including an estimate of the likely submission date.
- ②
- [g] *[OPTIONAL] Issues for Discussion*
  - Any questions that the student would like to pose to the Examiners during the Confirmation Interview.

## **I4     Assessment of the Proposal, and Production of the Recommended Outcome**

### **I4.1   Initial Scrutiny of the Submission**

The Panel shall read the Submission, and form an initial judgement, with reference to the University’s expectations for doctoral research, about the applicant’s potential to complete their research to doctoral level within the required timescale.

#### 14.2 The Confirmation Interview

The interview shall normally be held at the Partner Institution. However, in the case of students admitted under Distance Supervision arrangements, the interview may be held at an alternative location.

The interview shall normally take place within one month of the receipt of the written submission.

The Panel shall meet before the interview, to discuss, in view of the written submission, how the interview is to be conducted. The interview shall be chaired by the Chair of the Panel, with other members in attendance.

The aims of the interview shall be to:

- provide the Panel with an opportunity to corroborate their initial judgements based on the written submission, and explore with the applicant any issues arising from that submission,
- provide the applicant with an opportunity to develop and improve her/his oral and presentation skills in preparation for the final oral examination.

The student shall be allowed to audio-record the interview if they wish.

#### 14.3 The Panel's Recommendation

14.3.1 The Panel shall be required to complete, and jointly sign, a Confirmation Report Form, which shall require the Panel to allocate the student, via the Form, to one of the following outcomes as specified in the Regulations:

- [a] progress satisfactory and registration confirmed: *all subsequent annual registrations to be for a PhD;*
- [b] further assessment required: *student continues registered for a PhD for a further calendar year, pending a further Confirmation of Registration Event;*
- [c] progress only satisfactory for MPhil: *all subsequent annual registrations to be for MPhil;*
- [d] progress not satisfactory: *studies terminated.*

14.3.2 In arriving at their decision, the Panel shall be guided by the following conventions:

- [a] Progress Satisfactory and Registration Confirmed
  - The recommendation needs to be recorded on the form.
  - In addition, the Panel should, in order to provide feedback to the student, include on the report form a brief summary of key strengths and weaknesses of the research project, the written submission and the student's performance

[b] Further Assessment Required

- The recommendation needs to be recorded on the form.
- In addition, the Panel should, in order to provide feedback to the student, include on the report form a clear indication of [i] key strengths and weaknesses of the research project, the written submission and the student's performance, [ii] the improvements the student must take in order for the resubmission to be successful, this information being provided without prejudice to the outcome of a resubmission, [iii] the deadline by which a resubmission must be submitted, and [iv] whether the student would also need to undertake a second interview.
- The Panel should select this outcome if student has not demonstrated their potential for working at doctoral level, but the submission has sufficient strengths to persuade the Panel that the student should be given a further opportunity to request a transfer.
- The Panel should only select this outcome if it judges that the student would be able to make a successful submission within the maximum timescale stipulated in the regulations.
- In the case of a student being required to make only minor amendments, the Panel may request that such amendments are made in time for the outcome to be reviewed before the formal recommendation is submitted to the next meeting of Liverpool Hope University's Progression and Award Board for approval.

[c] Progress Only Satisfactory for MPhil

- The recommendation needs to be recorded on the form.
- In addition, the Panel should, in order to provide feedback to the student, include on the report form a clear indication of key strengths and weaknesses of the research project, the written submission and the student's performance.
- The Panel should select this outcome if student has not demonstrated their potential for working at doctoral level, and the Panel judges that the student would be unable to make a successful submission within the maximum timescale stipulated in the regulations.

[d] Progress Not Satisfactory

- This outcome is likely to be extremely rare, but would be used if the Panel judged that the weaknesses were so serious that the student would not be able to achieve a postgraduate research award.
- The recommendation needs to be recorded on the form.
- In addition, the Panel should, in order to provide feedback to the student, include on the report form a clear indication of key strengths and weaknesses of the research project, the written submission and the student's performance.

#### I4.4 Approval of the Recommended Outcome, and Communication to the Student

- I4.4.1 The Chair shall, normally within one week of the interview, submit the completed Confirmation Report Form, with attachments as appropriate, to the University Moderator, who shall arrange for their Faculty Research Administration to enter the Panel's recommendation to the sheets for the next meeting of Liverpool Hope University's Progression and Award Board for Postgraduate Research Students. At its next meeting, the Board shall confirm the outcome for each student and, in the case of students in the *Further Assessment Required* category, confirm the date by which the student is required to resubmit, and whether the student must undertake a second interview.
- I4.4.2 Liverpool Hope University's Student Administration unit shall formally communicate the confirmed outcome to the student, and, where appropriate, arrange for the student to re-register for the following academic session.
- I4.4.3 The Director of Studies shall arrange for the student to receive a copy of the completed Confirmation Report Form, and shall ensure that the student understands the rationale for the outcome.

#### I4.5 Reassessment of Students

This shall proceed in the same way as for the initial assessment, except that:

- the "Further Assessment Required" and Progress Not Satisfactory" categories shall not normally be available.

<b>J: The Application to Transfer Registration Event [MPhil Students only]</b>
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**J1 Notification of a Request to Transfer**

- J1.1 Any MPhil student who has successfully completed [without the need for reassessment] all Annual Monitoring events they have undertaken, shall be eligible, within the timescales stipulated in the Regulations, to submit to the Liverpool Hope University Moderator a formal notification that they wish to apply to transfer registration from MPhil to PhD. The Moderator shall inform the Liverpool Hope University Student Administration Team via [administration@hope.ac.uk](mailto:administration@hope.ac.uk); the Administrator shall record the initiation to the documents for the next Progression and Award Board meeting
- J1.2 Before submitting their request, the student is expected to discuss the matter with their Director of Studies. The Director of Studies shall explain the university's expectations for doctoral work, and discuss with the student whether he or she student appears to be on track for achieving those expectations; where relevant, the Annual Monitoring Report may be referred to during the discussion. However, irrespective of any advice offered by the Director of Studies, the decision about whether to apply for a transfer shall be made by the student.
- J1.3 Notwithstanding paragraph J1.2, if the Annual Monitoring Report Form indicates that the student appears to have the potential for reaching the University's expectations for doctoral work, the Director of Studies shall discuss this with the student, explaining the expectations of doctoral work and the process that would need to be followed in order for a transfer to be approved.

**J2 Appointment of a Transfer Panel**

The Liverpool Hope University Moderator shall appoint a Panel comprising the Supervisory Team and an independent reader, who shall serve as Chair. The reader shall not necessarily have expertise in the area of the research, but shall normally have been formally recognised by Liverpool Hope University as an Approved Research Supervisor, and shall have prior experience of successful supervision to completion of research at doctoral level in the discipline; in exceptional circumstances, the reader may not be an employee of Liverpool Hope University or any Partner Institution. The Panel may be the same as the student's Annual Monitoring Panel.

**J3 The Student Submission**

The Chair of the Panel shall invite the student to submit a formal Transfer Proposal, presenting a case to demonstrate that the work which the student has done so far indicates that they are capable of carrying out research at doctoral level. The invitation shall specify the required content and length of the proposal. The requirements shall be broadly consistent with the following guidelines, but the detailed requirements may legitimately vary across academic disciplines:

**J3.1 Length**

The typical length is likely to be around 20,000 words (although the precise length is dependent upon the discipline).

### J3.2 Content

[a] *Literature Review*

- A discussion of the existing literature in the area.
- This should be presented in sufficient detail to demonstrate that the student is developing the ability to “systematically acquire and understand a substantial body of knowledge which is at the forefront of an academic discipline or area of professional practice”.

[b] *Aims of the Research Project*

- An articulation of the aims of the study, how they have evolved. and how they will enable the student to extend previous knowledge.
- This should be presented in sufficient detail to demonstrate that the student is developing the ability to “conceptualise a project for the generation of new knowledge, applications or understanding at the forefront of the discipline, and to adjust the project design in the light of unforeseen problems”.

[c] *Methodology of the Research Project*

- A discussion of the methodology [including theoretical and analytical frameworks] which is being used, the ethical issues which are being addressed, and how the proposed methodology has evolved.
- This should be presented in sufficient detail to demonstrate that the student is developing the ability to “design and implement a project for the generation of new knowledge, applications or understanding at the forefront of the discipline, and to adjust the project design in the light of unforeseen problems”.

[c] *Interim Findings and Outcomes*

- A discussion of the findings obtained so far, how they are influencing the developing project overall, and any publications [or material submitted for publication] that have emerged, ranging from internal seminar presentations to referred journal articles.
- This should be presented in sufficient detail to demonstrate that the student’s research has the potential for generating “new knowledge, applications or understanding at the forefront of the discipline”, of a “quality to satisfy peer review”.
- Any publications [or material submitted for publication] should be included in full, in an Appendix].

[d] *Bibliography*

- Full references to primary and secondary sources which have been used so far, as well as those still to be accessed.

②

[e] *Proposed Structure of the Thesis*

- A draft structure for the study, including chapter headings and a short summary of content for each chapter.
- This should be presented in sufficient detail to demonstrate that the scope of the research will be sufficiently substantial to warrant consideration for a doctoral award.

[f] *Proposed Programme for Completion of the Research*

- A timetable for completion of the research, including an estimate of the likely submission date.

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[g] *[OPTIONAL] Issues for Discussion*

- Any questions that the student would like to pose to the Examiners during the Transfer Interview.

## **J4     Assessment of the Transfer Request, and Production of the Recommended Outcome**

### **J4.1     Initial Scrutiny of the Submission**

The Panel shall read the Submission, and form an initial judgement, with reference to the University's expectations for doctoral research, about the applicant's potential to complete their research to doctoral level within the required timescale.

### **J4.2     The Transfer Interview**

The interview shall normally be held at the Partner Institution. However, in the case of students admitted under Distance Supervision arrangements, the interview may be held at an alternative location.

The Panel shall meet before the interview, to discuss, in view of the written submission, how the interview is to be conducted.

The interview shall be chaired by the Chair of the Panel, with other members in attendance.

The aims of the interview shall be to:

- provide the Panel with an opportunity to corroborate their initial judgements based on the written submission, and explore with the applicant any issues arising from that submission,
- provide the applicant with an opportunity to develop and improve her/his oral and presentation skills in preparation for the final oral examination.

The student shall be allowed to audio-record the interview if they wish.

The interview shall normally take place within one month of the receipt of the written submission.

### **J4.3     The Panel's Recommendation**

J4.3.1     The Panel shall be required to complete, and jointly sign, a Transfer Report Form, which shall require the Panel to allocate the student, via the Form, to one of the following outcomes as specified in the Regulations:

- [a]     progress justifies transfer: *all subsequent annual registrations to be for a PhD;*
- [b]     further assessment required: *student continues registered for an MPhil for a further calendar year, but may request a second, and final, Transfer of Registration Event to upgrade to PhD;*
- [c]     progress satisfactory for MPhil and registration confirmed: *all subsequent annual registrations to be for MPhil;*
- [d]     progress not satisfactory: *studies terminated.*

J4.3.2     In arriving at their decision, the Panel shall be guided by the following conventions:

- [a]     Progress Justifies Transfer
  - The recommendation needs to be recorded on the form.
  - In addition, the Panel should, in order to provide feedback to the student, include on the report form a brief summary of key strengths and weaknesses of the research project, the written submission and the student's performance.



- [b] Further Assessment Required
- The recommendation needs to be recorded on the form.
  - In addition, the Panel should, in order to provide feedback to the student, include on the report form a clear indication of [i] key strengths and weaknesses of the research project, the written submission and the student's performance, [ii] the improvements the student must take in order for the resubmission to be successful, this information being provided without prejudice to the outcome of a resubmission, [iii] the deadline by which a resubmission must be submitted, and [iv] whether the student would also need to undertake a second interview.
  - The Panel should select this outcome if student has not demonstrated their potential for working at doctoral level, but the submission has sufficient strengths to persuade the Panel that the student should be given a further opportunity to request a transfer.
  - The Panel should only select this outcome if it judges that the student would be able to make a successful submission within the maximum timescale stipulated in the regulations.
  - In the case of a student being required to make only minor amendments, the Panel may request that such amendments are made in time for the outcome to be reviewed before the formal recommendation is submitted to the next meeting of Liverpool Hope University's Progression and Award Board for approval.
- [c] Progress Satisfactory for MPhil and Registration Confirmed
- The recommendation needs to be recorded on the form.
  - In addition, the Panel should, in order to provide feedback to the student, include on the report form a clear indication of key strengths and weaknesses of the research project, the written submission and the student's performance.
  - The Panel should select this outcome if student has not demonstrated their potential for working at doctoral level, and the Panel judges that the student would be unable to make a successful submission within the maximum timescale stipulated in the regulations.
- [d] Progress Not Satisfactory
- This outcome is likely to be extremely rare, but would be used if the Panel judged that the weaknesses were so serious that the student would not be able to achieve a postgraduate research award.
  - The recommendation needs to be recorded on the form.
  - In addition, the Panel should, in order to provide feedback to the student, include on the report form a clear indication of key strengths and weaknesses of the research project, the written submission and the student's performance.

#### J4.4 Approval of the Recommended Outcome, and Communication to the Student

- J4.4.1 The Chair shall, normally within one week of the interview, submit the completed Transfer Report Form, with attachments as appropriate, to the University Moderator, who shall arrange for their Faculty Research Administration to enter the Panel's recommendation to the sheets for the next meeting of Liverpool Hope University's Progression and Award Board for Postgraduate Research Students. At its next meeting, the Board shall confirm the outcome for each student and, in the case of students in the *Further Assessment Required* category, confirm the date by which the student is required to resubmit, and whether the student must undertake a second interview.

J4.4.2 Liverpool Hope University's Student Administration unit shall formally communicate the confirmed outcome to the student, and, where appropriate, arrange for the student to re-register for the following academic session.

J4.4.3 The Director of Studies shall arrange for the student to receive a copy of the completed Transfer Report Form, and shall ensure that the student understands the rationale for the outcome.

#### J4.5 Reassessment of Students

This shall proceed in the same way as for the initial assessment, except that:

- the "Further Assessment Required" and Progress Not Satisfactory" categories shall not normally be available.

<b>K: The Confirmation of Doctoral Registration Interview [Professional Doctorate Students only]</b>
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**K1 Initiation of the Process**

The process shall begin when the Board of Examiners has determined that the student is eligible to be assessed for progression to Part Two.

**K2 Appointment of a Confirmation Panel**

- K2.1 The Panel shall comprise all members of the Proposed Supervisory Team and an Independent Reader, who shall serve as Chair. The Independent Reader shall not necessarily have expertise in the area of the research, but shall normally have been formally recognised by the University as an Approved Research Supervisor, and shall have prior experience of successful supervision to completion of research at doctoral level in the discipline. The Independent Reader shall be a member of staff at the University or at one of the Partner Institutions offering a Liverpool Hope Professional Doctorate.
- K2.2 The proposed Supervisory Team shall be submitted, by the Award Director [or equivalent post holder in a partner institution] for approval to the Chair of Research Degrees Sub Committee as soon as the Board of Examiners has determined that the student is eligible to be considered for progression. The proposal shall be submitted via a standard form. The interview may not proceed until the Chair has approved the composition of the proposed team.
- K2.3 The Award Director [or equivalent post holder in a partner institution] shall also propose to the Chair of Research Degrees Sub Committee name of the Independent Reader. The proposal shall be submitted via a standard form. The interview may not proceed until the Chair has approved the appointment of the Independent Reader.

**K3 The Student Submission**

The submission shall be identical to the Research Proposal submitted in Part One.

**K4 Assessment of the Proposal, and Production of the Recommended Outcome****K4.1 General Criteria**

The Part One examiners will already have confirmed that the Research Proposal meets the University's expectations for work at Level M[7].

In contrast, the purpose of the interview will be to determine whether, on the basis of the written proposal and performance in the interview, the student has demonstrated potential to achieve, within the timescale stipulated in the Regulations, the University's expectations for a Doctoral award at Level D[8].

#### K4.2 Initial Scrutiny of the Research Proposal

The Panel shall read the proposal, and form an initial judgement, with reference to the University's expectations for doctoral research, about the student's potential to complete their research to doctoral level within the required timescale.

#### K4.3 The Confirmation Interview

- a. The interview shall be held at Hope Park, the Creative Campus or the Partner Institution at which the student is registered. Where necessary, one or more members of the Proposed Supervisory Team may attend via Skype [or equivalent]. However, the student, the Independent Reader and at least one member of the Proposed Supervisory Team must attend in person.
- b. The interview shall take place within one month of the publication of the Part One result.
- c. The Panel shall meet before the interview, to discuss, in view of the written submission, how the interview is to be conducted.
- d. The interview shall be chaired by the Independent Reader, with all members of the Proposed Supervisory Team in attendance. [Where necessary, one or more members of the Proposed Supervisory Team may attend virtually. However, the student, the Independent Reader and at least one member of the Proposed Supervisory Team must attend in person.]
- e. The student shall be allowed to audio-record the interview if they wish.
- f. The aims of the interview shall be to:
  - provide the Panel with an opportunity to corroborate their initial judgements based on the written submission, and explore with the applicant any issues arising from that submission,
  - provide the applicant with an opportunity to develop and improve her/his oral and presentation skills in preparation for the final oral examination.

#### K4.4 The Panel's Recommendation

- K4.4.1 The Panel shall be required to complete, and jointly sign, a Confirmation Report Form, which shall require the Panel to allocate the student, via the Form, to one of the following outcomes as specified in the Regulations:
- [a] the student may progress to Part Two of the Professional Doctorate;
  - [b] the student is not yet eligible to progress to Part Two, but is required to undergo a second interview, to be held no later no later than 3 months after the publication of the outcome of the first interview;
  - [c] the student is not yet eligible to progress to Part Two, but is required to revise the Research Proposal AND undergo a second interview, to be held no later no later than 3 months after the publication of the outcome of the first interview;
  - [d] the student is not eligible to progress to Part Two, and so is to be awarded a Masters degree with Merit.

K4.4.2 In arriving at their decision, the Panel shall be guided by the following conventions:

- [a] The student may progress to Part Two of the Professional Doctorate
  - The recommendation needs to be recorded on the form.
  - In addition, the Panel should, in order to provide feedback to the student, include on the report form a brief summary of key strengths and weaknesses of the proposal and the student's performance in the interview.
- [b] The student is not yet eligible to progress to Part Two, but is required to undergo a second interview, to be held no later no later than 3 months after the publication of the outcome of the first interview
  - The recommendation needs to be recorded on the form.
  - In addition, the Panel should, in order to provide feedback to the student, include on the report form a clear indication of [i] key strengths and weaknesses of the proposal and the student's performance, and [ii] the improvements the student must take in order for the resubmission to be successful, this information being provided without prejudice to the outcome of a resubmission.
  - The Panel should select this outcome if the proposal had suggested potential for working at doctoral level, but this was not supported by the student's performance in the interview.
- [c] The student is not yet eligible to progress to Part Two, but is required to revise the Research Proposal AND undergo a second interview, to be held no later no later than 3 months after the publication of the outcome of the first interview
  - The recommendation needs to be recorded on the form.
  - In addition, the Panel should, in order to provide feedback to the student, include on the report form a clear indication of [i] key strengths and weaknesses of the proposal and the student's performance, [ii] the improvements the student must take in order for the resubmission to be successful, this information being provided without prejudice to the outcome of a resubmission, and [iii] the deadline by which a resubmission must be submitted.
  - The Panel should select this outcome if the student's written submission has not demonstrated their potential for working at doctoral level, but the submission has sufficient strengths to persuade the Panel that the student should be given a further opportunity to become eligible to progress.
  - The Panel should only select this outcome if it judges that the student would be able to make a successful resubmission within three months [not including any extension that might be granted on the grounds of valid mitigating circumstances].
- [d] The student is not eligible to progress to Part Two, and so is to be awarded a Masters degree with Merit
  - The recommendation needs to be recorded on the form.
  - In addition, the Panel should, in order to provide feedback to the student, include on the report form a clear indication of key strengths and weaknesses of the proposal and the student's performance.
  - The Panel should select this outcome if the student has not demonstrated their potential for working at doctoral level, and the Panel judges that the student would be unable to make a successful resubmission within three months.

#### K4.5 Approval of the Recommended Outcome, and Communication to the Student

- K4.5.1 The Chair shall, normally within one day of the interview, email the completed Confirmation Report Form to, as appropriate, EITHER the Research Administration for the relevant Faculty at Liverpool Hope OR the Research office [or equivalent] at the Partner Institution.
- K4.5.2 The Administrator shall enter the recommendation to the Board spreadsheet, to be confirmed at the next meeting of the Progression and Award Board.
- K4.5.3 If the next Board meeting is more than 2 weeks after the interview, the result shall be jointly confirmed by the Chair of the Board and the Registrar, and reported to the next Board meeting.
- K4.5.4 The Student Administration unit at Liverpool Hope shall formally communicate the confirmed outcome to the student and, where appropriate, arrange for the student to register for Part Two. A copy of the outcome shall be issued as appropriate, EITHER the Research Administration for the relevant Faculty at Liverpool Hope OR the Research office [or equivalent] at the Partner Institution.
- K4.5.5 The proposed Director of Studies shall arrange for the student to receive a copy of the completed Confirmation Report Form, and shall ensure that the student understands the rationale for the outcome.

#### K4.6 Reassessment of Students

This shall proceed in the same way as for the initial assessment, except that:

- outcomes “b” and “c” shall not normally be available.

## **L: Supervisors and Examiners**

### **L1 Criteria and Procedures for the Approval of Staff as Potential Supervisors**

#### **L1.1 Criteria**

##### **[a] Criteria for Approval as a Potential Director of Studies**

- A potential Director of Studies shall hold a senior and substantive appointment with the Partner Institution and be actively engaged in the management and oversight of PGR activities within the Institution.
- A potential Director of Studies shall hold a doctorate (or professorial status) and have Approved Research Supervisor status.
- A potential Director of Studies shall have had significant involvement in the supervision to successful completion of at least two doctoral students and should EITHER demonstrate strong and recent evidence of high level research (of national / international standing in terms of its originality, significance and rigour) OR [for Professional Doctorates only] demonstrate evidence of experience at a senior level in a relevant professional role.
- A potential Director of Studies shall have undertaken all mandatory supervisory training specified by Liverpool Hope University.

##### **[b] Criteria for Approval as a Research Supervisor**

- An Approved Research Supervisor should hold a doctorate (or professorial status).
- An Approved Research Supervisor should have significant subject area and/or methodological expertise and should also EITHER demonstrate strong and recent evidence of high level research (of national / international standing in terms of its originality, significance and rigour) OR [for Professional Doctorates only] demonstrate evidence of experience at a senior level in a relevant professional role.
- An Approved Research Supervisor should have undertaken all mandatory supervisory training specified by Liverpool Hope University.

##### **[c] Criteria for Approval as a Research Adviser**

- An approved Research Adviser shall be a member of staff at the Partner Institution.
- An approved Research Adviser should normally hold a doctorate (or professorial status).
- An approved Research Adviser should have significant subject area and/or methodological expertise.

##### **[d] Criteria for Approval as an External Adviser**

- An approved Research Adviser shall NOT be a member of staff at the Partner Institution.
- An approved External Adviser should normally hold a doctorate (or professorial status).
- An approved Research Supervisor should have significant subject area and/or methodological expertise.

## L1.2 Procedures

No person can be involved in the supervision of research students until they have been formally approved by Research Degrees SubCommittee as fulfilling the criteria for one of the roles listed in paragraph L1.1 above.

Applications for approval [or for upgrade] must be made via the official form, with accompanying CV [to be approved by Liverpool Hope University's Research Degrees SubCommittee], which must be signed by the Liverpool Hope University Moderator.

Applications must be approved by Liverpool Hope University's Research Degrees SubCommittee.

The status of all approved potential Directors of Studies and Approved Research Supervisors shall be reviewed biennially.

## L2 The Supervisory Team

### L2.1 Overview

- [a] Each student shall, in accordance with the Regulations, be allocated a Supervisory Team comprising a minimum of two Approved Research Supervisors, one of whom, with Director of Studies status, shall be designated the Director of Studies.
- [b] The Team may:
  - be supplemented by one or more *External Advisers or Research Advisers*.
- [c] A minimum Supervisory Team will be structured in one of the following two ways.

**EITHER**

  1. Director of Studies (who is an Approved Supervisor and has subject specific or methodological expertise)
  2. Approved Research Supervisor

**OR**

  1. Director of Studies (who is an Approved Supervisor but does not have subject specific or methodological expertise)
  2. Approved Research Supervisor
  3. Approved Research Supervisor
- [d] Any proposal to appoint a Supervisory Team that does not match the criteria in paragraphs "a" to "c" above shall require approval by the Chair of Liverpool Hope University's Research Committee.
- [e] Exceptionally, with the approval of Liverpool Hope University's Research Degrees Sub-Committee, one or more of the supervisory roles for a student in a Partner Institution may be undertaken by a member of staff from Liverpool Hope University who fulfils Liverpool Hope's criteria for appointment to such a role.



#### L2.4 Duties and Responsibilities of Directors of Studies

- [a] To take overall responsibility for the supervisory process.
- [b] To ensure that students are familiar with the Code of Practice and the Regulations.
- [c] For PhD/MPhil students, to ensure that student, complete the Liverpool Hope University Research Skills Scheme [or equivalent], commencing with a Skills Audit.
- [d] To ensure that students complete their Personal Development Record annually.
- [e] To give guidance about the planning of the research programme. A draft programme of work should be agreed by the student and supervisor at the outset, with indicative deadlines for completion of the stages of the research programme.
- [f] To ensure that at least eight formal meetings takes place with the research student each year, in accordance with paragraph F above.
- [g] To determine, in liaison with the internal examiner, the need for any supervisory meetings in the resubmission period.
- [h] To arrange for students to talk about their work to staff or at graduate seminars and to have practice in oral examinations and to encourage students to communicate their findings to others in the academic community. Where appropriate students should be encouraged to attend and contribute to conferences.
- [i] To ensure that students are made aware of inadequacy of progress or of standards of work below those generally expected.
- [j] To ensure that the particular needs of international students are taken fully into account during the early stages of research and to give help and advice on language problems and training where necessary.
- [k] For PhD/MPhil students, to ensure that Annual Monitoring and either Confirmation of Registration or Transfer of Registration are completed in accordance with the University procedures.
- [l] To ensure that students re-register promptly at the beginning of each session.
- [m] To ensure that any circumstances that might require a student's formal registration to be amended or interrupted are brought to the attention of Liverpool Hope University immediately.
- [n] To assist with the selection of the Examiners, to inform the student of the names of the Examiners, and to ensure that the student is prepared and supported for the final oral examination.
- [o] To ensure that the roles of all members of the Supervisory team are clearly defined and explained to the student.

## **L2.2 Duties and Responsibilities of all Approved Research Supervisors**

- [a] To assist the Director of Studies as appropriate in tasks listed in K2.1 above.
- [b] To ensure that students are aware of the current developments in both specific and wider areas of research.
- [c] To give guidance about literature and sources, about requisite techniques (arranging for instruction where necessary) and about the problem of plagiarism.
- [d] To be accessible to students as appropriate at times other than formal meetings. The expectation is that they will meet frequently with students on an informal basis.
- [e] To encourage students to question critically the existing literature, the assumptions of the research project and the results they obtain.
- [f] To ensure that a draft of the thesis is read within an agreed timescale and suitable feedback given in good time to ensure submission.
- [g] For PhD/MPhil students, as part of the Selection process, to consider the feasibility of the proposed project and the suitability of the student to undertake the research, in an initial meeting of the student and all supervisors.
- [h] To be available at times other than formal meetings and provide general support as required. The level of such involvement will vary, in accordance with the expected contribution agreed at the outset. .

## **L3 Procedures and Criteria for the Approval of Staff as Internal Examiners**

### **L3.1 Criteria for Approval**

- [a] The proposed examiner shall normally satisfy Liverpool Hope University's criteria for approval as an Approved Research Supervisor.
- [b] An internal examiner's academic/professional qualifications should be appropriate to the content of the thesis. Both the level and the subject of the examiner's qualifications should generally match what is to be examined.

### **L3.2 Procedures**

- [a] The Research Office [or equivalent] in the partner institution, via their internal procedures, shall, in liaison with the University Moderator, seek to appoint the internal examiner[s]
- [b] The Research Office [or equivalent] in the partner institution shall then submit its recommendations electronically to the Chair of Research Degrees SubCommittee (together with completed internal examiner forms, a CV for each proposed examiner, and a completed copy of the *Intention to Submit* form).
- [c] Liverpool Hope University's Research Degrees SubCommittee shall formally ratify the recommendation. [Where the Chair of the SubCommittee is either a member of the Supervisory Team, or the proposed Internal Examiner, or the proposed Independent Chair, the recommendation shall be ratified by Liverpool Hope University's Pro Vice-Chancellor [Research].

- [d] The Research Office [or equivalent] in the partner institution shall then confirm the appointment of the internal examiner in writing, and send a copy of the relevant Academic Regulations and any other relevant documentation.
- [e] The Research Office [or equivalent] in the partner institution will liaise with the examiners and the student to agree an examination date/time and location, to fall within the time frame indicated within the regulations.

### **L3.3 Communication Channels**

- [a] All communications between the partner institution and the University in relation to the appointment of Internal Examiners should be copied to the Hope Moderator
- [b] All documents should be sent electronically.

## **L4 Duties and Responsibilities of Internal Examiners**

- [a] To prepare an independent preliminary report on the thesis in advance of the examination, identifying any concerns and giving an initial recommendation. This must not be disclosed to or discussed with the student or the supervisors prior to the oral examination.
- [b] To meet with the external examiner[s] and the Chair on the day of the examination before the candidate is seen, to agree how the examination is to proceed.
- [c] To conduct him/herself in the oral examination in a way which is fair and reasonable and gives the candidate every opportunity to explain and defend their work.
- [d] To give informal feedback to the candidate, with the other examiners, on the day of the examination.
- [e] To provide detailed feedback in respect of any modifications or revisions required to the thesis, no later than one week after the examination.
- [f] To contribute to, and to sign, the final report.
- [g] Where the examiners do not agree on a recommendation, to prepare an independent final report, and forward this to Liverpool Hope University's Registrar.
- [h] Where minor modifications have been requested to the thesis, to approve the modifications and sign a form to this effect, which must be forwarded to Liverpool Hope University's Registrar.
- [i] To ensure that any concerns about general issues are notified to the Independent Chair.

## **L5 Procedures and Criteria for the Approval of Independent Chairs of Oral Examinations**

### **L5.1 Criteria for Approval**

- [a] The proposed Chair shall be an employee of Liverpool Hope University who satisfies Liverpool Hope University's criteria for approval as an Approved Research Supervisor.
- [b] The proposed Chair shall have experience of serving as an internal examiner for at least one MPhil or doctoral thesis at Liverpool Hope university.
- [c] The proposed Chair must be willing, before undertaking any duties, to undertake training in [i] the role of an Independent Chair [to be delivered by an experienced Chair] and [ii] the Regulations and Code of Practice [delivered by the Liverpool Hope Registrar or nominee].
- [d] The proposed Chair need not have expertise in the subject area of the thesis.

### **L5.2 Procedures**

- [a] Liverpool Hope University's Secretary's Office shall maintain a list of staff who fulfil criteria "a" and "b" in paragraph K5.1, and can therefore be regarded as "Potential Chairs".
- [b] The Research Office [or equivalent] in the Partner Institution shall, after liaising with Liverpool Hope's Associate Dean [Postgraduate Research] and the Chair of Research Degrees SubCommittee to identify suitable candidates, approach one of the "Potential Chairs", and confirm their willingness to undertake the role for a specific oral examination, and will then submit a recommendation to the Chair of Research Degrees SubCommittee.
- [c] Research Degrees SubCommittee shall formally approve the recommendation. [Where the Chair of the SubCommittee is either a member of the Supervisory Team, or the proposed Independent Chair or the proposed Internal Examiner, the recommendation shall be ratified by the Pro Vice-Chancellor, Research and Academic Development.]
- [d] The Research Office [or equivalent] in the Partner Institution will confirm the appointment of the Chair in writing, send a copy of the relevant Academic Regulations and any other relevant documentation, and inform the Chair of the arrangements for training. A copy of the appointment letter shall be forwarded to the Supervisory Team.

### **L5.3 Communication Channels**

- [a] All communications between the partner institution and the University in relation to the appointment of Independent Chairs should be copied to the Hope Moderator
- [b] All documents should be sent electronically.

## **L6 Duties and Responsibilities of Independent Chairs of Oral Examinations**

- [a] To meet with the examiner[s] on the day of the examination before the candidate is seen, and to agree how the examination is to proceed.
- [b] To ensure that the oral examination is conducted in accordance with the Regulations and Code of Practice.

- [c] To ensure that informal feedback on the examination and the thesis is given to the candidate on the day of the examination.
- [d] Where the examiners do not agree on a recommendation, to prepare an independent final report, and forward this to Liverpool Hope University's Registrar, and provide instructions to the examiner(s) to do likewise.
- [e] To report to Liverpool Hope University's Pro-Vice Chancellor [Research] any significant problems which occur in the examination, and to report to Liverpool Hope University's Research Degrees SubCommittee any general issues arising from the examination.

## **L7 Procedures and Criteria for the Appointment of External Examiners**

### **L7.1 Criteria for Appointment**

- [a] An external examiner's academic/professional qualifications should be appropriate to the content of the thesis. Both the level and the subject of the examiner's qualifications should generally match what is to be examined.
- [b] An external examiner should have appropriate standing, expertise and experience to enable her/him to make judgements about comparability of standards. Standing, expertise and breadth of experience may be indicated by:
  - the present (or last, if retired) post and place of work;
  - the range and scope of experience across Higher Education/ professions;
  - current or recent active involvement in research/scholarly/ professional activities in the field of study.
- [c] An external examiner should have enough recent external examining experience or knowledge of the external examiner's role to be able to make judgements about academic standards expected of an MPhil thesis or doctoral thesis in the subject area in which she/he will be involved. However, Liverpool Hope University will consider applications from nominees without previous external examiner experience at the appropriate level, providing the application is supported by extensive experience of supervising MPhil or doctoral theses.
- [d] No External Examiner shall have previous close involvement with Liverpool Hope University or any Partner Institution, or with the student, that might compromise objectivity or impartiality of judgement. Specifically, the proposed examiner should not, in the 5 years prior to nomination, have been a member of staff, a governor, or a student of Liverpool Hope University or any Partner Institution.

### **L7.2 Method of Appointment**

- [a] The Research Office [or equivalent] in the partner institution, via their internal procedures, shall, in liaison with the University Moderator, seek to appoint the external examiner[s].
- [b] The Research Office [or equivalent] in the partner institution shall then submit its recommendations electronically to the Chair of Research Degrees SubCommittee for approval (together with completed external examiner forms, and a completed copy of the *Intention to Submit* form).

- [c] Liverpool Hope University's Research Degrees SubCommittee shall formally ratify the recommendation. [Where the Chair of the SubCommittee is either a member of the Supervisory Team, or the proposed Internal Examiner, or the proposed Independent Chair, the recommendation shall be ratified by Liverpool Hope University's Pro Vice-Chancellor [Research].
- [d] The Research Office [or equivalent] in the partner institution shall then confirm the appointment of the external examiner in writing, and send a copy of the relevant Academic Regulations and any other relevant documentation.
- [e] The Research Office [or equivalent] in the partner institution will liaise with the examiners and the student to agree an examination date/time and location, to fall within the time frame indicated within the regulations.

### **L7.3 Communication Channels**

- [a] All communications between the partner institution and the University in relation to the appointment of External Examiners should be copied to the Hope Moderator
- [b] All documents should be sent electronically.

## **L8 Duties and Responsibilities of External Examiners**

### **L8.1 All External Examiners**

- [a] To read the thesis and prepare a preliminary report on it in advance of the oral examination, identifying any concerns and giving an initial recommendation. This must not be disclosed to or discussed with the student or the supervisors prior to the oral examination.
- [b] To meet with the internal examiners, any other external examiners and the Independent Chair on the day of the examination before the candidate is seen, to agree how the examination is to proceed.
- [c] To conduct him/herself in the oral examination in a way which is fair and reasonable and gives the candidate every opportunity to explain and defend their work.
- [d] To give informal feedback to the candidate, with the other examiners, on the day of the examination.
- [e] To contribute to, and to sign, the agreed final report.
- [f] To provide detailed feedback in respect of any modifications or revisions required to the thesis, no later than one week after the examination.
- [g] To agree with the other examiners who will be responsible for approving any modifications required to the thesis. Where this includes the external examiner, to read and approve the modified thesis in a timely manner, and to sign the appropriate form and forward it to Liverpool Hope University's Registrar as instructed.
- [h] To ensure that any concerns about general issues are notified to the Independent Chair.

## **L8.2 Where a Student is Required to Undergo a Second Oral Examination**

Normally, the second examination will be conducted by the same examiners as the first examination, although in the case of external examiners, a second fee would be paid. [The only exception shall be if the external examiner is unable to extend his/her role to cover the period of the second examination. If the original external examiner cannot participate in the second oral examination, the University shall normally appoint a second external examiner for that purpose, in accordance with the procedures in section L7 above.]

<b>M: Submission of the Thesis</b>
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### **M1 Eligibility to Submit a Notification of an Intention to Submit**

- M1.1 No student shall be eligible to declare an intention to submit a thesis for the degree of PhD or MPhil until they have successfully completed phase 2 of the Liverpool Hope University Research Skills Scheme [or equivalent].
- M1.2 No student shall be eligible to declare an intention to submit a thesis for the degree of PhD until they have successfully undertaken the Confirmation of Registration Event.
- M1.3 No Intention to Submit form shall be accepted unless it has been approved by the Director of Studies.

### **M2 Guidance on the Preparation of a Thesis**

In addition to the requirements stipulated in the Regulations, students are expected to adhere to the following guidelines.

#### **M2.1 General**

These general guidelines apply to all theses submitted for Liverpool Hope University awards, but Liverpool Hope University Moderators may, following consultation with relevant Departments at Liverpool Hope University, publish supplementary guidelines.

Students are expected to consult with the Director of Studies to ensure they understand the precise requirements.

#### **M2.2 Acknowledgement of Sources**

Candidates must state [using conventions appropriate to their discipline] generally in the preface, and specifically in the body of the thesis, the sources from which their information is derived and the extent to which they have availed themselves of the work of others.

### M2.3 Length

- [a] The thesis should be as concise as possible.
- [b] No student shall exceed the normal maximum [100,000 words for PhD, 60,000 words for MPhil, and 60,000 words for a Professional Doctorate], unless written permission has been obtained, before the Intention to Submit Form is submitted, from the Director of Studies, and Liverpool Hope University's Research Degrees SubCommittee.
- [c] The maxima include footnotes, appendices and the bibliography or reference list.
- [d] In some disciplines it may be appropriate for theses to be significantly shorter than the maximum, or indeed to be largely presented in an alternative format in which a word count is inappropriate. Departments are expected to produce their own guidelines on this matter, in accordance with national conventions in their discipline.

### M2.4 References

References to published work should be given consistently in a format that is currently accepted in the field of work covered by the thesis. If in doubt, candidates should consult their supervisors about the best method.

### M2.5 Presentation and Layout

In the following specification some of the requirements of BS 4821:1990 have been adopted to ensure that doctoral theses conform to the standards expected by the British Library. Authors' rights are protected under the University's agreement with the British Library.

- [a] *Typing, printing and copying*

Type must be uniform and clear in all copies, for both text and illustrations. The minimum height for capital letters is 2 mm and the minimum x-height (height of lower-case "x") 1.5 mm. The main body of the text must be in black ink on white paper. A personal computer with a printer of good quality (e.g. laser or inkjet) must be used to produce the first copy. Good, permanent photocopies on plain paper are acceptable for the second and third copies. Copies made by chemical means, which may fade, are not. The copier must be checked before use to ensure that it does not produce extraneous marks on the copies.



[b] *Binding and lettering of the thesis presented for examination*

Theses may be presented for examination in either permanent or temporary bindings.

*Permanent binding*

- The thesis is to be bound in book form in a strong black cloth. Maximum thickness 65 mm (2½"): if of greater thickness, two or more volumes per copy will be required. The binding of all volumes must be identical.
- Lettering on permanent bindings to be in gold.
- Front cover: title of thesis.
- Spine: Top: degree. Middle: surname and initials. Bottom: year of submission.

*Temporary binding*

- The thesis should be presented in such a way that the pages cannot be readily removed (therefore ring binders and spiral binding are not permitted).
- The candidate's surname, initials, the date (month and year) and the degree to be shown on the outside front cover.

[c] *Binding and lettering of the thesis approved by the examiners*

After the thesis has been approved by the Examiners, two copies must be permanently bound [as in "b" above] and a copy sent by the partner institution to Liverpool Hope University's Sheppard Worlock library before arrangements for the conferment of the degree can be made.

[d] *The Title Page*

Content: Title of thesis *then* "Thesis submitted in accordance with the requirements of Liverpool Hope University for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy [or Master of Philosophy, as appropriate] *then* full forenames and surname *then* date (month and year)

Layout: centred with suitable line spacing.

[e] *Table of Contents*

The table of contents must show chapter headings and page numbers. All separate sections of the thesis, such as bibliography, lists of abbreviations, supporting papers, etc., must also be identified on the contents page.

[f] *Abstract*

Each copy of the thesis must include an Abstract indicating the aims of the investigation and the results achieved. The Abstract must:

- be typed or printed; good photocopies are acceptable;
- be no longer than can be accomplished by single-spaced type on one side of an A4 sheet (about 450 words);
- show the author and title of the thesis in the form of a heading.

[g] *Paper*

A4 white bond paper of 70 to 100 g/m<sup>2</sup> weight must be used for both originals and photocopies, except for any endpapers which carry no text.

If both sides of the paper are used, then:

- both sides must be used in both copies which are to be permanently bound;
- there must be little or no “show-through”: paper lighter than 80 g/m<sup>2</sup> should not be used;
- the full binding margin of 40 mm must be allowed on the *left* side of odd pages and the *right* side of even pages. Other margins must be 25mm minimum.

[h] *Margins and Line Spacing*

1½ line spacing is advised, but at least double line spacing should be used for text that contains many subscripts and superscripts. Quotations may be indented. Authors should check the text carefully for “widows and orphans” and make full use of all error-checking facilities.

[i] *Page Numbers*

Pages should be numbered consecutively and the position of page numbers (candidate’s choice or as advised by the Director of Studies) should be consistent throughout.

[j] *Footnotes*

Where footnotes are used, they should be inserted at the foot of the relevant page in single line spacing. Smaller type may be used, if available. A line should be ruled between footnotes and the text. Footnotes should be numbered consecutively throughout the thesis.

[k] *Diagrams, Maps, Illustrations and Supporting Material*

Diagrams, maps and illustrations should be placed as near to the relevant text as possible. If it is necessary to place illustrations in a separate volume, the binding must match that of the text. Photographs must be prints of good quality and adequate size. Identical and permanent prints of any monochrome or colour photographs used must be securely mounted in each copy of the thesis. Published papers submitted in support of the thesis should be sewn in by the bookbinder as an appendix. Essential material that cannot be sewn in (large charts, tapes, floppy disks, CDs, microfiches, etc.) must be placed securely in a pocket attached to the inside back cover of each copy by the bookbinder. Before submitting material that cannot be read without special facilities, candidates must satisfy themselves and their supervisors that [i] that it is essential to include such material and [ii] the Examiners have ready access to such facilities.

[e] *The Author's Declaration*

Each copy of the thesis must be accompanied by a Declaration by the Author. This shall indicate:

- that the thesis is the author's own work, and has not been previously submitted for an award of this university or any other institution;
- that the content of the thesis is legally allowable under copyright legislation [this statement must be checked, and countersigned by the Director of Studies];
- any temporary restrictions on access to, and copying of, the thesis. [An author may impose restrictions on access to theses and copying annually for up to five years, but only if the Director of Studies endorses the Author's Declaration, by confirming, on the same sheet, that such restriction is necessary for good reasons, e.g. preparation for publication or a patent application. Permanent restriction is not permitted, nor does the University accept theses written under contracts of secrecy.]

**M3 Submission of the Thesis**

M3.1 No student shall be eligible to submit a thesis until the student has been informed, by email from [administration@hope.ac.uk](mailto:administration@hope.ac.uk), that their Intention to Submit Form has been approved, and their status changed to "Submission Pending".

M3.2 Students must email an electronic copy of the thesis, together with a completed "submission of a Soft-Bound Thesis" form, to the Research Office [or equivalent] in the Partner Institution. Students must also submit at least two soft-bound paper copies of the thesis [one for each examiner], to the Research Office [or equivalent] in the Partner Institution.

M3.3 On receipt of the form and the copies of the thesis, the Research Office [or equivalent] in the Partner Institution should:

- if the form has been fully completed, and the DoS has indicated on the form that the student has successfully completed their (Vitae) Research Skills, forward the thesis to the examiners;
- if the form has not been fully completed, or the DoS has not indicated on the form that the student has successfully completed their (Vitae) Research Skills, return the form to the student, and warn that the thesis cannot be forwarded to the examiners until a suitably amended form has been received, and that this may delay the examination.

M3.4 Late Submissions

- If no thesis has been received by the "approximate date of submission" on the Intention to Submit form, the Research Office [or equivalent] in the Partner Institution shall issue a reminder to the student.
- If no thesis has been received by one month after the "approximate date of submission" on the Intention to Submit form, the Research Office [or equivalent] in the Partner Institution shall inform the student that the form has expired, that a further form, giving a revised "approximate date of submission", must be submitted, and that the thesis cannot be accepted until this has been done.
- If no thesis has been received by the formal submission deadline indicated by the student's Expected End Date on the University's database, and no extension has been granted by the Progression and Award Board, the student will be deemed to have failed the degree.

**M4 After the Submission of the Softbound Thesis for Examination**

The student shall be entitled to receive guidance on how to prepare for the examination.

The guidance shall normally include an opportunity to engage in a mock examination, and to receive feedback on this examination.

**M5 Communication Channels**

**M5.1** All communications between the partner institution and the University in relation to the submission of a student's thesis should be copied to the Hope Moderator

**M5.2** All documents should be sent electronically.

## **N: Examination of the Thesis**

In addition to requirements stipulated in the Regulations the examination is expected to follow the guidelines below.

### **N1 Location of the Oral Examination**

The examination shall normally be held at the Partner Institution. However, in the case of students admitted under Distance Supervision arrangements, the examination may be held at an alternative location.

### **N2 Timing of the Oral Examination**

The examination shall normally be held within 2 months of the submission of the thesis, and any proposal to hold an examination later than 3 months after the submission of the thesis must be authorised by Liverpool Hope University's Progression and Award Board.

The Research Office [or equivalent] in the Partner Institution shall ensure that each examiner receives a copy of the thesis no later than one working week after the thesis has been submitted.

### **N3 Examiners' Reports Submitted Before the Oral Examination**

#### **N3.1 Submission of the Reports**

Each Examiner shall submit an independent, signed, report to the Research Office [or equivalent] in the Partner Institution, to arrive electronically no later than one week before the date of the oral examination. The examiner's signature shall not be typed.

The Research Office [or equivalent] in the Partner Institution shall collate the reports and distribute a full set to all examiners before the date of the oral examination, ensuring that, when examiners arrive they are familiar with all the issues raised.

The reports shall not be given to, or discussed with, either the candidate or any member of the Supervisory Team.

#### **N3.2 Content of the Reports**

Each report shall summarise the examiner's impressions from reading the thesis, including, *inter alia*:

- [a] whether the candidate appears to have fulfilled the university's expectations for the award of a the relevant degree [cf Appendix One];
- [b] any specific strengths of the research and/or the thesis itself;
- [c] any specific weaknesses of the research and/or the thesis itself;
- [d] proposed issues for discussion with the candidate during the examination;
- [e] a provisional recommendation, if possible, of the outcome, with reference to the categories specified in the regulations.

#### **N4 Conduct of the Oral Examination**

The University has a responsibility under the Disability Discrimination Act to make reasonable adjustments to oral examinations. The candidate is required to inform the Research Office that adjustments will be required at the stage of submitting their Notification of an Intention to Submit. The Research Office will then ask the learning support team to work with the Independent Chair to facilitate reasonable adjustments.

The Independent Chair shall arrange to meet the examiners before the examination, to agree an Agenda.

Oral examinations are open to the student's supervisor(s). However, the candidate has the right to decline the presence of their supervisor. The supervisors must remain silent throughout the examination if they are in attendance and may not take part in any discussions.

The examination shall follow the Agenda agreed in advance. However, the Agenda shall offer the candidate an opportunity to draw attention to aspects of the thesis covered by the substantive Agenda items.

The candidate shall be given a full opportunity to defend their thesis and to address the issues raised.

The Registrar or Nominee shall be on call throughout the examination, in case any issues arise that require regulatory guidance beyond the expertise of the Independent Chair.

A member of the Research Office staff shall be on call throughout the examination, in case any issues arise in relation to the examination room or other physical resources.

#### **N5 Selecting the Most Appropriate Outcome and Producing the Joint Report**

##### **N5.1 Selecting the Recommended Outcome**

After the examination, the examiners shall select one of the outcomes specified in the Regulations, in accordance with the formal definitions of those outcomes specified in the Regulations.

##### **N5.2 The Joint Report**

- This shall be compiled by the Chair, but shall be signed by all examiners.
- The Report shall indicate the recommended outcome, and, where appropriate, shall [a] specify a date, in accordance with the regulations, by which the thesis must be submitted, and [b] indicate whether a further oral examination would be required.
- Where the candidate is required to make modifications to the thesis, the report shall specify these in sufficient detail for it is be clear, on re-examination, whether the candidate has successfully undertaken the required amendments.
- The Chair shall submit the report electronically to the Liverpool Hope University's Registrar or Nominee, normally on the day of the examination.

##### **N5.3 Where the Examiners Do Not Agree on a Recommendation**

In accordance with paragraph L6 above, the Independent Chair shall prepare an independent final report, and forward this electronically to Liverpool Hope University's Registrar or Nominee, and provide instructions to the examiner(s) to do likewise. The matter shall then be referred to Liverpool Hope University's Pro-Vice Chancellor [Research].

#### N5.4 Where a Second Oral Examination is Recommended

The Independent Chair shall seek confirmation from the external examiner[s] that they will be in a position to participate in the second examination, as required in the Code of Practice. Where, exceptionally, an external examiner indicates that he or she will be unable to participate in the second examination, this shall be noted in the Joint Report, and the Independent Chair shall formally request that the Supervisory Team prepares a recommendation, in accordance with paragraph L7, for the appointment of a replacement.

**N6    Feedback to Candidates**

- N6.1 The Chair shall normally provide the candidate with informal oral feedback on the day of the examination. This shall include the recommended outcome and, where amendments are needed, an indication of the broad nature of the amendments and the date by which they would need to be submitted;
- N6.2 The candidate and Director of Studies shall be supplied, by the Research Office [or equivalent] in the partner institution, no later than one week after the examination, with written feedback, giving full details, extracted from the Joint Report, of the outcome and required modifications.
- N6.3 Both the oral and written feedback shall:
- [a] specify that the recommendations are subject to formal confirmation from Liverpool Hope University, and indicate that this confirmation will arrive by email from the Student Administration team;
  - [b] draw the attention of unsuccessful candidates to the University's appeals regulations, specifying that an appeal could only be lodged when the formal confirmation has been issued.

**N7    Storage of the Final Copies of the Thesis, for Candidates Eligible to Graduate**

When the final electronic and hard bound copies have been received in the Research Office [or equivalent] in the Partner Institution, the Partner shall forward them, together with the Copyright Declaration Form, to the Sheppard Worlock Library at Liverpool Hope University.

**N8    Communication Channels**

- N8.1** All communications between the partner institution and the University in relation to the examination of a student's thesis should be copied to the Hope Moderator
- N8.2** All documents should be sent electronically.



## **O: Monitoring the Success of Postgraduate Research Programmes**

### **O1 Data about Students and Research Degree Programmes**

O1.1 The Research Committee [or equivalent] at each Partner Institution shall routinely, and at least on an annual basis:

- [a] consider data pertaining to the success of Liverpool Hope University's research degrees programmes at the Institution, and
- [b] use this consideration to prepare an annual report to Liverpool Hope University's Research Degrees SubCommittee, which comments upon the data and presents recommendations for how the provision may be enhanced.

O1.2 The data shall include, *inter alia*:

- submission and completion times and rates: overall, by degree and by faculty and Department;
- number of candidates attempting the Annual Monitoring, Confirmation of Registration and Application to Transfer Registration Events, and an analysis of the outcomes of each event: overall, by degree and by faculty and by Department;
- number of candidates whose thesis has been examined and re-examined, and an analysis of the outcomes of each event: overall, by degree and by faculty and by Department;
- withdrawal rates and interruption rates: overall, by degree and by faculty and by Department;
- the number of appeals and complaints, the reasons for them, and how many are upheld: overall, by degree and by faculty and by Department;
- comments from examiners: overall, by degree and by faculty and by Department;
- recruitment profiles: overall, by degree and by faculty and by Department;
- feedback from research students, employers, sponsors and other external funders: overall, by degree and by faculty and by Department;
- information on employment destinations and career paths of former students. overall, by degree and by faculty and by Department.

### **O2 The Research Environment**

Liverpool Hope University's Pro Vice-Chancellor [Research] shall routinely, and at least on an annual basis, monitor the research environment at each Partner Institution, to ensure that it continues to provide support for doing and learning about research in a context in which high quality research is occurring, and to confirm that each subject area remains entitled to admit research students.

## **P: Responsibilities of Students**

### **P1 General Expectations**

Research students are expected to:

- take responsibility for their own personal and professional development, including completing the Liverpool Hope University Research Skills Scheme [or equivalent];
- maintaining regular contact with the Director of Studies,
- preparing adequately for meetings with supervisors, including submitting to the Director of Studies both an agenda and targets for each formal meeting;
- setting and keeping to timetables and deadlines, including planning and submitting work as and when required, specifically keeping to deadlines relating to Annual Monitoring, Confirmation of Registration and submission of the thesis, the and generally maintaining satisfactory progress with the programme of research;
- making the Director of Studies aware of any specific needs or circumstances likely to affect their work;
- being familiar with the Liverpool Hope University's regulations and policies that affect them, including the Regulations and Code of Practice for Postgraduate Research Degrees.

### **P2 Undertaking Teaching Duties**

A Partner Institution may wish to ask Postgraduate research students who are not employed as a member of academic staff at the Institution to undertake a limited amount of teaching and continuous assessment work when this is appropriate. Before confirming such arrangements, the Partner Institution is expected to confirm with the Liverpool Hope University Moderator that the workload would not compromise the progression of the students towards their postgraduate research award.

## **Q: Academic Misconduct**

### **Q1 Misconduct Discovered Before a Degree is Conferred**

Alleged misconduct shall be investigated, and a penalty applied, in accordance with paragraph B10 of the Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Research Degrees at Partner Institutions.

### **Q2 Misconduct Discovered After a Degree is Conferred**

Alleged misconduct shall be investigated in accordance with paragraph B10 of the Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Research Degrees at Partner Institutions.

If it is judged that the student has engaged in academic misconduct, Liverpool Hope University's Progression and Award Board shall be empowered to rescind the degree. The student shall be entitled to appeal against the decision in accordance with Liverpool Hope University's Academic Appeals Procedures.

## **R: Mitigating Circumstances**

### **R1 When might Mitigating Circumstances be Considered?**

Mitigating circumstances might be identified via the following mechanisms:

- routine monitoring by Directors of Studies;
- supervisory meetings;
- annual monitoring reviews;
- mid point reviews.

### **R2 What Concessions are Available on the basis of Approved Mitigating Circumstances?**

In principle, the following 10 concessions are available.

- R2.1 Deferral as an Annual Monitoring Review outcome [*standard forms and procedures apply*].
- R2.2 Short-term rescheduling of Annual Monitoring Review interview or deadline for submission of Annual Monitoring Review documents, so that Deferral is not necessary [*no form; authorised by Director of Studies*].
- R2.3 Interruption of Studies [*standard forms and procedures apply*].
- R2.4 Transfer from full-time to part-time study [*standard forms and procedures apply*].
- R2.5 Short-term rescheduling of Confirmation of Registration Event or Transfer of Registration Event RE or Confirmation of Doctoral Registration Interview] interview or deadline for submission of documents, so that the interview still takes place within timescales stipulated in the Regulations [*no form; authorised by Director of Studies* ].
- R2.6 Rescheduling of Confirmation of Registration Event or Transfer of Registration Event RE or Confirmation of Doctoral Registration Interview or deadline for submission of documents, so that interview would NOT take place within timescales stipulated in the Regulations [*no form; authorised by Liverpool Hope Registrar*].
- R2.7 An extension of a thesis [re]submission deadline [*standard forms and procedures apply*].
- R2.8 Rescheduling of an oral examination [*no form; authorised by Registrar*].
- R2.9 “Potentially not on track, due to mitigating circumstances” as an outcome of Mid Point Review [*standard forms and procedures apply*].
- R2.10 A Learning Support Plan [or equivalent in a Partner Institution], to reflect a student’s disability.

### R3 Some Principles

#### R3.1 Does the Liverpool Hope University's Fit to Sit Policy apply to PGR Students in Partner Institutions?

Yes.

Awarding a more generous outcome than work deserves on merit is NEVER acceptable.

#### R3.2 Students' Responsibilities

All students are expected to:

- familiarise themselves with the Fit to Sit policy, and these guidelines;
- if they become unwell or otherwise unfit to study, consult a medical practitioner or other relevant professional at the time the issue presents itself, and understand that retrospective statements along the lines that "X told me she was ill three months ago" are not normally acceptable, even from a qualified health/medical practitioner;
- if they believe that they have grounds for a concession, consult their DoS before the relevant deadline;
- if they wish to request a Learning Support Plan or equivalent, consult a learning support adviser or in the Partner Institution as soon as possible, on the understanding that no such arrangement can operate retrospectively.

#### r3.3 General Definition of a "Mitigating Circumstance"

A "mitigating circumstance" must:

- be out of the student's control;
- have had a demonstrably negative impact on the student's ability to study or to undertake an assessment.
- have affected the student at a time relevant to the requested concession.

A "mitigating circumstance" could be:

- *internal* to the student [eg illness, disability or a psychological condition];
- *external* to the student [eg illness of another person or an event {such as a funeral or a court appearance} clashing with a University assessment].

#### R3.4 Acceptable Evidence

For very short-term illness lasting up to 48 hours [such as stomach bug] for which it is not reasonable to consult a medical professional at the time, the University will accept a "Sickness Absence Self Certification Form" on no more than one occasion per academic year. However, where such illness occurred on or very close to the submission deadline for an assessment, Liverpool Hope University will also require evidence that the student had made very substantial progress with the assessment before falling ill.

Otherwise, the form of evidence will depend on the circumstance [see Section rU4 below]. However, in principle:

- evidence of an internal circumstance must be in writing, from a relevant professional [eg a "Statement of Fitness for Work", available free of charge from a GP, or a letter from a counsellor] and must confirm that the circumstance will prevent [or has prevented] the student from studying or undertaking assessments on specified dates;
- evidence of an external circumstance must be in writing and where the impact on a student's ability to study or be assessed is not self-evident, must include a statement from

- an independent professional person [that might include, *inter alia*, a member of staff independent of the assessment process, confirming that the circumstances prevented the student from studying or undertaking assessments on specified dates;
- evidence must be in English.

Liverpool Hope University reserves the right to verify evidence without prior notification. Where evidence cannot be verified, this may lead to the request being rejected and/or to the matter being investigated as a breach of the Code of Student Discipline.

### RU3.5 Timing of the Request for Mitigating Circumstances to be Considered

Claims are expected to be made in good time, in accordance with R3.2 above.

Retrospective claims will only be considered if the student can clearly demonstrate a satisfactory explanation of why the claim was not submitted within the expected timescale. Not being aware of the rules will only be considered a valid reason in the case of assessments conducted before the student had been issued with this policy.

Where a retrospective claim relates to an assessment that the student had submitted, or as interview or oral examination the student had attended, the claim will be rejected unless the student can provide suitable evidence that, as a result of the student's clinical diagnosis, he or she was not, at the time of the assessment, sufficiently medically fit to make a rational judgement about whether they were fit to submit or attend. This would be an exceptional circumstance and one that would require substantial supporting evidence, which must be from a GP or other relevant medical practitioner.

Where extra time for a written submission is being requested, the amount of time granted will normally correspond to the amount of time the student was unable to study.

For example:

- attendance at a family funeral leading to absence for 1 day might justify an extension of 24 hours;
- a 48-hour stomach bug might justify an extension of 48 hours.

### R36 Different Concessions Might Require Different Circumstances and Evidence

Whether a circumstance and the evidence provided are valid will depend upon exactly what is being requested, for example:

- evidence sufficient to justify a week's extension might not be sufficient to grant a 3 month's extension;
- evidence accepted as valid grounds to explain absence from an AMR interview in June would not be accepted as valid evidence to explain absence from a reconvened AMR interview in September [unless the evidence explicitly stated that the student would be unfit for both the June and September periods].

#### **R4 Potentially Acceptable Circumstances, and Types of Evidence Required**

This section should be interpreted with reference to the general principles in Section R3 above.

The list is not exhaustive, definitive or prescriptive.

##### **R4.1 Illness of the Student**

- The University requires an original "Statement of Fitness for Work", medical certificate or letter [ie not a copy] from an appropriate medical or healthcare professional.
- The evidence will only be accepted if it identifies a specific date on which the student became unable to undertake formal assessment and/or study, and the likely date on which the student would be fit to resume studies.

##### **R4.2 Hospitalisation of the Student**

- The University requires an original letter certificate from the hospital or a GP.
- The evidence will only be accepted if it identifies a specific date on which the student became unable to undertake formal assessment and/or study, and the likely date on which the student would be fit to resume studies.

##### **R4.3 Illness of a Family Member, Partner or Dependent**

- Where such illness has impacted on the student's ability to undertake their studies, evidence is required of this impact [not of the illness itself].
- The University requires an original "Statement of Fitness for Work", medical certificate or letter [ie not a copy] from an appropriate medical or healthcare professional.
- The evidence will only be accepted if it identifies a specific date on which the student became unable to undertake formal assessment and/or study, and the likely date on which the student would be fit to resume studies.

##### **R4.4 Bereavement**

- A claim for a short-term [up to 72 hours] inability to study will be accepted on the basis of evidence of the death [such as a death certificate, or an order of service], together with a "Sickness Absence Self Certification Form" specifying that there was a close relationship between the student and the deceased.
- If the claim is for a longer period, or if a close relationship has not been specified, then the matter should be dealt with under R4.1 above.

##### **R4.5 Acute Personal Circumstances Not Covered in R4.1-R4.4**

- A claim for a short-term [up to 48 hours] inability to study will be accepted on the basis of evidence of the circumstances, together with a "Sickness Absence Self Certification" Form.
- If the claim is for a longer period, then the matter should be dealt with under R4.1 above.

##### **R4.6 Pregnancy and Childbirth**

- Pregnancy *per se* does not count as a mitigating circumstance.
- However, if, as a consequence of pregnancy, a student becomes unable to study or be assessed as normal, R4.1, R4.2 or R4.5 may apply.

- Evidence of childbirth would be accepted as valid mitigating evidence for a short period around the birth. If a student wishes a concession for more than a short period, R4.5, R4.2 or R4.1 will apply, as appropriate.

#### R4.7 Victim of Crime

- The University requires a written statement from the student, supported by with a Crime Reference Number. This will normally cover only a short period around the crime itself.
- Where the impact of the crime has led to a medical or other professional consultation, U4.1, R4.2 or R4.5 may apply. The evidence will only be accepted if it specifies not only the nature of the circumstances, but also the likely impact the reported crime is having on the student's ability to undertake formal assessment and/or study, the dates to which such impact would apply, and the likely date on which the student would be fit to resume studies.

#### R4.8 Domestic Disruption

- Such disruption must be significant and unforeseen [such as a house fire or flood].
- For short-term disruption, up to 48 hours, the University requires a letter from an appropriate independent individual/authority. The letter should indicate not only the nature of the circumstances, but also the likely impact the disruption is having on the student's ability to undertake formal assessment and/or study, the dates to which such impact would apply, and the likely date on which the student would be fit to resume studies.
- For longer-term disruption, or where the essence of the claim is that the disruption is having an impact on the student's health or wellbeing, the matter should be handled as for R4.1.

#### R4.9 Jury Service

- The University will only accept this as a valid circumstance if the student supplies not only a letter from the Court but also proof that a deferral of Jury Service has been requested and rejected or proof that a previous request for deferral of Jury Service has been accepted.

#### R4.10 Attendance at a Tribunal or Court as a Witness, Defendant or Plaintiff

- The University will accept this as a valid circumstance if the student supplies either official correspondence from the tribunal/court confirming attendance, or a solicitor's letter detailing the nature and dates of the legal proceedings and the requirement for the student to attend.

#### R4.11 Requirements of Military Service

- The University will accept this as a valid circumstance if the student supplies official correspondence from their commanding officer confirming that the student is required to be absent, and indicating relevant dates.

#### R4.12 Unforeseen or Exceptional Work Commitments

- The University will accept this if the student supplies correspondence from their employer detailing the additional hours that the student needs to work, and indicating relevant dates.
- This does not apply in the case of commitments that had applied at the time the student was admitted to the University.

## **R5 Normally Unacceptable Circumstances**

### **R5.1 Transport Issues**

[Exceptionally, these might be accepted as grounds for absence from a specific event if the issue was unforeseen and beyond the student's control and could not have been avoided by the student planning for unforeseen events when judging when to begin their journey.]

### **R5.2 Holidays**

[Exceptionally, these might be accepted as grounds for absence at a specific event if the student can provide evidence that the holiday was booked before the student began their studies.]

### **R5.3 Misunderstanding a Deadline**

[Exceptionally, these might be accepted as grounds, but only if the student could demonstrate that the information supplied by the University had been misleading.]

### **R5.4 IT and/or Computer Failures**

- It is the student's responsibility to ensure that all work which is electronically stored, generated and/or submitted is sufficiently backed up, so that it is stored in a non-local storage location, for example the student's University personal drive or cloud storage.
- [Exceptionally, this might lead to acceptance, but only if it was confirmed that the University's systems, or those in the partner institution, were inoperable at the time the student attempted to use them; such evidence could only be used to grant a short extension for the duration of the IT problem.]

### **R5.5 Undisclosed Circumstances**

- The University cannot accept claims on the grounds of undisclosed circumstances.
- Students should be advised that, although the circumstances do need to be disclosed to the person/body deciding whether to grant a concession, this information will be treated in the strictest confidence.

### **R5.6 Withdrawal of IT Facilities or Other Resources due to Debt**

- Students in financial difficulties are expected to take steps to prevent facilities from being withdrawn, by consulting the student finance advisers [either at Liverpool Hope in the Partner Institution, depending on the nature of the debt] to discuss any debt, and to respond immediately to any warning about the consequences of a debt.



## APPENDIX ONE

### Qualification Descriptors \*\*

#### **Master of Philosophy**

**1. Liverpool Hope University will award the degree of MPhil to students who have demonstrated:**

- ☐ a systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of their academic discipline, field of study or area of professional practice;
- ☐ a comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship;
- ☐ originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline;
- ☐ conceptual understanding that enables the student:
  - ☐ to evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline
  - ☐ to evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses.

**2. Typically, holders of an MPhil degree from Liverpool Hope University will:**

**[a] be able to:**

- ☐ deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, make sound judgements in the absence of complete data, and communicate their conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences;
- ☐ demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level;
- ☐ continue to advance their knowledge and understanding, and to develop new skills to a high level.

**[b] have the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring:**

- ☐ the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility;
- ☐ decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations;
- ☐ the independent learning ability required for continuing professional development.

#### **Doctor of Philosophy**

**1. Liverpool Hope University will award the degree of PhD to students who have demonstrated:**

- ☐ the creation and interpretation of new knowledge, through original research or other advanced scholarship, of a quality to satisfy peer review, extend the forefront of the discipline, and merit publication;
- ☐ a systematic acquisition and understanding of a substantial body of knowledge which is at the forefront of an academic discipline or area of professional practice;
- ☐ the general ability to conceptualise, design and implement a project for the generation of new knowledge, applications or understanding at the forefront of the discipline, and to adjust the project design in the light of unforeseen problems;
- ☐ a detailed understanding of applicable techniques for research and advanced academic enquiry.

**2. Typically, holders of a PhD degree from Liverpool Hope University will:**

**[a] be able to:**

- ☐ make informed judgements on complex issues in specialist fields, often in the absence of complete data, and be able to communicate their ideas and conclusions clearly and effectively to specialist and non-specialist audiences;
- ☐ continue to undertake pure and/or applied research and development at an advanced level, contributing substantially to the development of new techniques, ideas or approaches.

**[b] have the qualities & transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of:**

- ☐ personal responsibility;
- ☐ largely autonomous initiative in complex and unpredictable situations.

\*\* Adapted from: "The Framework for HE Qualifications in England, Wales & Northern Ireland" [QAA, August 2008].

## APPENDIX TWO

### Glossary of Terms

**Annual Monitoring Review**

A formal procedure undertaken each year to monitor the progress of each student registered for an MPhil or a PhD.

**Application to Transfer Registration Event**

A formal procedure whereby a student admitted to read for an MPhil degree may apply to transfer their registration to read for a PhD degree.

**Confirmation of Registration Event**

A formal procedure for confirming, normally within 2 years after initial registration, that students admitted to read for the degree of PhD are on track to fulfil the University's expectations associated with doctoral level work. This event must be completed before a student may submit a thesis for the award of PhD. Candidates who do not complete the event successfully may be required to register, instead, to read for an MPhil degree.

**Director of Studies**

The member of a student's Supervisory Team who has overall responsibility for the supervisory process .

**IELTS**

This stands for "International English Language Testing System". Liverpool Hope University expects international applicants for whom English is not their first language to have IELTS scores of at least 6.5

**Liverpool Hope University Moderator**

A member of staff at Liverpool Hope University, with responsibility for maintaining oversight of the University's accredited provision at a specified Partner Institution, and for providing advice and guidance to the Institute in respect of academic matters and the University's procedures and regulations.

**Liverpool Hope University Research Skills Scheme [LHURSS]**

A compulsory scheme established to ensure that all postgraduate research students acquire the essential skills required by the national framework of the Joint Research Councils.

**Oral Examination**

A form of assessment in which a student is expected to defend their thesis in front of at least two examiners, at least one of whom will be an external examiner.

**Progression & Award Board for Postgraduate Research Students**

A Board, based at, and operated by, Liverpool Hope University, which formally considers recommendations relating to the progress of students registered for awards of that University, irrespective of the institution at which the students are based. The Board's remit includes: proposed extensions of study, the recommended outcomes of the Annual Monitoring, Confirmation of Registration and Application to Transfer Registration Events, and recommended awards following oral examinations of theses.

**Research Degrees SubCommittee**

A SubCommittee of Research Committee at Liverpool Hope University, responsible, *inter alia* for considering recommendations that applicants be admitted, general issues arising from examinations, and requests to operate contrary to the Code of Practice, The SubCommittee routinely monitors data relating to research students and research degree programmes.

**Scrutineers**

A team appointed by the Head of Department [or equivalent] to scrutinise applications for admission to read for a postgraduate research degree.

**Supervisory Team**

The group of supervisors responsible for guiding an individual research student.