QA245: University Guidelines for Research Degree Programmes

Fot research students, supervisors and staff

July 2023

Using this publication

You can scroll through this publication from page to page using the normal scroll bars and arrow keys. However, it has additional navigation options to make it easy to use on screen.

Entries in the Index (page 2) are clickable, to allow you to jump direct to specific pages.

On the View menu (Adobe Reader or Acrobat), choose Page Display > Continuous to view pages in a vertical column.

You can also use CTRL+L (Windows) or CMD+L (Macintosh) to view in Full Screen mode – menu bars, etc., are hidden. Press the Esc key to exit (or CTRL/CMD+L again).

1 1. Adobe Reader/Acrobat navigation options.
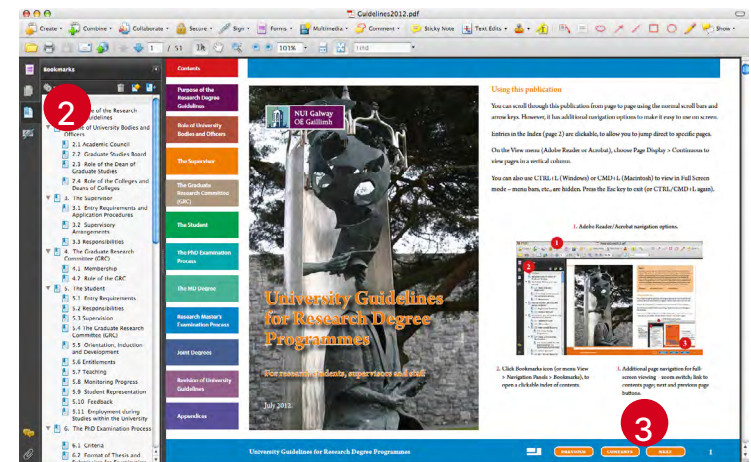
2. Click Bookmarks icon (or menu View > Navigation Panels > Bookmarks), to open a clickable index of contents.

3. Additional page navigation for full-screen viewing – zoom switch; link to contents page; next and previous page buttons.

Contents (clickable hyperlinks).

Every effort has been made to ensure that the contents of the University Guidelines for Research Degree Programmes are accurate.

Preface

We, in the Graduate Studies Office, are pleased to bring you these revised set of guidelines for research degree programmes. The initial sets of guidelines were developed following a comprehensive consultative process, involving University officers and representatives of research supervisors and students from across the University, and are updated annually.

Internally, the Researcher Development Centre and CELT has advised and supported the development of graduate training and externally we have active collaborations with the Deans of Graduate Studies in the other IUA Universities.

These Guidelines are designed to promote the sense of a 'community of scholars' which is a hallmark of a high-quality university. We have many partners in the development of graduate training. Vice-Deans of Graduate Studies appointed in each College have contributed to the coordination of graduate training across the University and have inputted into the revision of these guidelines. We acknowledge the input of the Deputy President and Registrar, Secretary for Governance & Academic Affairs, the Standing Committee of Academic Council, colleagues who contributed to the equality impact assessment and the Graduate Studies Board who reviewed and approved the updates. Internally, CELT has advised and supported the development of graduate training and externally we have active collaborations with the Deans of Graduate Studies in the other IUA Universities. The University welcomes and embraces diversity in the postgraduate population and is committed to embed equality, diversity and inclusivity principles into the postgraduate process.

However, these Guidelines will not be efficacious in themselves. To ensure implementation of these guidelines, while endeavouring to keep the administrative burden as low as possible, we have relied on the cooperation of staff across the University. We would like to acknowledge particularly the efforts of everybody in Postgraduate Admissions, Records & Registration, Examinations Office, Fees Office, ISS, Research Accounts and Academic Affairs all who have assisted Graduate Studies.

Further revisions which occur after the printing and online publishing of these guidelines will be included in the annual update of the guidelines. We encourage feedback from all involved in graduate research and training in the University so that we can attain and maintain the highest standards.
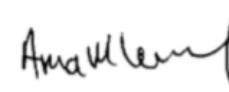
To contact the Graduate Studies Office, please send an email to: graduatestudies@universityofgalway.ie

July 2023

Dónal Leech
Dean of Graduate Studies

Anna Marie Leonard
Manager,
Graduate Studies

Sandra Donohue
Administrator,
Graduate Studies

1. Purpose of the Research Degree Guidelines

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide students, supervisors, examiners and other university staff with the necessary information to ensure best practice in the management of the research degree process. The guidelines have been produced in consultation with academic staff and students and approved by Academic Council. Central to the achievement of this purpose is the regular revision of these Guidelines to take account of feedback and evolving practice nationally and internationally.

These guidelines should be used in conjunction with the forms used in the administration of PhD/MD/Research Masters degrees (Appendix 1), the Online Research Thesis Exam System, regulations and forms governing research Master's degrees which are available in the calendars of the individual colleges and regulations for the MD which are to be found in the College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences calendar:

Calendars - University of Galway

In conjunction with the research degree guidelines, the policies and documents available on the websites below should be consulted:

Research Office: https://www.universityofgalway.ie/research-office/

Student Services: https://www.universityofgalway.ie/student-services/

2. Role of University Bodies and Officers

2.1 Academic Council

As the University body responsible for overseeing all matters relating to the operation of academic activities, Academic Council oversees the operation of postgraduate research programmes, including standards and procedures. Council approves all major revisions of these guidelines and the relevant regulations.

2.2 Graduate Studies Board

The Graduate Studies Board will consider and recommend to the Standing Committee of Academic Council in the following areas:

- General matters of academic policy and practice relating to postgraduate study and research in line with overall objectives, policy and regulations of the University
- Formation of graduate schools
- Structure of postgraduate research degree programmes
- New postgraduate research degree programmes and major changes to existing postgraduate research degree programmes
- Structures, credit frameworks, content and assessments of graduate modules
- Annual reports on progression and completion rates for graduate research students
- Revision of the University guidelines in relation to research degree programmes and approval of local guidelines
- Promotion of postgraduate research programmes
- Strategy for graduate studies
- Such matters as the Standing Committee of Academic Council may refer.

2.3   Role of the Dean of Graduate Studies

The Dean of Graduate Studies, acting with the Secretary for Governance & Academic Affairs and the Standing Committee of Academic Council, is responsible for the overall management of the operation of University postgraduate research programmes. The Dean is responsible for:

1. Making an annual report on the operation of all of the University's postgraduate research programmes to Academic Council (normally at the last meeting of the calendar year)

2. Making such revisions as are necessary to these guidelines, and preparing and revising all relevant regulations and other documents such as operational procedures and forms

3. Ensuring that feedback from research students, supervisors, local graduate research committees and examiners is analysed and considered, and that any necessary consequent changes in guidelines or regulations are drafted and approved

4. Working with the College Deans and relevant Vice Deans to ensure that all local guidelines and procedures conform to those of the University

5. Overseeing and monitoring the operation of the research Master's and PhD/MD examination processes.

2.4   Role of the Colleges and Deans of Colleges

As the local body responsible for overseeing all matters relating to the operation of academic programmes, each College oversees the detailed operation of postgraduate research programmes, including local standards and procedures. To facilitate comparability and the maintenance of good standards, any supplementary local guidelines should be kept to a minimum. *All local guidelines must agree with these University Guidelines, and may contain extra information and provisions relevant to the discipline in question. In the absence of local guidelines formally approved by the Graduate Studies Board and the Standing Committee of Academic Council, these University Guidelines apply.*

2.4.1   The College Dean/Vice Dean

The Dean of a College is responsible for the overall supervision of the operation of the College's postgraduate research programmes, but may delegate specific duties and responsibilities to a Vice Dean. In the context of postgraduate research degrees, in each College there is a Vice Dean who is responsible for:

1. Working with the Dean of Graduate Studies and the postgraduate sections of Academic Affairs

2. Ensuring that feedback from research students, supervisors, local graduate research committees and examiners is provided to the Graduate Studies Board.

2.4.2   The College

The College approves all substantive revisions of local guidelines following consultation with the Dean of Graduate Studies and the Graduate Studies Board. Starting from the premise that a single (or a minimum) set of guidelines and procedures is sufficient to cover all circumstances in a College, all applications for the approval of variant guidelines are examined critically and, if justified, are approved by the Graduate Studies Board. Where more than a single set exists, a College monitors all equally. If approved, links to local College guidelines will be available on the relevant College website.

2.4.2.1 Annual Report of Research Degree Programmes

An annual report on the operation of each College's postgraduate research programmes is prepared by the Dean (or a designated Vice Dean) and submitted to the Dean of Graduate Studies. It is prepared by the end of the first semester and includes accounts of feedback from research students and research supervisors for the previous year. The report also summarises the information received in the Yearly Progress Reports. The report should include and comment on completion rates and completion times for each School.

The College annual report also includes related reports on External Examiner Affiliation, QA200 (PhD International Merit Scholarship) and QA203 (PhD Fee Waivers) approvals, which are submitted to the Standing Committee of Academic Council and to Academic Council, once recommended by the Graduate Studies Board.

2.4.2.2 Yearly Progress Reports

The College is responsible for ensuring that Yearly Progress Reports are received on each research student who is registered in the College in that year (see Annual Progress Review, Section 5.8.3). The recommendation of the Graduate Research Committee (Section 5.4) is made to the relevant sub-committee of the College and, following consideration of this recommendation, a formal decision on progression will be made by the sub-committee. Outcomes regarding Transfers, Leave of Absence or Withdrawals need to be communicated by College to central academic administration.

3. The Supervisor

As a supervisor, you are the person who is responsible for providing guidance on the research carried out by the student. Where co-supervision is appropriate, for example, for interdisciplinary or co-operative projects, a primary supervisor must be identifiable.The primary supervisor takes full responsibility for the overall management of the student's training and research project, and for relevant administrative matters. Training in research supervision is offered by CELT within the Academic Practice Framework and by the Graduate Studies Office. Acceptance of appointment as a supervisor by you confirms your awareness of, and agreement to, the duties and responsibilities described in this section.

All research supervisors, particularly those who have not yet supervised a PhD to successful completion, are recommended to attend supervisor training as part of their professional development, e.g. relevant modules provided by CELT and/or supervisor workshops provided by the Graduate Studies Office. PhD supervisors who have not yet supervised a PhD to successful completion are strongly encouraged to attend supervisory training (which is offered on an annual basis) during, or prior to, their first year of supervising. An introduction to the regulations and procedures for doctoral supervision is provided in the staff section of the Graduate Studies webpage Staff - University of Galway Supervisors can register on the Core HR portal for supervisor training and development opportunities Learning and Development - University of Galway. A range of books for research supervisors and students can be consulted, or in the University of Galway Library.

As a postgraduate research project supervisor you should meet the following criteria:

- be an active scholar and researcher with good records of achievement and publication
- have a PhD in a suitable academic area, or an equivalent record of achievement.

3.1 Supervisory Arrangements

The following conditions apply to the approval of supervisors:

3.1.1. The College, on the nomination of the Head of School, will assign a permanent member of University academic staff to be the primary supervisor of the candidate's research.

3.1.2. The College may allow for co-supervision of the thesis. In the case of co-supervision, one of the supervisors need not be a member of the staff of the University.

3.1.3. The College may assign a member of the University's research staff as primary supervisor of a candidate's research, with a permanent member of the University's academic staff as co-supervisor, where the research being undertaken by the candidate is funded from a research project on which the member of research staff is the Principal Investigator.

3.1.4. Honorary Clinical academic staff are eligible to be a primary supervisor for research degrees, within the area of clinical specialisation, with a fulltime academic consultant or fulltime permanent academic staff member being co-supervisor in the College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences. Honorary Clinical academic staff are required to abide by the University Guidelines for Research Degree Programmes.

3.1.5. Senior researchers may undertake graduate student supervision following approval of their application as Honorary Research Lecturers. Nominations for Honorary Research Lectureships, to include the curriculum vitae of the nominee, are made by the Head of the relevant School, or Director of the relevant Research Institute, and the Vice-President for Research to the Dean of College. The appointment is made by the Dean of College, acting on a positive recommendation from the relevant College. Persons appointed to Honorary Research Lectureships shall, if requested to do so by the relevant University authority, carry out appropriate student supervision. Full details on the approval process for appointment are available at Senior Academic Roles - University of Galway

3.1.6. The name(s) of the supervisor(s) and the names of the three members of the candidate's Graduate Research Committee nominated by the Head of School in consultation as appropriate with Head of Discipline must be forwarded when the candidate's name is submitted to the College for approval.

3.1.7. Unless permission is given to the candidate by the Head of School, on the recommendation of the relevant supervisor and GRC member, to work elsewhere under the general direction of the primary supervisor, the research will be carried out in the School mainly responsible for the subject area concerned but, where the research is interdisciplinary in nature, there shall be due co-operation between the main School and the other School(s) involved. If off-campus for more than 3 months in any academic year year and a full-time research student, the Student, Supervisor, and GRC member, are to complete form GS 090 (Off Campus form for Full-Time Research Students) and submit to the Head of School for approval. The Head of School is to send the completed form to the Vice Dean of Graduate Studies. This decision is communicated by the Vice Dean of Graduate Studies to the next Graduate Studies Board meeting for noting. A student who has registered for a joint degree with another institution, with whom a formal memorandum of understanding has been signed, will spend a period of time at the partner institution.

3.1.8. The facilities required for a particular research project vary greatly across the Colleges. In some areas, direct access to complex instrumentation, a cohort of skilled co-workers and a large annual consumables budget are prerequisites; in others, access to research materials is a priority or travel to research sites. Therefore in all cases:

– Research students are not recruited unless the minimum facilities and consumable budgets required for the completion of the proposed project are available

- Note the University of Galway Safety Statement for guidance on Student Placement (5-63), Visitors (5-72) Health and Safety - University of Galway.
- If fieldwork is necessary to conduct primary research, then the requisite Health and Safety requirements are evaluated prior to the initiation of the project. Further information on the University's Fieldwork Code of Practice is available via this weblink Laboratory/Office/Fieldwork and Diving - University of Galway
- The Library, Information Solutions and Services, Buildings & Estates and other relevant University services and support suppliers are informed, by the supervisor, prior to recruitment, of research student numbers with special requirements and the nature of such requirements.

3.2 Responsibilities

The commitment and expertise of the supervisor(s) is critical to the success of a postgraduate research project. Your specific responsibilities include:

- Supporting the student in the development or refinement of a research project and/or plan of work
- Ensuring that the student has been introduced to the members of their Graduate Research Committee at the beginning of their studies
- Providing advice and guidance about the direction of the research project and the strategies that might be used to achieve the research goals
- Advising the student on their specific, transferrable and generic training needs and the regulations governing the Structured programme within their College
- Advising the student on their responsibilities, entitlements and duties at the beginning of their studies (see Sections 5.2, 5.6 and 5.7)
- Supporting the health and wellbeing of students, and

recommending referrals to student services and other supports when necessary. See Health and Wellbeing - University of Galway
- Ensuring that reasonable accommodation is provided to students supported by the disability support service. See Disability Support Service - University of Galway
- Providing guidance on the standard of research expected for a research Master's/MD or PhD degree and communicating clearly to the student how they are performing, particularly when the required standards are not being met
- Monitoring student progress (see Section 5.8)
- Ensuring that lines of communication with the student are efficient, that regular contacts are maintained, and that all important understandings and decisions are recorded and agreed. There should be clear and agreed frequencies of consultations between you and your student
- Providing feedback on written or oral presentations that are given by the student
- Providing the student with opportunities to meet other researchers in the field by facilitating their attendance at conferences as appropriate and as permitted by resources
- Providing encouragement, advice and assistance with the presentation of conference papers and the publication of scholarly papers emanating from the research project, while ensuring that the student gets appropriate recognition for their efforts (e.g., authorship on papers and acknowledgements at seminars)
- Ensuring that the research is conducted in a safe manner and to high ethical standards
- Ensuring that adequate supervision is in place for students during any extended periods of absence by the supervisor
- Organising and overseeing the Examination Process (see Section 6-8 for details).

4. The Graduate Research Committee (GRC)

Every research student and supervisor also has the support of a committee that is charged with ensuring compliance with basic good practices. This is called the 'Graduate Research Committee'.

4.1 Membership

On student registration, the name(s) of the supervisor(s) and the names of the three members of the candidate's GRC, nominated by the Head of School in consultation as appropriate with Head of Discipline, must be forwarded when the candidate's name is submitted to the College for approval. All research students are required to have a Graduate Research Committee in place. Decisions on GRC membership take into consideration relationships with cognate research institutes and centres, the mix of research projects in the unit and gender balance and diversity. The committee consists of three members of academic staff, which may include an external member from another university. A supervisor may not be a member of the student's Graduate Research Committee. Membership of the GRC does not preclude you from also being an internal examiner for the same student. In the case of supervisors who have not yet supervised a PhD to successful completion, the Graduate Research Committee should include an experienced supervisor. Acceptance of membership of a GRC confirms awareness of, and agreement to, the roles and responsibilities described in this section.

During the course of the research degree, it may be necessary to change the membership of a student's GRC, following consultation with the student and the supervisor. A student may appeal a decision to change the membership of the GRC to the Standing Committee of Academic Council.

4.2 Role of the GRC

The committee supports *both the student and supervisor* by:

- Acting in an advisory capacity to the student and as an additional source of encouragement

- Acting in an advisory capacity to the supervisor on academic/technical/ethical/safety matters that arise during the course of the project

- Being available for consultation by the student on any project-related matters

- Monitoring informally the total workload of the student (including the research project work, teaching contributions, additional duties in the unit and other commitments) and, as appropriate, gives advice or intercedes

- Formally monitoring student progress through an annual review process involving a meeting with the student (Section 5.8.3) and making recommendations to the College on student progression, re-registration for another degree (Master's, MD or PhD) or exit (Section 5.8.4 - 5.8.6) A meeting of the GRC and the student must take place in the first year, irrespective of the time of year the student commences their study, and each subsequent year until the student has graduated or formally withdrawn from the University. This applies to students whether full or part-time.

- Acting, in the first instance in a supportive informal way, to facilitate the clarification and resolution of student/supervisor problems at an early stage, and, in the event of a persistent or intractable problem, engages in a more formal way (perhaps with extra external inputs) to find a resolution

- Advising the College when action is deemed necessary because of issues raised by the student or the supervisor(s)

- Ensuring there is a mechanism in place for a change of supervisor during the course of the research degree, should it be deemed necessary

- Advising the student and supervisor(s) when a project is becoming prolonged

- Acting promptly to ensure the continuity of the research project if the supervisor becomes incapacitated, retires or resigns

- Discussing with the supervisor(s) the choice of external and internal examiners and approving the examiners before the approval of the Head of School and the College can be sought (Section 6-8)

- In order to ensure prompt, effective action a designated member of a GRC may act on behalf of the entire committee in cases where it is deemed that quick action is essential.

5. The Student

You as a student are central to the research endeavours of the University and during the period of research you will experience intellectual excitement, opportunities for prolonged engagement with difficult issues and ultimately the capacity to undertake independent research. PhD, MD and research Master's study is about scholarship, research and creativity; it involves supervisors, examiners and administrators; and graduate education forms an increasingly important part of universities' activities. Acceptance of admission to a research degree by you confirms your awareness of, and agreement to, the duties and responsibilities described in this section.

5.1   Entry Requirements

To be eligible to enter on a programme of study and research for the degree of PhD you must have reached a high honours standard at the examination for the primary degree or presented such other evidence as will satisfy the Head of School and the College of your fitness. The University welcomes and embraces diversity in the postgraduate population and is committed to embed equality, diversity and inclusivity principles into the postgraduate process.

To be eligible to enter on an MD programme of study candidates should normally have a high honours standard in Medicine from University of Galway or possess qualifications deemed by the University to be equivalent.

To be eligible to enter on a Research Master's programme of study, candidates should normally have a high honours standard at the examination for the primary degree or presented such other evidence as will satisfy the Head of School and the College of your suitability for the programme.

If your application is approved by the College, you must register as a candidate for the period set out below:

In the case of a full-time PhD candidate you must register for a period of four years and attend such a programme of study as may be prescribed by your College. The relevant College may reduce this period where the thesis has been approved for examination prior to the end of the four-year period, provided, however, that the minimum period of registration for candidates with a Master's qualification is not less than two years and not less than three years for all other candidates. Fees will be applied until the end of the semester in which the thesis is submitted

In the case of a part-time PhD candidate, you must register for a period of six years and attend such a programme of study as may be prescribed by your College. The relevant College may reduce this period where the thesis has been approved for examination prior to the end of the six-year period, provided, however, that the minimum period of registration for candidates with a Master's qualification is not less than three years and

not less than four years for all other candidates. Fees will be applied until the end of the semester in which the thesis is submitted.

In the case of a full-time or part-time candidate, you must register and carry out research in the University and within a partner University with whom the University has agreed through a memorandum of understanding to offer a joint degree.

You must comply with Regulations and pass such examinations, if any, as maybe prescribed in your College.

5.2 Responsibilities

Success in graduate research requires commitment, dedication and a willingness to accept constructive criticism and expert supervision. In particular, you must accept full responsibility for all the contributions that you are expected to make, for example:

- Becoming familiar with the University and local guidelines pertaining to graduate degrees
- Becoming familiar with student policies and responsibilities Policies for Students / Polasaithe do Mhic Léinn - University of Galway including the responsibility to contribute to an inclusive University community (see Policies & Procedures - University of Galway")
- Acquiring the special and generic skills necessary for the project and for preparation of the thesis
- Fulfilling all the requirements if you are registered for a Structured programme in your College
- Working efficiently on the project
- Becoming familiar with norms and guidelines on issues of direct relevance to the communication of research findings such as plagiarism and the correct usage of quotations, and the importance of the explicit acknowledgement of the work of others
- Becoming familiar with and applying best practice, for example, with policies such as Research Integrity (QA514) , Research Data

Management (QA509), the Intellectual Property Policy (QA507) and other relevant university policies. Policies and support documents are available at Policies and Procedures - University of Galway.

- Communicating progress, and difficulties should they arise, regularly with your supervisor and your GRC
- Recording accurately and carefully in the required formats all relevant tasks being carried out, and producing timely progress reports as required
- Disseminating results of your research at conferences and in print.
- **QA509 Research Data Management Policy:** All research data generated/collected/created by research activities at the University of Galway is, subject to relevant policies and procedures, the property of the University and shall be retained by the University (this applies to data deposited in repositories on/off site) in line with the relevant appropriate Data Management Plan (DMP).
- **QA514 Research Integrity Policy:** Throughout their work, researchers shall keep clear and accurate records of the research procedures followed, approvals granted and of interim and final results. Data must be managed according to good practices for collection, curation, storage, management, retrieval, re-use, sharing, archiving, and access, and in line with the University of Galway's Research Data Management Policy.

For details on insurance cover for research activities contact the Head of Insurance Services at: susan.cavanagh@universityofgalway.ie

5.3 Supervision

Your supervisor(s) is the person who is responsible for providing guidance on your research. You may have co-supervisors for interdisciplinary or co-operative projects or where one of your supervisors holds an Honorary post (see Section 3.1). Also, in the case of co-supervision, one of the supervisors may be drawn from the

academic staff of other Universities. In all cases of co-supervision, one of the supervisors is named as the primary supervisor. The primary supervisor takes full responsibility for the overall management of your training and research project, and for relevant administrative matters. For the specific responsibilities of your supervisor see Section 3.2.

5.4   The Graduate Research Committee (GRC)

Every research student and supervisor has the support of a committee that is charged with ensuring compliance with basic good practices. This is called the 'Graduate Research Committee' (GRC). The GRC is nominated by the Head of School in consultation as appropriate with Head of Discipline and its membership is approved by the College when you register for your degree. See Section 4.2 for details of the role of the GRC.

5.5   Orientation, Induction and Development

Orientation and induction programmes are held three times during the academic year, and attendance is obligatory. Please see Postgraduate Research Students Orientation - University of Galway for further information.

The purpose of the orientation and induction programme is to promote awareness of all aspects of your research degree, including the preparation of research plans, performance monitoring and examination procedures. What may constitute a 'reasonable workload' and 'standard attendance' are also discussed. In addition, your teaching contribution, your rights and responsibilities, potential intellectual property issues, the rights and responsibilities of supervisors, plagiarism, safety and ethical considerations, definitions of research misconduct, basic work conditions and regulations, and the supports available from careers, the Researcher Development Centre (RDC) and other student services are explained.

5.5.1   Development of Research Skills

The Irish Universities Association (http://www.iua.ie/) has issued an 'Irish Universities' PhD Graduates' Skills' document which describes the desired learning outcomes and skills that PhD students may develop during their studies. The structured PhD has a strong focus on developing a range of skills which will assist you greatly in your career after your graduate and is also designed to meet the needs of an employment market that is wider than academia. Students develop these skills through their research and structured training. You will find this document at IUA-PhD-Graduate-Skills-Statement-2021-final.pdf

Your development is supported by the University through seminars and accredited skills training courses and through development support offered by the Researcher Development Centre (RDC) Researcher Development Centre - University of Galway Workshops and other resources, for example on the Personal Development Planning (PDP) process, are available from the RDC .

Research Integrity Training

Research Integrity relates to the performance of research to the highest standards of professionalism and rigour, and to the accuracy and trustworthiness of the research record in publications and elsewhere. It is expected that all research students undertake basic training in Research Integrity – this is provided online and free of charge. (https://www.universityofgalway.ie/researchcommunityportal/researchintegrity/).

Threesis

Threesis is a research communications training programme and competition in the University of Galway for postgraduate research students. There are a series of training sessions, heats and a grand final. It is an opportunity to network and to communicate your research

stories. Threesis is organised by the Research Office, in conjunction with the Researcher Development Centre and Graduate Studies Office, and with support from the research community. See this weblink Threesis - University of Galway

Coimbra 3MT Competition

University of Galway participates in the **Coimbra Group Three-Minute-Thesis Competition**. This event is an opportunity to hear short three-minute presentations from postgraduate research students who featured in the final of the Threesis competition. The Three Minute Thesis (3MT®) is a research communication competition "to present a compelling oration on their thesis and its significance". The idea is to increase research communication skills, and to a non-specialist audience. This event is organised by the Research and Graduate Studies Office. See this weblink for more information Three Minute Thesis (3MT®) | (eui.eu)

ENLIGHT

There are opportunities for doctoral researchers and supervisors to engage with the ENLIGHT doctoral network activities. ENLIGHT - University of Galway"

5.5.2 Structured PhD Programmes

Structured PhDs are offered in each College.

The core component of the structured PhD programme is the advancement of knowledge through original research. It is recognised that doctoral education is an individual journey.

The purpose of structuring doctoral education is to create a supportive environment, which is achieved by:

1. Formal accredited structured training to support the student's research. Every PhD student must complete 30 ECTS of such training during their PhD programme. Students select modules in consultation with their supervisor. The two main types of modules are:
   – advanced discipline-specific modules and
   – generic/transferrable/professional skills modules, further information on such modules is available at Modules - University of Galway.

   Online resources are available on Canvas to support these modules.

   Flexible delivery and assessment are key features of Structured PhD modules.

2. The programme of modules should be discussed with the student's supervisor and agreed by the GRC. Fulltime students will normally take modules to a weighting of 30 ECTS over Years 1-3 of their PhD programme. In exceptional circumstances students may be allowed to take modules in Year 4, subject to the agreement of the student's GRC. In the case of part-time students, the GRC will specify an appropriate schedule for taking the modules of the programme.

3. The Structured PhD Programme requires successful completion and examination of the research thesis and 30 ECTS of modules, approved by the student's Graduate Research Committee (GRC). Students will not be allowed present their thesis until the GRC has verified that they have successfully completed approved modules to a total minimum of 30 ECTS. The University, through the relevant College, may approve modules up to a total of 60 ECTS, where required by external funding agency or accreditation body. The University Marks and Standards for structured PhD programmes can be found at (QA236 Postgraduate Marks and Standards,

https://www.universityofgalway.ie/exams/policies-procedures/
Policies and Procedures - University of Galway

For further information on the Structured PhD in individual Colleges follow the links below:

College of Arts, Social Sciences and Celtic Studies
Structured PhD - University of Galway

College of Business, Public Policy & Law
https://www.universityofgalway.ie/business-public-policy-law/
cairnes/courses/research/business-public-policy-law.html

College of Medicine, Nursing & Health Sciences
College of Medicine, Nursing & Health Sciences - University of
Galway

College of Science and Engineering
School Guidelines - University of Galway

Some structured PhD programmes may involve inter-institutional collaboration. Further information available at:
External Modules - University of Galway

Sustainable Development Goals
The University of Galway has committed to embedding the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into all areas of activity, including education and research. Sustainable practices should be used in research activities. Research students are encouraged to consider relevant postgraduate modules in sustainability; there are several, such as BI5108 Green Labs Principles and Practice, BSS2103 Introduction to Sustainability I, PAB5128 Data Analysis for Sustainability Research, etc.
The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) - University of Galway

5.5.3 Doctor of Psychological Science (Clinical Psychology)

The Doctor of Psychological Science (Clinical Psychology) is a professional doctorate programme that provides professional training in clinical psychology in accordance with the accreditation standards of the Psychological Society of Ireland and of the British Psychological Society. The programme involves study for three calendar years, and is provided in partnership with clinical psychology services in the Health Services Executive (HSE) and other agencies.

The Doctor of Psychological Science (D.Psych.Sc.) in Clinical Psychology for Qualified Clinicians, is a three-year part-time programme that provides additional research training to those already holding a qualification in clinical psychology Clinical Psychology - University of Galway

Every Doctor of Psychological Science student and supervisor has the support of a committee that is charged with ensuring compliance with basic good practices. This is called the 'Graduate Research Committee'.

For details on the Doctor of Psychological Science (Clinical Psychology) **compliance with basic good practices** *and* **examinations***, see information here from the School of Psychology Clinical Psychology - University of Galway*

5.6   Entitlements

You should feel free at any time to approach for advice your supervisor, any member of your GRC, or SU post-graduate representatives. If issues arise that significantly impact your research, they should be addressed as early as possible, preferably in an informal way. You should, in the first instance, search for solutions locally i.e. discuss with supervisor(s), followed by GRC, followed by the Head of School and/or the Vice Dean of Graduate Studies. If necessary, the Head of School or Vice Dean of Graduate Studies can decide to escalate an issue to the Dean of the College and/or the Dean of Graduate Studies. Research students should

also be aware of the availability of representatives from the SU, College administrators, Student Counselling and other services.

Some contact details are provided at Postgraduate Research Student Reps, PG Academic Co-ordinators and Postgraduate Research Student Society - University of Galway

Students have the right to make a formal complaint to the Dean of Students, following University of Galway procedures QA611 QA611-University-of-Galway-Student-Complaints-Procedure.pdf (universityofgalway.ie)

It is essential that your entitlements, duties and responsibilities are communicated clearly to you at the beginning of your studies by your supervisor. These include:

- Entitlements including stipends, insurance and any additional benefits
- Fees and other charges and whether they are covered by the financial support for the project
- Reporting requirements
- Relevant codes of behaviour and practice
- Activities relating to teaching, tutoring, supervision and mentoring
- Policies for Students (relevant codes of behaviour and practice) apply to research students and are at this link Policies for Students / Polasaithe do Mhic Léinn - University of Galway
- Services and Support for Students (health & wellbeing, chaplaincy and counselling supports, disability support services) apply to research students and are at these links https://www.universityofgalway.ie/student-services/ and Student Services - University of Galway
- University of Galway, as a designated University of Sanctuary, seeks to make Galway's community an inclusive and equitable space for all, with details provided at Sanctuary - University of Galway
- While most research students are not employed to undertake their research degree and therefore do not have contractual hours of attendance, full-time research students are typically expected to devote time to their programme equivalent to a full-time employee (37 hours per week). Part-time students are typically expected to devote time to their programme equivalent to 2/3 that of a full-time student. Funded research students must comply with the terms of any funding award.
- The student should agree an appropriate regime with the supervisor(s), taking into consideration student commitments and any funding terms or conditions. Annual leave should normally be 4 weeks in a calendar year, in addition to public holidays.
- Supervisor(s) should be informed if a student experiences short-term interruption to research, because of illness or other circumstances. If a student requires a longer period of interruption to research (more than 1 month in a calendar year), they are advised to apply for a leave of absence. See section 5.8.5.

5.7   Teaching contributions

Contributing to teaching as a Graduate Teaching Assistant may form part of the training of a research postgraduate student. Supporting teaching assists you in the acquisition of generic and transferable skills, and can be an important element in the formation of a research graduate. See the GTA policy at https://www.universityofgalway.ie/media/humanresources/policiesproceduresandforms/policiesprocedures/QA135--Engagement-of-Graduate-Teaching-Assistants-Policy.pdf. There is an accredited blended-learning training course on demonstrating/tutoring on offer and as this is fundamental to your development, you can register for this without prior permission, whether within a structured PhD or not (GS506). There is also a book (*In At The Deep End – Starting to Teach In Higher Education*) which is available through the Graduate Studies Office to assist you in improving your teaching skills.

5.8 Monitoring Progress

As with other sections of these guidelines, many specific additional details are decided locally to ensure that fundamental discipline-specific matters are allowed but the guidelines given below are common to all students.

5.8.1 Initial Measures

There is an initial formal meeting between you, the primary supervisor and any co-supervisor(s), at which:

- The proposed topic of research (or the process leading to definition of your research project) is explained and discussed in detail, with attention given to expected standards of work

- Monitoring procedures are clarified

- Consideration is given to any questions and concerns that you may have

- A plan of research is developed, and agreed jointly and formally by you and the supervisor(s) as early as is feasible, and reviewed regularly. Your supervisor will inform you of your training needs, and assist you in drafting a personal development plan and agreeing the courses you take as part of your structured PhD. The Researcher Development Centre (Researcher Development Centre - University of Galway) provides training for University of Galway Researchers in continuing professional development and skills for future careers both within and beyond academia.

5.8.2 Assessment of Progress

Effective supervision and monitoring of research students depends on regular, informal communications between you and your supervisor(s). These often take the form of research group/discipline or more public presentations of interim results and findings.

Formal meetings with minutes of recommendations are also necessary to ensure all important understandings and recommendations are recorded and agreed.

5.8.3 Annual Progress Report

During the summer period each year your supervisor is responsible for providing a written report on your progress to your GRC. This report must be provided irrespective of the date of commencement of your studies and for each year you are registered until you graduate or formally withdraw from your studies. Each report must contain the following information:

- The approximate number, duration and significance of meetings with you that have occurred during the period in question

- An indication of what you have achieved during the preceding period

- Any communications of your work or relevant articles submitted for publication in this period (indicating whether this could have been expected).

- Results of all modules (including external where relevant) which the student has registered for in that year as part of the structured PhD.

Shorter reports may be submitted by your supervisor in your first year if you commence your research in the second semester.

You are also responsible for providing a report to the GRC on your progress for each year you are registered until you graduate or formally withdraw from your studies. The content and length of this report is usually specified in local guidelines. In your fourth year, it may be a summary of the progress you have made in writing your thesis. Every year you must have a meeting, normally in person, of at least 15 minutes with your GRC to discuss the reports submitted by you and your supervisor, and any other inputs before a recommendation is reached on your progression. Registered Research students past their time limit (i.e. after 4 years for a full-time PhD, 6 year part-time PhD, after 2 years for full-time Masters and 3 years part-time Research Masters students) should meet more frequently with their GRC e.g. quarterly. The completion plan is to be the focus of GRC meetings in the final year and any years over the time limit. If either you or members of your GRC are away from the University, then this meeting may take place

virtually. Adequate notice of the deadline for submission of reports to, presentations before or meetings with, the GRC should be provided to students and supervisors, taking into consideration any time away from the University or requirement for reasonable accommodation.

Research Integrity Training

You must confirm in your report to your GRC that you have undertaken basic training in Research Integrity (this is provided online and free of charge at https://www.universityofgalway.ie/researchcommunityportal/researchintegrity/) once (at least) during your research degree.

Personal Development Plan

You must develop a Personal Development Plan (PDP), review it with your Supervisor(s) and confirm in your report to your GRC that you have developed a PDP. The PDP will help you identify training, modules, development activities and resources that you should avail of during your programme, and it will help you plan how to develop your professional skills. The PDP should be reviewed annually with your supervisor, confirming review of the PDP in your report to your GRC. A PDP guide, template, workshops and other resources on the PDP process are available from the Researcher Development Centre Personal Development Planning (PDP) (sharepoint.com)

The 'Mini-viva'

PhD students are required to undergo a Mini-Viva process with their GRC, within 2 years of registration for full time PhDs and 3 years of registration for part time PhDs. Individual Schools may decide on when the mini-viva is held within this period. The 'Mini-Viva' may replace one annual GRC meeting. In cases where the 'Mini-Viva' is replacing an annual GRC meeting, the completion and submission of a written report on progress by you and your supervisor to your GRC remain compulsory.

Based on careful consideration of all inputs your GRC makes one of the following recommendations:

- Continue with PhD/MD/Research Masters
- Continue but further review necessary
- Discontinue research degree programme
- Final Thesis has been submitted (see section 6.7)

The GRC will submit their recommendation to a subcommittee of College and following due consideration of this recommendation, a recommendation on progression shall be made by the sub-committee to the PhD Examination Board. The PhD Examination Board is the formal progression authority for each College. Chaired by the Dean, or nominee, the Board is made-up of academic staff members of the College and from the other Colleges responsible for multi-College programmes. Only those decisions approved by the Examination Board will be formally recognized by the University.

In cases where your engagement, progress and/or commitment are found to be wanting, you are given formal notice of this through a recommendation of 'Continue but further review necessary' by the GRC. You will be given an opportunity to re-submit an updated report (based on recommendations by the GRC) and re-present for a further GRC meeting before a GRC recommendation is made to a subcommittee of College. The GRC may, following this further review, recommend that you continue or that you:
• Transfer to another Programme (Indicate which Programme)
• Discontinue research degree programme

Once either of these decisions is approved by the Examination Board notification of either of these outcomes is sent by College to the student, the primary supervisor, Head of School, Academic Administration & Registration Office, the Fees Office, and Research Accounts Office.

You should be aware, that should matters of a serious disciplinary nature arise, Academic Council is empowered to withdraw the acceptance of a candidate, at any time, on the recommendation of the College concerned.

A candidate can appeal a decision not to allow progression to the Standing Committee of Academic Council.

A former student who was discontinued from that programme may apply for re-admission. The application, together with the recommendation of the Head of School, shall be considered by the College in which the programme is to be pursued. The College, in considering the case for re-admission, will arrange for review of the application and may seek additional information from the applicant, which may include evidence to demonstrate that the reasons the student was discontinued have been satisfactorily addressed. The College shall decide whether or not the student is re-admitted to the programme. The decision will be communicated to the former student by the relevant College.

5.8.4 Transfer between Research Master's and PhD Degrees

Following the Yearly Progress Report (see Section 5.8.3 above), where your engagement, progress and/or commitment are found to be wanting, your GRC may recommend to the College that you transfer from PhD student status and re-register for a research Master's degree. A student registered for a PhD degree may apply to transfer to a research Master's Degree at any time during their studies.

5.8.5 Leave of Absence

Principles
Research graduate students are normally expected to complete the degree for which they are registered within the prescribed period of time. In instances where students experience extenuating circumstances (medical or personal), they are eligible to apply for a leave of absence. When submitting an application for leave of absence the research graduate student must obtain approval from their primary supervisor. All requests for leave of absence must have the recommendation of the School in which the research graduate student is registered, normally indicated by the signature of the Head of School. Where the Head of School does not approve, the student may appeal directly to the Dean of College, supplying all relevant documentation. Finally, applications for leave of absence must be approved by the College in which the student is registered. Students

should communicate with their supervisor as soon as is reasonably possible should they identify a possible need for leave of absence. Discretion will be exercised by Colleges when considering applications. Circumstances that may be considered acceptable include:

Medical (illness, disability)
Protected leave (maternity, adoptive leave, paternity leave etc)
The 'Policy on Supports for Students Experiencing Pregnancy, Maternity and Paternity', and 'Policies for Students' is available at https://www.universityofgalway.ie/student-services/policies/

Extenuating personal circumstances (family bereavement, etc)
Students with extenuating circumstances will be treated in a sensitive manner and their privacy will be respected.

Original medical certificates will be maintained by the School and reported to the College. The Dean of Graduate Studies may review original certificates on request. The student will maintain a status throughout their leave of absence on the Student Record System. A student who is externally funded should consult firstly with their supervisor who then consults with the funding agency regarding the leave of absence. Students should be aware of any implications a leave of absence will have on their funding. In exceptional circumstances, Colleges may consider a retrospective application for leave of absence on a case-by-case basis where a student has been unable to formally apply for leave of absence in advance.

Application Process
Application must be made on form GS 080 (Appendix 1) - Application Form for Leave of Absence (Research Graduate Students) and should state clearly the reasons and the duration of the proposed leave of absence. This form should be completed, signed by the student, and primary supervisor, and submitted for recommendation and signature to the Head of School and sent to the College. The College shall retain the original application form and inform the student, supervisor and Head of School in writing, of the decision regarding leave of absence. GS

081- Leave of Absence Credit Note form should be completed by the College following approval of the GS 080. The GS 081 form should then be submitted by College to the Fees Office. The College is responsible for informing the Academic Administration & Registration Office, Graduate Studies Office, the Fees Office, and Research Accounts Office of all approved leaves of absence, to facilitate formally updating the student's record. Where the primary supervisor or Head of School does not support the student's application, the student may appeal to the Dean of College, supplying all relevant documentation.

Duration

Leave of absence will *not* normally be granted for any period longer than one year or shorter than one month. On return to formal studies in the University, research graduate students are responsible for notifying Academic Records and Registration to update their registration status following the end of their approved leave of absence. If a student needs to extend their leave of absence, they need to re-apply for another period of leave. A student may not normally be on leave of absence for more than two years throughout the period of their degree programme.

Full-time research students may apply to change their mode of attendance to part-time upon return from leave, with agreement of their primary supervisor and Head of School. Students should be aware of any implications a change to part-time mode of attendance will have on their funding. The College is responsible for informing the Academic Administration & Registration Office, Graduate Studies Office, the Fees Office, and Research Accounts Office of all changes to study mode, to facilitate formally updating the student's record. Where the primary supervisor or Head of School does not support the student's application, the student may appeal to the Dean of College, supplying all relevant documentation.

Status

During an approved leave of absence, the student's participation in their research programme is suspended. Fees are not payable by the student for leave of absence approved for an academic year. For leave of absence less than one year, the student is liable for fees in that academic year but will be granted the appropriate time credit at the end of their research degree programme. During leave of absence the student will not normally be entitled to supervision or use of University facilities. Students should be prepared to discuss the implications of their leave of absence for joint research projects, publications, laboratories, teaching contribution etc. with their primary supervisor (who should consult with Head of School or Discipline as appropriate), and/or other members of their Graduate Research Committee. The student and Primary Supervisor will agree what information needs to be communicated to the student during their leave. This agreement will include the preferred method and frequency of communication and details of who the student should contact to discuss their return date, if they have any concerns or their circumstances change.

Full-time research students should consider that in on-going but less critical circumstances, a change of mode of attendance to part-time status may be an appropriate alternative. In some cases consideration might be given to making an application for an alternative award. In all cases these options should be discussed with the appropriate services available to the research graduate students.

5.8.6   Withdrawal from Studies

Should matters of a serious disciplinary nature arise , Academic Council has the right to remove the student from their programme of studies at any time during the academic year. This decision will only be made after consultation with the student, supervisor and GRC.

A student who is considering withdrawing from the programme should communicate with their supervisor and/or GRC and may seek the advice of the Dean of Graduate Studies before taking this option. Students should complete the 'Postgraduate Research Degree Programme Withdrawal Form' which is available on the Student Registry

Helpdesk website at Course Withdrawal - University of Galway. If you are in receipt of funding, it is important to inform the Funding Agency and Fees/Research Accounts Office as appropriate.

5.9   Student Representation

Students and their interests are represented at different levels within the university. At the highest level, a postgraduate representative sits on Údarás na hOllscoile (University of Galway's Governing Authority). The students' union postgraduate research officer and one graduate student nominated by the students' union (on an annual basis) are represented on the Graduate Studies Board. A postgraduate representative also sits on the Board of each School. For further information see the Student Guide, which is available on the Graduate Studies website:
New, Returning and Visiting students - University of Galway

Student Partnership Agreement (University of Galway and Students' Union) announced in 2023.

This agreement enhances the ongoing relationship between the University and the Students' Union by developing and supporting an effective partnership, based on the values of openness and respect, in line with the university's strategic plan Strategy | Straitéis 2020-2025 - University of Galway

5.10   Feedback

The opinions of graduate students are important to the university. Your feedback is used to improve services for current and future students. You will find feedback from the national student survey at Home | Student Survey and details of the University of Galway 'Action Plan'for postgraduate research students via the weblink: Surveys - University of Galway

5.11   Employment during Studies within the University

Registered postgraduate students may undertake paid work as a Graduate teaching Assistant, as stipulated by HR policies, either for their School or any other area of the University where work is available. Such work, where available, is to support you only for the period of your studies and such work will cease on completion of, the degree. You must be aware and acknowledge acceptance that any opportunity for work is available only for the period that you remain a registered student and actively pursuing your research degree. These regulations apply to you from the period you register as a research student until you complete your degree. You are also required to comply with the HR policies on part time employment:
Policies and Procedures - University of Galway

6. The PhD Examination Process

The examination of a student for a PhD degree, coming at the end of a prolonged period of intense study/research/creativity, needs to be a sophisticated and carefully considered process. These guidelines for the PhD examination take into consideration best practice, nationally and internationally.

6.1   Criteria

To be awarded a PhD, a candidate must demonstrate that, in pursuance of an agreed project, they have met all of the following criteria:

- Has made a significant contribution to knowledge and scholarship
- Has demonstrated a capacity for original and critical thought
- Can display an appropriate depth and breadth of knowledge and understanding of the relevant field(s) of study in the thesis and at the *viva* examination
- Has gained significant expertise with respect to basic and advanced methodologies and techniques
- Has presented a thesis with the appropriate structure and written style
- Has completed work that is suitable for publication.

Evidence as to whether or not these criteria are met is found in the thesis, but the oral examination or *viva* is critical to confirmation that the required standards have been achieved.

6.2   Format of Thesis and Submission for Examination

The candidate must follow the directions on format, layout and presentation of a thesis, as described below. The Examinations office will accept research theses as PDF (equivalent to soft bound version) by email. See Thesis Submission - University of Galway

A thesis may be submitted for examination only after the candidate has received approval for examination by their primary supervisor and a member of the candidate's GRC on the Approval for Examination form (EOG 020). Prior to thesis submission, the student should submit the thesis to check for similarity to existing work in extensive databases using software support available on the 1GST1 Canvas module.

The candidate must ensure that fees are cleared prior to submission of the softbound thesis, and should contact fees@universityofgalway.ie. Advancement to the stage where your thesis is sent to the examiners will not take place until confirmation of fee clearance. Once fees clearance is received, you can submit your softbound thesis to the Exams Office.

The signed, scanned, version of form EOG 020 must be submitted with the thesis. Where a candidate considers that approval for the submission of the thesis has been withheld unreasonably, they may appeal to the Standing Committee of Academic Council.

6.2.1   Declaration Regarding the Work

The candidate must certify that the thesis is all their own work and they have not obtained a degree in this University, or elsewhere, on the basis of this work. If the thesis is based on a group project, then the student must indicate the extent of their contribution, with reference to any other theses submitted or published by each collaborator in the project, and a declaration to this effect must be included in the thesis. This declaration should follow the Table of Contents.

6.2.2 Directions on Format, Layout and Presentation

The PhD thesis should not normally exceed 80,000 words, inclusive of appendices, footnotes, tables and bibliography. It is university policy that the practice of engaging professional editorial services to assist in writing the thesis is not permitted.

There must be a title page which shall contain the following information:
a. The full title (and subtitle, if any)
b. The volume number and total number of volumes, if more than one
c. The full name of the candidate, followed, if desired, by any degree and/or professional qualification(s)
d. The name(s) of the supervisor(s), School(s), component Discipline(s), Institution
e. The month and year of submission.

Format and Layout

The 'Table of Contents', which should not be over-detailed, shall immediately follow the title page. Line-spacing should be a maximum of one-and-half; text must be left justified with a left-hand margin of 4 cm and may be right justified. An easily-readable layout and font are recommended for the body text. More compact formats, with smaller font sizes, are usually appropriate for certain sections, such as reference lists, bibliographies and some kinds of appendices. Pages must be numbered consecutively, with page numbers located centrally at the bottom, and chapter headers at the top, of each page. Diagrams, graphs, photographs and tables should be properly numbered and located in relation to the text.

6.2.3 Third-Party Copyright

You need to identify all material in your thesis that is subject to third-party copyright. Material subject to third-party copyright includes, for example, published articles, diagrams, tables, figures created by another author and inserted in the thesis to illustrate an argument.

You need to obtain permission from the copyright owners to include this material in your thesis before it is published online. You should seek such permissions in good time, and well in advance of thesis submission.

Before submitting an article which is intended to form part of an article-based PhD thesis a candidate should ensure that the publisher will allow the author's final version of the article to be made freely available electronically. For article-based PhDs, articles must not be included with the publishers' copy-editing, formatting and pagination. Different publishers have different policies in relation to authors making published material freely available electronically.

Your thesis in online format should correspond exactly to its publication in printed format. If, however, it is not possible to obtain permission for an item subject to third-party copyright, such material should be removed from the thesis in its online format, with a note to this effect.

Some frequently asked questions and sample permission request letters are available at Introduction - Library Guides and Tutorials - LibGuides at University of Galway

6.2.4 Article-based PhD

PhD theses may be presented for examination in either monograph style or in an article-based format. The monograph style is where the work is usually laid out as a series of chapters, typically having the structure of introduction, literature review, methodology, results and conclusions. The article-based PhD is based on a collection of papers (including published papers or papers submitted or accepted for publication) which describe a coherent programme of research undertaken by the student while registered for the PhD. It also contains a short introductory chapter, explanation of the research question, relevant literature and methodology and a concluding chapter. The student's contribution to each article must be made explicit. The article-based format is most often adopted in the general disciplines of Science, Engineering and Medicine while the monograph is usually preferred in the Humanities and Social Sciences. Both formats for the presentation of the research work are equally valued and both are subject to the same examination process and must meet the academic standards for the award as given in Section 6.1. The article-based PhD format has both advantages and disadvantages. The advantages include wider and earlier dissemination of research results, and experience for the student in writing research articles. The disadvantages include the time delay in acceptance of articles in some research fields and the strict restrictions on the length of research articles which may lead to the omission of methodologies normally included in a monograph. A monograph has the advantage of more readily supporting the development of a sustained argument, with the synthesis of the relevant literature and an integrated discussion of the methodology. The critical and theoretical review of the papers in an article-based PhD must achieve this end. All other guidelines apply to students irrespective of the format of the thesis that is submitted. Precise guidelines on article-based formats are developed in the four Colleges of the University. The online version of these guidelines should be consulted on the relevant College website. As a general guideline, a minimum of three peer reviewed articles should be included with the PhD candidate normally being first author on the major part of the work. Joint publications may be included, but the candidate must make explicit their contribution to the work. Candidates must agree the final content of the thesis, including the number of published papers with their supervisor(s). The article-based PhD must also include a comprehensive introduction to the overall research topic with the appropriate bibliography. The discussion should refer to how the objectives of the research were met in each of the articles included. Supplementary appendices of the methodologies used may be necessary if sufficient detail is not included in the thesis to allow repetition of the research.

6.3 Examiners and Chair of the *viva*

6.3.1 Arrangements for the Examination

The smooth operation of the examination process depends on all concerned understanding their roles, and on well-defined procedures. A brief outline of the process follows.

- The primary supervisor is responsible for organisation of the overall examination process and for checking that the candidate, examiners and chair have been supplied with the information necessary for understanding their roles.

- Except in exceptional circumstances, the viva should be held on campus with all examiners physically present. Where it is not practical for all participants to attend in person, an application for participation by video conference must be made two months in advance of the proposed date of the viva. The student must agree to the viva being held by video conference and the approval of a GRC member, Head of School, Dean of College and Dean of Graduate Studies obtained through the Online Research Thesis Exam.

- The Examinations Office is responsible for processing the submitted thesis and the subsequent Examiners' Report.

- The examiners submit a report according to an agreed format, after the examination of the thesis and the candidate at the viva, and this report is considered by the Standing Committee of Academic Council.

- At the meeting of the Standing Committee, members of the Committee, having given detailed consideration to the criteria for examination (Section 6.1), discuss the contents of the report.

- A decision is made to accept the report as is, or to modify the recommendations, or to request re-submission of a revised report.

- The final approval of the recommendation of the examiners is decided by the Standing Committee and the minutes of the outcomes are sent to the Academic Council.

- After the completion of any necessary corrections, successful candidates are sent a letter by the Deputy President and Registrar confirming the award of the PhD degree.

Detailed information on the exact processes and procedures is given below.

6.3.2 Approval of Examiners

The examination of a PhD research thesis involves at least two examiners, one external and one internal, and has two stages: the examination of the thesis and the oral or *viva* examination of the candidate. All examiners participate fully in the two stages of the process: the examination of the thesis and the *viva* examination of the candidate. The primary supervisor discusses with the GRC the choice of the external and internal examiners. Supervisors and GRCs should take into consideration gender balance and diversity in the selection of examiners. The candidate is informed in good time when potential examiners and the overall make-up of the Examination's Board are being considered. At that stage, while providing a rationale for doing so, a candidate may object to the appointment of a particular examiner. If an examiner is recommended for appointment despite an objection from the candidate, a written rationale for the recommendation is supplied to the College by the primary supervisor. Following the consultation outlined above, the primary supervisor submits an online 'Approval of Examiners' request (Appendix 1). The recommended examiners must be first approved by a member of the GRC, and then the Head of School, before approval of College can be granted. The examiners, with the letter of appointment, will be asked to declare any potential conflicts of interest that they may have.

External Examiner

The external examiner shall be an expert of international standing in the field of study of the thesis. A short *curriculum vitae* of the external examiner will be provided, by the supervisor, to the College to accompany the online request for the approval of Examiners. The process of identifying the external examiner should commence at least six months in advance of the submission of the thesis.

External examiners should normally be appointed from outside the Republic of Ireland. The external examiner must be independent of the university and of the conduct of the research and must not have any real or perceived conflict of interest in examining the thesis. The external examiner, with their letter of appointment, will be asked to declare any potential conflicts of interest that they may have. Please see Section 9 for further guidance on Conflicts of Interest.

Diversification in the range of persons appointed as external examiners is encouraged, though it is recognised that there may be a particular reason for availing of the expertise of a particular extern for a number of theses within a given period. Colleges must submit an annual report listing all external examiners approved and their affiliation for review by Standing Committee of Academic Council.

A short written preliminary report, (GS060 Examiner's Independent Pre-Viva Report), is prepared by the internal and external examiners before the *viva* and sent to the chair, not less than one week before the viva date and only then should the examiners confer. These reports should include an initial judgement on the thesis and any major issues arising.

A second external examiner is appointed:

a. When the candidate to be examined is or has been within the past 4 years a member of staff of the University, full-time or part-time, except when the staff member has been appointed in the six months prior to approval of examiners. There is no requirement for candidates who are or have only been tutors or demonstrators (or have undertaken similar roles, as adjudged by the Head of School) to have two external examiners. A second external examiner is not required in the case of externally funded PhD candidates who are required to have a contract of employment with the University for the duration of the funding award.

b. When the work being examined, because of its nature, justifies this. For example, where the research is multi-disciplinary.

Because of their specific expertise, external examiners have a critical role and normally lead the oral examination process. If there is more than one external examiner, the whole Board selects one to lead the process.

Internal Examiner
Any member of academic staff who has appropriate expertise and experience may act as an internal examiner. Membership of the GRC does not preclude a member of academic staff from also being an internal examiner for the same student. As a general principle, neither Emeritus nor Adjunct Professors should act as an internal examiner. However, a College can make a recommendation to the Standing Committee for exceptions to the principle on a case by case basis, such a recommendation to be made in good time so that the Standing Committee would be in a position to give the recommendation due

consideration. Honorary Clinical Lecturers in the School of Medicine are eligible to be internal examiners of postgraduate research theses. The central role of external examiners should not take away from the role of the internal examiners, who are in a position to act to maintain consistently high internal standards.

A second internal examiner may be included:

- When a student's project is multidisciplinary
- When the primary examiner is otherwise suitable but has no prior experience as an examiner.

A short written preliminary report, (GS060 Examiner's Independent Pre-Viva Report), is prepared by the internal examiner(s) before the *viva* and sent to the chair and only then should the examiners confer. These reports should include an initial judgement on the thesis and any major issues arising.

6.3.3 Role of supervisor in the PhD examination

The primary supervisor is responsible for organisation of the overall examination process and for checking that the candidate, examiners and chair have been supplied with the information necessary for understanding their roles. A supervisor may not act as an examiner or chair the *viva* for their student. Supervisors may attend the *viva*, subject to the agreement of the examiners, chair and the student. The supervisors, if present at the *viva*, neither participate nor intervene in the examination process. The supervisors may only observe the viva proceedings and must leave the examination when final deliberations are taking place.

6.3.4 Approval of Chair of the *viva*

A chair of the *viva* must be nominated, and approved by the College, for each PhD examination and must be present at the *viva*. The chair will normally be the Established Professor of the relevant discipline. However, they may nominate another permanent member of academic staff in the discipline to act as chair. When the Established Professor is the supervisor of the candidate being examined an alternate chair

must be appointed. In the event of a vacancy in the Established Professorship, the Head of School, following appropriate consultation, will appoint the chair. The candidate is informed in good time when the chair is being considered. At that stage, while providing a rationale for doing so, a candidate may object to the appointment of a particular chair. If a chair is recommended for appointment despite an objection from the candidate, a written rationale for the recommendation is supplied to the College by the primary supervisor.

6.3.5 Role of the Chair of the *viva*

The chair will not be an examiner and will not be required to read the thesis. However, the chair fulfils a very important role in the PhD examination and must know the PhD regulations, be able to advise the examiners of these regulations and has a particular responsibility to ensure they are implemented. Information sessions on the current regulations and procedures, and any updates approved by the Standing Committee of Academic Council, will be held at regular intervals to facilitate the chairs in this regard. A short written preliminary report is prepared by each examiner before the *viva* and sent to the chair and only then should the examiners confer. These reports should include an initial judgement on the thesis and any major issues arising. The chair will ensure that any issues raised in the individual reports are discussed at the *viva*.

The chair shall be present at the *viva*, meet the examiners prior to the *viva* and agree the agenda, format of the examination and procedures to be followed. The chair should introduce the examiners and the candidate and outline to the candidate the procedure for the *viva*. Normally the chair will then act as an observer and make brief notes on the examination. (These notes may be important in the case of an appeal of the result of the PhD examination (Section 6.9). The chair may intervene if the student misunderstands a question by asking to rephrase it or may call for a short break if the candidate becomes unduly distressed. The chair is also responsible for ensuring that there is an offer of a break if the *viva* exceeds two hours. As soon as is practicable after the *viva*, the chair provides feedback to the candidate on the outcome.

The chair also ensures that the report of the examination is completed satisfactorily. The chair does not directly submit the joint examiners' report on the online system, rather ensures its submission by the internal examiner via the Online Research Thesis Exam System, and that all digital signatures are received in a timely manner. The Chair is responsible for ensuring that the changes made, in consultation with the external examiner(s), satisfy the requirements of the examiners, and communicating with the Examinations Office, should the internal examiner be unavailable for minor or major corrections or when the thesis is referred. The chair informs the Dean of College, immediately after the *viva*, of a recommendation to refer a thesis.

6.4 The *Viva* (Oral) Examination

The *viva* is an integral part of the examination process and candidates need to prepare for this part of the examination. A number of books on how to prepare for the *viva* are listed in the bibliography. The *viva* provides the opportunity for the candidate to elaborate on the central research question and the approach taken to investigate this. It also provides an opportunity to clarify any ambiguities that arise in the thesis, satisfy the examiners that it is the candidate's own work and satisfies the other criteria given in Section 6.1.

The *viva* is arranged by the supervisor at a time suitable for the candidate, examiners and chair. The *viva* should normally be held *within two months* of the submission of the thesis. The candidate is made familiar by the supervisor in advance with the standard format, timetable and normal length for such examinations. Failure of the candidate to engage with the supervisor in making suitable arrangements for the viva and/or non-attendance at the viva will, in the absence of extenuating circumstances, result in the candidate exiting the degree programme. The chair of the *viva* is responsible for arranging the *viva* should a supervisor be unavailable.

Normally the *viva* should have a minimum duration of one hour and after about two hours a break should be offered. The *viva* should not normally exceed three hours. Except in exceptional circumstances, the *viva* should be held on campus with all examiners physically present. As soon as is practicable after the *viva*, feedback is given to the candidate by the chair of the *viva*.

6.5   Examination Report

Where the Examiners are in agreement, they submit a joint report with a recommendation for award or otherwise of the degree on the online system:

- Award PhD
- Award PhD, but insist on typographical corrections (1 month)
- Award PhD, but insist on corrections in content (1 month)
- Award PhD, but insist on corrections in content (3 months)
- Refer, permit submission of a revised thesis with second *viva* required (1 year)
- Award a Master's degree
- Award a Master's degree, subject to typographical corrections
- Award a Master's degree, subject to corrections in content
- Reject, with no recommendation as to resubmission.

The report must include information under each of the headings stipulated (see weblink to the Online Research Thesis Exam System in Appendix 1). The minimum length of the report is 300 words, excluding the listing of corrections and publications arising from the research undertaken. Failure to comply with these requirements will result in inevitable delays and the resubmission of the report.

If the report does not conclude with a recommendation that a PhD be awarded to the candidate, the report should include:

- An explicit description of the areas of weakness and/or under-performance
- A clear description of the courses of action advised by the examiners before resubmission. These may include, for example, information on requirements for extra work, information on the scale of rewriting, and/or rectification of deficiencies in candidate's knowledge.

The report shall be submitted online by the internal examiner to the Examinations Office within *two* weeks of the *viva* being held and will then be considered by the Academic Council Standing Committee.

Where the Examiners are not in agreement, separate reports must be made by each examiner, and all reports submitted together to the Examinations Office. The reports will be considered by the Academic Council Standing Committee. In accordance with the general regulations of the University, the opinion of an external examiner as to the overall result to be awarded to a candidate shall not be overruled unless by decision of not less than two-thirds of all the members of the Standing Committee then in office.

Only reports that are received at least 8 days prior to a Standing Committee meeting will be considered at that meeting.

The University of Ireland Galway is subject to the Freedom of Information Act (2014) and the Data Protection Acts (1988 to 2018). This legislation allows for access to personal data relating to an identifiable person held by the University. Whilst examiner reports are kept strictly confidential insofar as is possible, examiners should note that any information provided relating to the subject of the report will be released by the Examinations Office to the subject of the report where a request for same is made, once the report is approved by the Academic Council Standing Committee. University regulations and forms define the appeal procedure that can be used by the candidate in cases of disagreement with the examination outcome (Section 6.9).

6.6   Revisions

6.6.1   Award subject to minor or major corrections

Examiners generally require revisions before recommending an award for the candidate. Where the examiners have recommended that award of the PhD be conditional on corrections being made to the thesis, the primary supervisor is responsible for monitoring the implementation of these corrections, and the internal examiner(s), (in consultation with the external examiner, if necessary) is responsible for ensuring that the changes made satisfy the requirements of the examiners. The internal examiner shall communicate in writing with the Examinations Office, to thesissubmission@universityofgalway.ie that the corrections are made. The Chair of the *viva* is responsible for ensuring that the changes made, in consultation with the external examiner(s), satisfy the requirements of the examiners, and communicating with the Examinations Office, should the internal examiner be unavailable. The timeline for the re-submission of the thesis requiring minor corrections to be made, either typographical or in content, is one month from the date of approval of the report by the Standing Committee of Academic Council. Three months from the date of approval of the report by the Standing Committee of Academic Council are allowed for the re-submission of a thesis which is deemed to require major corrections in content. These deadlines may be extended by the Dean of Graduate Studies in extenuating circumstances.

6.6.2   PhD is referred

- The chair informs the Dean of College, immediately after the *viva*, of a recommendation to refer a thesis. Where the PhD has been referred, formal contact should be made with the student by the Dean of College to inform the candidate of the decision of the Standing Committee of Academic Council and to ensure that they receive the examiners' report.
- A student with a referred outcome must register to continue their

programme until they submit a revised thesis for examination.

- The revised thesis and a new EOG 020 form 'Approval for Examination' must be submitted to the Examinations Office.
- The re-examination of the thesis must be undertaken by the same examiners. The examiners may waive the requirement for the viva, following examination of the re-submitted thesis, and provided the joint report on the candidate's performance at the viva when the thesis was originally examined was positive.
- The new joint examiners' report must be submitted online and considered by the Standing Committee of Academic Council.
- The time limit for re-submission is one year from the date of approval of the report by the Standing Committee of Academic Council. This deadline may be extended by the Dean of Graduate Studies in extenuating circumstances.
- A candidate may only re-submit once.

6.7   Final Thesis Submission

The University, in support of the National Principles for Open Access and the national Framework on the Transition to an Open Research Environment provides access to PhD and MD and Research Masters theses as soon as possible following award of the degree. Open access to online theses allows the University to share the excellence of its research without restriction. The default position of the University is not to place an embargo on open access to the thesis.

The candidate may not graduate until the revised thesis, incorporating the required changes as confirmed in writing by the internal examiner(s), has been lodged with the Examinations Office. Where the award of the research degree has been recommended, and (where necessary) when the internal examiner has confirmed in writing that all the requirements of the examiners have been met in relation to the thesis in its print and online formats, the candidate must re-submit a hard-bound print copy of the thesis to the Examinations Office. The print copy of the thesis must be submitted through the Student

Registry Helpdesk to be lodged in the University Library with the appropriate accompanying form signed by the candidate (Library Submission Form, EOG 051, see section 6.7.1). The original and a copy of EOG 051 form are required. All theses shall remain the property of the University. Candidates may not graduate unless they also submit an online copy to the Library, via the Research Repository (Access to Research at University of Galway) system.

The print of the final bound thesis must be bound within boards with leaves permanently secured. The cover of the final bound thesis must bear the title of the thesis, candidate's name, degree awarded and the date of submission. The spine bears the candidate's name, the degree awarded and the date of submission.

University of Galway Research Repository is the University's system, managed by the Library, for online publication of theses. When ready to upload the electronic version of the thesis, the candidate should email researchrepository@universityofgalway.ie to request a password for their research repository account to be created. It will be necessary to provide your Name, School, Supervisor and University of Galway email address. On notification that an account has been created, the Research Repository Manager will email you login and upload instructions. The file format for online publication is PDF. The final version of the thesis must correspond to the printed version and must be saved in PDF prior to upload. However, where copyright clearance has not being obtained for any third party content, this content must be replaced by a placeholder to this effect. An online workflow enables the candidate to upload their thesis to the Research Repository system. Once uploaded, a number of process checks are conducted by Library staff prior to enablement of public access to the thesis. If, however, you have been granted an embargo, the full text of your thesis will not be made available publicly until after the embargo period has elapsed, but you must still upload the thesis to Research Repository system .

See also University of Galway Research Repository (formerly ARAN) - Open Access Publishing - LibGuides at University of Galway"

6.7.1   Library Submission form EOG 051

Form EOG 051 provides for the submission of the final thesis in print and online formats. Immediately above the signature section of the form, it is essential to tick the appropriate box to indicate that all permissions regarding third party copyright have been obtained or that, if any permissions have been withheld or otherwise not obtained, an edited version of the thesis, excluding material subject to third party copyright but providing a reference to it, has been submitted for online publication, see section 6.2.3.

Should a research supervisor have left the University of Galway, either a member of the GRC or the Head of School must sign Form EOG 051.

The following should be considered before you complete the form:

Section (a) of Form EOG 051 outlines the conditions under which you grant access to your thesis. This section applies if your thesis can be made accessible as soon as the award of the research degree has been confirmed.

Section (b) of Form EOG 051 provides the opportunity to request a period of restricted access. An embargo period may be sought to provide time to publish the thesis either as a series of articles or as a monograph, to alleviate a potential breach of confidence, commercial sensitivity, security interests, copyright concerns and issues surrounding breach of GDPR.

'Commercially Sensitive Information' means any confidential information that, if disclosed, may prejudice a third-party's commercial interests e.g. trade secrets, profit margin or new ideas.

'Confidential Information' means any information which has been designated as confidential by either party in writing or that ought to be considered as confidential (however it is conveyed or on whatever media it is stored) including information which would or would likely prejudice the commercial interests of any person, trade secrets, intellectual property rights, know-how of either party and any Commercially Sensitive Information.

'Copyright' means all copyright and rights to the nature of copyright subsisting in the theses in any part of the world to which a third-party is, or may become, entitled.

'Data Protection legislation' means the Irish Data Protection Acts 1988-2018 (as may be amended).

'GDPR' means the European General Data Protection Regulation 2016.

The embargo period shall be used by the student to alleviate the relevant grounding concerns by potential use of the following actions

Breach of confidence
Permission should be sought from the relevant third-party. Redaction of material deemed to give rise to a breach of confidence issue..

Security concerns
Where a legitimate security concern arises redaction of material deemed by the supervisor to give rise to a security issue.

Copyright infringement
Permission should be sought from the Copyright holder. If it is not possible to obtain permission for an item subject to third-party copyright, such material should be removed from the thesis, with a note to this effect. See section 6.2.3

A personal data breach under GDPR and Data Protection Legislation
Personal data should be anonymised/pseudo-anonymised

Commercially sensitive information
Permission should be sought from the relevant third-party. If this is not forthcoming, the information should be redacted, with a note to this effect.

Before completing Form EOG 051, the author should discuss with their supervisor the need for a period of embargo, and the appropriate duration of such an embargo. Applications for an embargo period will be considered by an Embargoes sub-group of Graduate Studies Board, consisting of University Librarian, Business Development Manager Research & Innovation Office, Graduate Studies Manager, Digital Publishing and Data Management Librarian and chaired by the Dean of Graduate Studies. The sub-group will meet at least twice per calendar year, and will provide an annual report to Graduate Studies Board detailing

- Number of theses added to the Research Repository system
- Number of embargoes and embargo extensions granted by embargo period
- Categories of queries received from students
- Usage data for University of Galway Theses (Research Theses) collection on the Research Repository system e.g. page views and downloads, most popular thesis.

Descriptive information (metadata), including an abstract, will be displayed on the Research Repository system during the period of embargo.

Embargoes granted apply to the 590 metadata field in the Library catalogue record which displays "No consultation until dd mm yyyy". The theses with embargoes are not accessible/loanable. The start date of an embargo is the latest date of signature on Form EOG-051. The normal length of embargo is two years, but an embargo of up to 4 years can be requested in the first instance if justified. In certain circumstances an extension to the initial embargo period will be granted. Embargo extensions require submission of a new Form EOG 51 at least two months prior to expiry of the current embargo period, and must be accompanied by substantive supporting documentation, such as a book publishing contract or evidence of significant delay in publication or commercialisation of thesis material. The thesis will be published on the Research Repository system at the expiry of the embargo period.

Should an embargo request be received after a thesis has been made available on the Research Repository system the request is referred to the Embargoes sub-group. An email is sent by the Digital Publishing and Data Management Librarian to author and copied to supervisor to notify them of same. The email includes download data from the Research Repository system. An embargo can be removed at the request of the author to the Digital Publishing and Data Management Librarian if the reason for the embargo is no longer valid. An email is sent by the Digital Publishing and Data Management Librarian to author and copied to supervisor to notify them of embargo removal.

6.8   Completion Time Limit

Full-time PhD candidates are allowed four years in which to complete the degree from the date of registration. Part-time candidates are allowed six years to complete the degree from the date of registration. Fees will be applied until the end of the semester in which the thesis is submitted for examination (First semester is taken to end January 31st of each year). If candidates do not complete the degree within the due period from the date of registration they must re-apply to the College, presenting justification for an extension. Candidates must be registered at the time of submission of thesis for examination.

6.9   Appeal of the result of a PhD examination

An appeal may not question the academic judgement of the examiners. Potential grounds for appeal are as set out in QA235 QA235---Procedure-for-the-Discussion-Checking-and-Appeal-of-Examination-Rresults---Feb-2021.pdf (universityofgalway.ie) Further information on the mechanism for an examination appeal is available at Appeals - University of Galway and Policies and Procedures - University of Galway. Appeals may not be submitted on the basis of inadequate supervision; complaints of that nature should be lodged during the period of study and before the submission of the thesis under the student complaints procedure, with details provided in the policy available at Policies for Students / Polasaithe do Mhic Léinn - University of Galway

6.10 Conferring

PhDs are conferred at the Summer, Autumn and Winter conferring ceremonies.

When the decision has been made at Standing Committee of Academic Council to award a PhD and

- the final hard-bound thesis (with required corrections completed and confirmed by the internal examiner, when necessary),
- e-thesis and
- library submission form (EOG 051)

are submitted to the Examinations office by the relevant deadline, the PhD will be conferred at the next PhD conferring ceremony.

Deadlines are advertised on the conferring website Conferring - University of Galway

Graduands who do not meet the deadline will go forward to the next PhD conferring ceremony.

Invitations are posted to the home addresses of graduands due to confer approximately three weeks before the conferring ceremony.

PhD graduands may request to defer their graduation once only.

If a student is unable to attend their conferring ceremony, the degree will be conferred *in absentia*. Degree parchments for graduates conferred *in absentia* are posted to the home address within two weeks of each respective ceremony.

6.11 Use of PhD Title

International best practice permits the use of the hardbound submission date as the date of award and entitlement to use the designation (Dr). The University of Galway does not permit wearing of a doctoral robe until the degree is conferred. Some employers require the parchment (Conferring) as proof of award prior to commencing employment. At the University of Galway, the issuance of the award letter from the Deputy President & Registrar permits use of the title (Dr).

7. The MD Degree

The research programme leading to the MD degree is, in accordance with national and international norms, provided to encourage the development of advanced research skills in medical graduates and the medical profession, and is adapted to the particular circumstances of advanced professional training in that profession. The nature of the preparation for the degree is similar to other research doctoral degrees, but research for the degree is normally completed within a shorter period of time, typically two years of full-time research and study. The primary purpose of MD level research is to make a significant contribution to new knowledge and understanding in the theory and/ or practice of an area of medicine or medical science and to develop in the student the skills and competencies required to conduct effective research.

Regulations for the MD degree are set out in the College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences calendar Calendars - University of Galway

7.1   Entry Requirements

To be eligible on an MD programme candidates should normally have a high honours standard *in the degrees of M.B., B.Ch., B.A.O* from the University of Galway or possess qualification deemed by the University to be equivalent. The application will require support of an academic staff member who is approved by the College to supervise the research in terms of its nature and scope. Candidates may be required to submit a research proposal for consideration by the School as part of their application.

7.2   The MD Examination Process

The MD examination process is identical to the PhD examination process. Detailed guidelines on this examination process are provided in Section 6. For example, the same external examiner regulations apply to the MD and PhD, two external examiners are required for the MD examinations of staff members, and a referred MD thesis may only be re-examined once.

7.2.1   Criteria

To be awarded a MD, a candidate must demonstrate that, in pursuance of an agreed project, they have met all of the following criteria:

- Has made a significant contribution to knowledge and scholarship
- Has demonstrated a capacity for original and critical thought
- Can display an appropriate depth and breadth of knowledge and understanding of the relevant field(s) of study in the thesis and at the viva examination
- Has gained significant expertise with respect to basic and advanced methodologies and techniques
- Has presented a thesis with the appropriate structure and written style
- Has completed work that is suitable for publication

Evidence as to whether or not these criteria are met is found in the thesis, but the oral examination or viva is critical for confirmation that the required standards have been achieved.

7.2.2   Article-based MD

The MD thesis may be presented for examination in either monograph style or article based format.

The article-based MD is available to students on full or part time, structured and non-structured MD programmes within the College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences. A minimum of three original, published (peer reviewed) research papers in international leading journals of appropriate impact factor for the area of research is required. If no methodological papers are part of the submission, the student must include a detailed methodological chapter. In line with University guidelines, only articles which are based on research which has been undertaken by the student while registered for the MD at the University of Galway are admissible. In addition, the MD candidate would normally be the first or leading author on the major part of the

work. Joint publications may be included but the candidate must make explicit their contribution to the work.

7.2.3 The *Viva* (Oral) Examination

The *viva* is an integral part of the examination process.

7.2.4 MD Examination Report

Where the Examiners are in agreement, they submit a joint report on the criteria outlined in Section 7.2.1, to a Standing Committee meeting via the online system, with one of the following recommendations and time limits:

- Award MD
- Award MD, but insist on typographical corrections (1 month)
- Award MD, but insist on corrections in content (1 month)
- Award MD, but insist on corrections in content (3 months)
- Refer, permit submission of a revised thesis with second *viva* required (1 year)
- Award a Master's degree
- Award a Master's degree, subject to typographical corrections
- Award a Master's degree, subject to corrections in content
- Reject, with no recommendation as to resubmission

The report must include information under each of the headings stipulated (see weblink to the online examiner system in Appendix 1). The minimum length of the report is 300 words, excluding the listing of corrections and publications arising from the research undertaken. Failure to comply with these requirements will result in inevitable delays and the resubmission of the report.

If the report does not conclude with a recommendation that an MD be awarded to the candidate, the report should include:

- An explicit description of the areas of weakness and/or under-performance
- A clear description of the courses of action advised by the examiners

before resubmission. These may include, for example, information on requirements for extra work, information on the scale of rewriting, and/or rectification of deficiencies in candidate's knowledge.

7.2.5 Final Thesis Submission

The MD Final Thesis submission and upload process, as well as the appeal, complaints and conferring arrangements, are identical to the PhD processes. Detailed guidelines on this process are provided in Section 6.

MD graduands may request to defer their graduation once only.

7.2.6 Completion Time Limit

The MD programme can commence at any time in the academic year. Normal minimum duration is 24 months full time and the normal minimum duration for the part time MD is 36 months. If candidates do not complete the degree within the due period from the date of registration they must re-apply to the College, presenting justification for an extension.

Fees will be applied until the end of the semester in which the thesis is submitted.

8. Research Master's Examination Process

The examination of an applicant for a research Master's degree is focused on the learning and achievements of a student working on an unique project.

8.1 Criteria

To be awarded a research Master's degree, a candidate must demonstrate that, in pursuance of an agreed project, s/he has met each of the following criteria:

- Has made a contribution to understanding or knowledge
- Can display an appropriate depth and breadth of understanding of the relevant field(s) of study
- Has gained a corresponding level of expertise with respect to relevant methodologies and techniques.

Evidence as to whether or not these criteria are met will be found in the thesis and an oral examination is not normally required.

8.2 Format of Thesis and Submission for Examination

The candidate must follow the directions on format, layout and presentation of a thesis, as described below. The Examinations office will accept research theses as PDF (equivalent to soft bound version) by email. See Thesis Submission – University of Galway

Prior to thesis submission, the student should submit the thesis to check for similarity to existing work in extensive databases using software support available on the 1GST1 Canvas module.

The candidate must ensure that fees are cleared prior to submission of the softbound thesis, and should contact fees@universityofgalway.ie. Advancement to the stage where your thesis is sent to the examiners will not take place until confirmation of fee clearance. Once fees clearance is received, you can submit your softbound thesis to the Exams Office.

A thesis may be submitted for examination only after the candidate has received approval for examination by their primary supervisor and a member of the candidate's GRC on the Approval for Examination form (EOG 021). The signed, scanned, version of form EOG 021 must be submitted with the thesis.

A Structured Master's Programme requires successful completion and examination of the research thesis and 30 ECTS approved by the student's Graduate Research Committee (GRC). The modules should be discussed with the student's supervisor and agreed by their GRC. In no case will a student be allowed present their thesis until their GRC has verified that they have successfully completed approved modules up to a total minimum of 30 ECTS. The University, through the relevant College, may approve modules up to a total of 45 ECTS where required by external funding agency or accreditation body. The University, through the relevant College, may approve modules at another University or Institute towards total ECTS of modules Policies and Procedures – University of Galway.

Where a candidate considers that approval for the submission of the thesis has been withheld unreasonably, they may appeal to the Standing Committee of Academic Council.

The Master's thesis should not normally exceed 45,000 words, inclusive of appendices, footnotes, tables and bibliography. Please note that it is university policy that the practice of engaging professional editorial services to assist in the writing of the thesis is not permitted.

There must be a title page which shall contain the following information:

a. The full title (and subtitle, if any)
b. The volume number and total number of volumes, if more than one
c. The full name of the candidate, followed, if desired, by any degree and/or professional qualification(s). This must be the registered name, as on the student's ID card. Shortened versions or names translated into other languages will not be accepted.
d. The qualification for which the thesis is submitted
e. The name(s) of the supervisor(s), Head of School, component Discipline(s), Institution

f.   The month and year of submission.

8.2.1   Format and Layout

The title should describe the content of the thesis accurately and concisely. The 'Table of Contents', which should not be over-detailed, shall immediately follow the title page. Line-spacing should be a maximum of one-and-half; text must be left justified with a left-hand margin of 4 cm and may be right justified. An easily-readable layout and font are recommended for the body text. More compact formats, with smaller font sizes, are usually appropriate for certain sections, such as reference lists, bibliographies and some kinds of appendices. Pages must be numbered consecutively, with page numbers located centrally at the bottom, and chapter headers at the top, of each page. Diagrams, graphs, photographs and tables should be properly numbered and located in relation to the text. The cover of the copies of the thesis must bear the title of the thesis, candidate's name, degree awarded and the year of submission.

8.2.2   Declaration regarding the work

The candidate must certify that the thesis is all his/her own work and that they have not obtained a degree in this University, or elsewhere, on the basis of this work. Work on which a degree in the National University of Ireland, or elsewhere, has already been obtained will not be accepted as the main work for a subsequent degree, but may be accepted as supplementary work. If the thesis is based on a group project, then the student must indicate the extent of their contribution, with reference to any other theses submitted or published by each collaborator in the project, and a declaration to this effect must be included in the thesis. This declaration shall follow the Table of Contents.

8.2.3   Completion Time Limit

Candidates must be registered at the time of submission of the thesis. Full-time candidates are allowed two years in which to complete the degree from the date of registration. Part-time candidates are allowed three years to complete the degree from the date of registration. Fees will be applied until the end of the semester in which the thesis is submitted (First semester is taken to end January 31st of each year). If candidates do not complete the degree within the due period from the date of registration they must re-apply to the College, presenting justification for an extension.

8.3   Arrangements for the Examination

The smooth operation of the examination process depends on all concerned understanding their roles, and on defined procedures. The supervisor is responsible for the organisation of the examination and the provision of advice to the examiners. The process of identifying the external examiner should commence at least three months in advance of the submission of the thesis. The primary supervisor submits an online 'Approval of Examiners' request Online Research Thesis Exam System - University of Galway

8.3.1   Role of the Examiners

The examination of a research Master's thesis normally involves two examiners, one external and one internal. The candidate is informed of the appointment of examiners and overall arrangements as they are made, and may express relevant opinions via the GRC and/or directly to the supervisor. All examiners are requested to declare any potential conflicts of interest that they may have with respect to the examination.

External Examiner
The external examiner can be a current external examiner, although this is dependent on the discipline in question and consideration of Conflict of Interest guideline C3. External examiners should normally be appointed from outside the Republic of Ireland. If particular expertise

in the field of study relevant to the project is required, application is made to the relevant College for the appointment of a specific external examiner. The external examiner, with their letter of appointment will be asked to declare any potential conflicts of interest that they may have. Please see Section 9 for further guidance on Conflicts of Interest. Because of their specific expertise and extra-institutional perspectives, external examiners play a critical role in the examination.

Internal Examiner

The internal examiner is an experienced permanent member of academic staff of the University of Galway, other than the supervisor. Honorary Clinical Lecturers in the School of Medicine are eligible to be internal examiners of postgraduate research thesis.

Membership of the GRC does not preclude a member of academic staff from also being an internal examiner for the same student. As a general principle, Emeritus Professors should not act as an internal examiner. However, it was agreed that a College could make a recommendation to the Standing Committee for exceptions to the principle on a case by case basis, such a recommendation to be made in good time so that the Standing Committee would be in a position to give the recommendation due consideration. The central role of external examiners should not take away from the role of the internal examiners, who are in a position to act to maintain consistently high internal standards.

The central role of external examiners should not take away from the role of the internal examiners, who are in a position to act to maintain consistently high internal standards. The internal examiner ensures that the report of the examination is completed satisfactorily and that all digital signatures are received in a timely manner.

8.4   *Viva* (Oral Examination)

If a *viva* is required (either because it is normal practice in a particular discipline or school area, or because it is requested specifically by the examiners) it is organised like the oral examination for a PhD degree (see Section 6.4), but normally would be significantly shorter. The viva, if required, should normally be held within two months of the submission of the thesis. The examination will be organised by the primary supervisor, or by the internal examiner if the supervisor is unavailable. If significant travel or inconvenience is involved, the oral examination may be conducted by video conference. The decision as to whether a *viva* is required should be made by the external and internal Examiners in consultation with each other.

Except in exceptional circumstances, the viva should be held on campus with all examiners physically present. Where it is not practical for all participants to attend in person, an application for participation by video conference must be made two months in advance of the proposed date of the viva. The student must agree to the viva being held by video conference and the approval of a GRC member, Head of School, Dean of College and Dean of Graduate Studies obtained through the Online Research Thesis Exam System.

8.5   Examination Report

A short report is prepared by the External Examiner, in consultation with the Internal Examiner, on the basis of the examination of the thesis, and oral examination, if it is required. The report is submitted to the Examinations Office, for consideration by the Standing Committee of Academic Council. The joint examiners' report shall be submitted online by the internal examiner to the Examinations Office within one month, of submission of the thesis for examination. The report should comment on:

- Quality of research contained in the thesis
- The contribution the thesis makes to knowledge and scholarship
- The written style and overall presentation of the thesis
- Performance of the candidate in the oral examination (if required)
- The nature of minor corrections required (if any).

Where the Examiners are in agreement, they submit a joint report with a recommendation for award or otherwise of the degree on the online system

Online Research Thesis Exam System - University of Galway The report shall be submitted online by the internal examiner to the Examinations Office and containing one of the following recommendations:

- Award
- Award but insist on corrections: typographical or in content
- Refer, but permit submission of a revised thesis
- Reject, with no recommendation as to resubmission.

If the report does not conclude with a recommendation that a Master's Degree by Research be awarded to the candidate, the report should include:

- An explicit description of the areas of weakness and/or under-performance
- A clear description of the courses of action advised by the examiners before resubmission. These may include, for example, information on requirements for extra work, information on the scale of rewriting, and/or rectification of deficiencies in candidate's knowledge.

Only reports that are received at least 8 days prior to a Standing Committee meeting will be considered at that meeting.

The University of Galway is subject to the Freedom of Information Acts (2014) and Data Protection Acts (1988 to 2018). This legislation allows for access to personal data relating to an identifiable person held by the University. Whilst examiner reports are kept strictly confidential insofar as is possible, examiners should note that any information provided relating to the subject of the report will be released by the Examinations Office to the subject of the report where a request for same is made, once the report is approved by the Academic Council Standing Committee.

8.6   Revisions

Where award of the degree is conditional on corrections being made to the thesis, the supervisor is responsible for monitoring the implementation of these corrections, and the internal examiner , or a member of the GRC if the internal examiner is unavailable, is responsible for ensuring that the changes made satisfy the requirements of the examiners. The candidate is required to complete any revisions as

quickly as is feasible. The internal examiner, or a member of the GRC if the internal examiner is unavailable, shall communicate in writing with the Examinations Office, to thesissubmission@universityofgalway.ie that the corrections are made.

- The time limit for the re-submission of the thesis requiring typographical corrections or corrections in content is two months.

In cases where the Research Masters is referred:

- Formal contact should be made with the student by the Dean of College to inform the candidate of the decision of the Standing Committee of Academic Council and to ensure that they receive the examiners' report.
- The revised softbound thesis and a new EOG 021 form 'Approval for Examination' must be submitted to the Examinations Office.
- The re-examination of the thesis must be undertaken by the same examiners.
- If a viva was required, the examiners may waive the requirement for a viva following examination of the re-submitted thesis, and provided the joint report on the candidate's performance at the viva when the thesis was originally examined was positive.
- The new joint examiners' report must be submitted online and considered by the Standing Committee of Academic Council.
- The time limit for re-submission is six months.
- A candidate may only re-submit once.

8.7   Final Thesis Submission

The final thesis submission and upload process, as well as the appeal and complaints arrangements, are identical to the PhD processes. Detailed guidelines on this process are provided in Section 6

8.8   Conferring

Research Masters degrees will be conferred at the Summer, Autumn and Winter conferring ceremonies.

9. Conflict of Interest in the appointment of External Examiners for Research Degree Theses

Guidelines

The use of independent thesis examiners is an important defining feature of Research Degree Programmes. The independence of examiners is one indicator of the quality of the examination process. The process of examination of theses assumes that examiners undertake the task independently and without bias.

Professional and personal relationships between examiners and a candidate and their supervisors, and relationships between examiners and the University, have the potential to introduce bias and thus compromise the independence of the examination, in fact or in perception.

The purpose of the guidelines is to ensure the independence of the examination in both fact and perception. The guidelines are designed to protect the candidate, examiner and the University against potential negative perceptions during and beyond the examination process. There is no presumption that any individual will behave inappropriately.

It is expected that these guidelines will be particularly useful to:

1. supervisors and Graduate Research Committee (GRC) members when proposing external examiners
2. external examiners and
3. heads of School and Colleges in their approval of external examiners.

These guidelines distinguish between

- **major** (potential) conflicts of interest that would normally results in the non-appointment of the examiner from

- **minor** (potential) conflicts that should be discussed but which should not normally, independently of other considerations, inhibit the appointment of the examiner.

It is important to recognise that some conflicts of interest arising through collaboration on publications and/or research grants, or membership of an advisory board, may be mitigated by the size of the team and a corresponding relative independence of some members of the team. Indeed in some cases, members of a team may never have met nor corresponded directly.

There is a range of circumstances that can lead to a conflict of interest. The guidelines list examples of different types of conflict of interest that may arise between the examiner and various parties including the candidate, the supervisor, the University, the subject matter itself and another examiner. The list is indicative and is not to be considered exhaustive.

Other situations not covered specifically by these Guidelines may present themselves from time to time, from which a perceived or real conflict of interest could be inferred and in such a situation, the supervisor should consult with the Head of School and/or College Office for advice.

These guidelines draw heavily on the Australian Council of Graduate Research Conflict of Interest Guidelines https://www.acgr.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/ACGR-Conflict-of-Interest-in-Examination-Guidelines.pdf

A   Conflict with the Candidate

Working relationship

The most frequent concern raised by candidates is in relation to formal and informal contact between the candidate and potential examiners. Candidates often ask if they should avoid attending conferences organised by a potential examiner or at which they may have contact with a potential examiner, avoid presenting papers in a department at which a potential examiner works, or avoid submitting papers to a journal edited by a potential examiner. No conflict of interest exists in these cases and it would defy common sense to consider proscribing such valuable activities. As a general rule of thumb, a conflict of interest exists where a potential examiner has worked with the candidate on matters of synthesis

A1	Examiner has co-authored a paper with the candidate within the last five years	MAJOR
A2	Examiner has worked with the candidate on matters regarding the thesis e.g. has been a member of the GRC.	MAJOR
A3	Examiner has employed the candidate or has been employed by the candidate within the last five years. OR Examiner is in negotiation to directly employ or be employed by the candidate	MAJOR
A4	Examiner has acted as a referee for the candidate for employment	MAJOR

Personal Relationship

A5	Examiner is a known relative of the candidate	MAJOR
A6	Examiner is a personal friend or mentor of the candidate	MAJOR

A7	Examiner and the candidate have an existing or a previous emotional relationship or are co-residents	MAJOR

Legal Relationship

A8	Examiner is or was married to the candidate	MAJOR
A9	Examiner is legally family to the candidate (for example, step-father, sister-in-law)	MAJOR
A10	Examiner is either a legal guardian or dependent of the candidate or has power of attorney for the candidate	MAJOR

Business, Professional and/or Social Relationship

A11	Examiner is currently in or has had a business relationship with the candidate in the last five years /during the research degree programme (for example, partner in a small business)	MAJOR
A12	Examiner has a current professional relationship, such as shared membership of a Board or Committee (including editorial and grant decision boards), with the candidate	MINOR
A13	Examiner has had personal contact with the candidate that may give rise to the perception that the examiner may be dealing with the candidate in a less than objective manner	MINOR

B   Conflict with the Supervisor

Working relationship

The most frequent concerns raised by supervisors relate to conflicts of interest between an examiner and a supervisor, especially with respect to co-authorship. There is occasionally a tension between the need to find an independent examiner and the need to find an examiner with expertise in the field of the thesis, especially where that field is considered to be particularly narrow. It may be useful here to keep in mind that specific expertise in the narrow field of the thesis is not the only (nor necessarily the primary) consideration in selecting a potential examiner. An examiner's broad knowledge of the particular field of research, experience as a supervisor of post-graduate research candidates and examiner of such theses, plus their broad familiarity with the expectations of the University of Galway and the associated discipline, are all considerations in the selection of appropriate examiners.

B1	Examiner was a candidate of the supervisor within the past five years	MAJOR
B2	Examiner has co-supervised with the supervisor in the past five years	MAJOR
B3	Examiner holds a patent with the supervisor granted no more than eight years ago and which is still in force	MAJOR
B4	Examiner had directly employed or was employed by the supervisor in the past five years OR Examiner is in negotiation to directly employ or be employed by the supervisor	MAJOR

B5	Examiner holds a current grant with the supervisor *Mitigating circumstances may exist, for example where the grant in question is held by a large consortium of relatively independent researchers.*	MAJOR
B6	Examiner has co-authored a publication with the supervisor in the past five years *Mitigating circumstances may exist, for example where the paper in question has a large author list and where the examiner and supervisor have not collaborated directly.*	MAJOR

Personal Relationship

B7	Examiner is a known relative of the supervisor	MAJOR
B8	Examiner and the supervisor have an existing or a previous emotional relationship or are co-residents	MAJOR

Legal Relationship

B9	Examiner is or was married to the supervisor	MAJOR
B10	Examiner is legally family to the supervisor (for example, step- father, sister-in-law)	MAJOR
B11	Examiner is either a legal guardian or dependent of the supervisor or has power of attorney for the supervisor	MAJOR

Business, Professional and/or Social Relationship

B12	Examiner is currently in or has had a business relationship with the supervisor in the last five years (for example, partner in a small business)	MAJOR
B13	Examiner is in or has had professional or social contact with the supervisor that may give rise to perception that the examiner may be dealing with the candidate in a less than objective manner	MINOR

C   Conflict with the University

Working relationship

C1	Examiner has worked for the university within the last five years or is currently in negotiation with the University for a work contract (other than examining thesis)	MAJOR
C2	Examiner is currently working for the University pro bono (for example, on a review)	MINOR
C3	Examiner has examined research degree thesis for the University two or more times in the past 12 months and/or five or more times in the past five years	MINOR

Other Relationship

C4	Examiner has received an Honorary Doctorate from the University within the past five years	MAJOR
C5	Examiner graduated from the University within the past five years	MAJOR
C6	Examiner has a current formal legal case with the University	MAJOR

Professional Relationship

C7	Examiner is a current member of staff or has a current Honorary, Adjunct or Emeritus position with the University or has had such a position during the candidature of the candidate or in the past five years	MAJOR
C8	Examiner has a current professional relationship with the University (for example, membership of a Board or Committee)	MINOR

C9	Examiner has a current Visiting position with the University or has had such a position during the candidature of the candidate or in the past five years.	MINOR

D   Conflict with the subject matter

Working relationship

Research

D1	Examiner has a direct commercial interest in the outcomes of the research	MAJOR

E   Conflict with the internal OR the second external examiner

Working relationship

E1	Examiner works in the same department/school as another examiner	MAJOR

Personal Relationship

E2	Examiner is married to, closely related to or has a close personal relationship with another examiner	MAJOR

Professional Relationship

E3	Examiner has a professional relationship with another examiner	MINOR

10. Joint Degrees

The policy on Inter-Institutional co-Supervisory Awards details how the award of joint or double degrees was are approved. The availability of this provision is important towards the achievement of its internationalisation strategy and to maximise European funding opportunities for PhD students. Should the procedures for admission, progression or award of the degree diverge significantly between the partner Universities then a double degree could be awarded; ideally the award should be of a joint degree where the processes within partner Universities are broadly similar. This policy has been prepared with a view to enabling a small number of joint PhDs that the University of Galway may wish to approve. It does not in any way seek to limit or constrain movement of students for short-term research exchange/ visits (e.g., the University of Galway/other University of California exchanges) or joint supervision but rather to enable participation of PhD students in joint PhDs where there is truly a joint research programme between supervisors/institutions.

10.1   What is a Joint PhD?

There are three main types of joint PhDs (presented below in order of increasing levels of cooperation/degrees of integration between universities):

1. Individual doctoral programmes, also known as cotutelle agreements, involve formalised joint supervision of one candidate by two institutions. Several joint doctoral programmes use a cotutelle agreement as part of their organisational structure. They have a consortium agreement for their whole joint doctoral programme and a cotutelle agreement for each individual candidate.

2. Joint doctoral programmes - a doctoral programme developed and/ or provided by two or more universities, leading to the awarding of a double, multiple or joint degree. For example, Erasmus Mundus Joint Doctoral Programmes and Marie Curie Initial Training Networks. There are formalised arrangements on the time spent in each location and how this movement is facilitated. Joint degrees are awarded if no legal impediment exists whereas double/multiple degrees are awarded otherwise.

3. Joint doctoral degree programmes and joint structured doctoral programme where all elements of doctoral education are run jointly and the organisational and evaluation processes are managed on the basis of full integration of the partners, leading to the award of a joint degree issued jointly by two or more universities.

Difference between a Joint PhD and Joint Supervision
The difference between a joint PhD and joint supervision is that for a joint PhD a student is registered in both institutions for the duration of the PhD and receives a joint award from the two institutions. Research collaborations may involve joint supervision of doctoral students. This interaction enhances doctoral training and may lead in time to more integrated programmes. Current regulations allow for an external supervisor to act as co-supervisor for a student registered at the University of Galway. The award of the PhD in this case is made solely through University of Galway and the institution where the external supervisor is based does not receive any student fees. Joint supervision is also practised where the partner institution does not have degree-awarding powers.

10.2   Detailed Considerations

Supervisors should contact the Graduate Studies Office at the earliest possible stage to seek advice on Joint PhDs. Legal agreements must be in place between collaborating institutions before the end of year one of the student's PhD programme.Please see QA212, the University Of Galway policy on Inter-institutional **Co-Supervisory PhD Awards**. University Guidelines, Regulations and Forms for Research Degrees - University of Galway

11. Revision of University Guidelines

The efficacy of these Guidelines and their efficient operation will depend on their regular revision. The officers indicated in Section 2 are responsible for each appropriate aspect of the process. Revisions take into account:

- The results of monitoring their operation and the experience of those charged with administering research degrees at the level of the University
- Feedback from students, graduates, supervisors, examiners and members of relevant bodies at College and school levels
- Evolving practice, nationally and internationally.

The Dean of Graduate Studies, working with the Secretary for Governance & Academic Affairs, is responsible for the revision process and the assurance that, as they are developed and revised, they remain compatible with University policies and practices.

Appendix 1: Relevant Official Forms

All the forms need be downloaded and completed as necessary from the web links below:

Relevant Official Forms for Students - University of Galway

Name of Form	Reference Number English Version	Reference Number As Gaeilge
PhD/MD Forms/Research Masters Forms		
Approval for Examination PhD/MD	EOG 020	EOG 020
Approval for Examination Research Masters	EOG 021	EOG 021
Online Research Thesis Exam System (includes Approval of Examiners and Joint Examiners' Report)	https://graduate.nuigalway.ie/ Information available in user guides	
Library Submission Form	EOG 051	EOG 051
GS Forms		
Annual Student Report to GRC	GS 030	GS 030
Annual Supervisor(s) Report to GRC	GS 040	GS 040
GRC Recommendation Report to College	GS 050	GS 050
Examiner's Independent Pre -Viva Report for PhD and MD Students	GS 060	GS 060
Visiting Postgraduate Research Student Set-up form (Irish and English)	GS 070	GS 070
*Leave of Absence for Research Students	GS 080	GS 080
**Credit Note for Leave of Absence for Research Students	GS 081	GS 081
Off Campus Form for Full-Time Research Students undertaking research with a partner organisation	GS 090	GS 090

* The College is responsible for informing the Academic Administration & Registration Office, Graduate Studies Office, the Fees Office, and Research Accounts Office of all approved leaves of absence, to facilitate formally updating the student's record.

** The GS 081 (Credit Note) form should be completed by the College following approval of a Leave of Absence for a Research Student - GS 080 form. Colleges should submit the completed GS 081 form to the Fees Office. (reference section 5.8.5 of the University Research Degree Guidelines.

Appendix 2: National Framework for Doctoral Education

Source: http://hea.ie/policy/research-policy/current-policy-initiatives/

The Minister for Further & Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, in July 2023, launched the revised National Framework for Doctoral Education

This latest iteration considers the changing research and doctoral education landscape in Ireland and Europe and international best practice. The implementation of this Framework is supported by the NFDE Advisory Forum, which is co-chaired by the Higher Education Authority (HEA) and Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) and consists of members from key stakeholders in higher education and research.

Context

Ireland enjoys a centuries-old tradition in scholarship. Today, it is one of the most globalised and open economies in the world. These characteristics fuse to offer an evolving and exciting place in which to undertake research and to embark on doctoral education. Since the late 1990s, the research landscape has developed very significantly, underpinned by the recognition that talented people are at the heart of any national innovation system. Significant investment has resulted in Ireland ascending in international rankings of research capacity, and in the doubling of the number of doctoral graduates.

The quality of the doctorate awarded in Ireland is vital to the development of human and knowledge capital. Irish higher education institutions, as well as offering more doctoral places, have taken action to enhance quality of provision. For example, graduate schools have been established and panel-based monitoring at review and progression-points is now standard. In this evolution towards structured doctoral provision across the sector, programmes are designed to provide a high-quality research experience and outcome. They are also designed to imbue doctoral graduates with the transferable skills necessary to advance their careers across a broad range of employment sectors and to make significant contributions in any field. The institutions have also embraced an increasing diversity of academic and professional routes to doctoral attainment including collaborative and inter-sectoral approaches, as well as provision for student mobility.

Looking towards the future, Ireland's National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030[1] sets out a clear vision and roadmap for the development of all aspects of Irish higher education. A key Strategy objective is the creation of a coherent and well coordinated system of higher education institutions, each contributing to national economic and social objectives. In order to enhance the international reputation and capacity of Irish higher education for doctoral education, the National Strategy calls for the development of a consistent quality framework and for greater collaboration among providers. Through this National Framework for Doctoral Education, Irish higher education institutions are committing to embedding these core principles that will continue to enhance Irish doctoral education. In so doing, and with the wider support of relevant stakeholders, Ireland is positioning itself as a leader in doctoral provision. This reflects the continuing centrality of people and knowledge to Ireland's economic and societal development.

1. Purpose of the National Framework for Doctoral Education

The key aim of this National Framework for Doctoral Education is to underpin excellence in all forms of doctoral education in Ireland. It provides a set of principles for doctoral education, while recognising the diversity in the Irish higher education system. It is consistent with European and international standards, principles and guidelines, including, for example, the Salzburg principles, the Salzburg II recommendations and the Principles for Innovative Doctoral training[2].

The purpose of this Framework is to:

- Facilitate consistent excellence in the quality of postgraduate education and training, including research undertaken at Master's and doctoral levels;

- Enable and encourage higher education institutions to work more closely in the delivery of an improved learner-experience and outcome;
- Maximise the employability of doctoral graduates across a broad range of employment sectors by ensuring that the acquisition of discipline-specific knowledge is complemented by the development of transferable skills;
- Underpin the international standing of the Irish doctoral award.
-

2.   Framework Principles

This National Framework for Doctoral Education commits the key stakeholders in Irish graduate education and research to the highest standards in the provision of doctoral education and research through the endorsement of the following principles:

1. The core of doctoral education is deep engagement with a question, problem or hypothesis at the frontier of knowledge, and advancement of this frontier under the guidance of expert and committed supervision. to be awarded a doctoral degree, the candidate must have made an original contribution to knowledge.

2. Successful completion and examination of the research thesis, comprising work of publishable quality, is the basis for the award of the doctoral degree. The thesis can be presented in a variety of formats.

3. Doctoral education increases significantly students' depth and breadth of knowledge of their discipline and develops their expertise in research methodology which is applicable to both a specific project and a wider context. It provides a high-quality research experience, training (including a formalised integrated programme of personal and professional development) and output consistent with international norms and best practice.

4. Doctoral education is conducted in a learning community where sucient critical mass of internationally recognised research activity exists to allow students to gain access to a training programme of appropriate breadth and to interact with peers engaged in their field, nationally and internationally.

5. Recognising that each doctorate is unique, doctoral education is also flexible so as to support students within individual disciplines or within interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary groups.

6. Doctoral education is conducted in a research environment with a high degree of academic quality and infrastructure and where it is consistent with institutional strategies. Academic quality includes quality supervision and training for supervisors.

7. The admission of doctoral students takes into account preparedness of the applicant, the availability of qualified, competent and accessible supervision and the resources necessary to conduct the research.

8. Doctoral education is supported by established structures with:
   – supervision by a principal supervisor(s), normally with a supporting panel approved by the institution;
   – formal monitoring of progress to completion against published criteria, supported by institutional arrangements;
   – clearly defined examination processes, involving external examiners, assessment criteria and declared outcomes.

9. A robust quality assurance system underpins all doctoral provision.

3.   Doctoral Outcomes

(Level 10 of Ireland's National Framework of Qualifications[3])

Doctoral education programmes in Ireland educate and develop researchers to the highest skills levels so that they become creative, critical and independent individuals who will advance the boundaries of research. Through the process of doctoral education, the student is provided with opportunities to develop a range of skills to a very

advanced level. These skills relate both to the research process itself and to broader professional training and development. The National Framework for Doctoral Education endorses the following skills and attributes, as articulated in the IUA PhD Graduates' Skills[4] statement, as key educational objectives for all graduates of Irish doctoral programmes:

- *Research Skills and Awareness*
- *Ethics and Social Understanding*
- *Communication Skills*
- *Personal electiveness/development*
- *Team-working and leadership*
- *Career management*
- *Entrepreneurship and innovation*
-

The core and essential component of doctoral education remains the advancement of knowledge through original research – a fundamental societal value in itself, based on freedom of enquiry, the fostering of innovative thinking and the development of advanced critical skills.

The successful embedding of this National Framework for Doctoral Education involves higher education institutions and the support of a range of stakeholders. Cooperation will be facilitated through the establishment of a National Advisory Forum, whose agenda will reflect the purpose and principles of the Framework and will be developed collaboratively.

[1] *Department of Education and Skills, National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030 (2011)*

[2] *European University Association, Salzburg Principles (2005) and Salzburg II Principles (2010); European Commission, Principles for Innovative Doctoral training (2011)*

[3] *Quality and Qualifications Ireland, National Framework of Qualifications*

[4] *Irish Universities Association, Irish Universities' Statement on PhD Graduate Skills Statement (2nd edition 2015)*

Appendix 3: Training Resources for Research Students and Supervisors

Training resources are available for postgraduate research students, from various sources, as listed below. Targeted communications and updates are available to you on 1GST1, Canvas platform.

Canvas

Canvas, the new Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), will enhance the student campus experience and enable staff to nurture greater learner engagement and participation. Communications and updates will be available for postgraduate research students via 1GST1 on Canvas.
Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching - University of Galway

Researcher Development Centre

The Researcher Development Centre (RDC) is an initiative of the offices of the Vice President for Research and Innovation and the Graduate Studies Office, to support the continuing professional development of all our researchers, from postgraduates to senior fellows, at University of Galway.

The series of 'PhD Peer Conversations' seminars are facilitated by academic staff for our research postgraduate students and are also supported by the RDC.
Researcher Development Centre - University of Galway

Epigeum

The Epigeum Research Skills toolkit (courses) are listed on the Researcher Development Centre portal, along with access instructions (select 'learner' page, and then 'self-paced').

https://nuigalwayie.sharepoint.com/sites/rdc/SitePages/Epigeum-Research-Skills-Toolkit.aspx

Access instructions are the same for all modules i.e. once the student registers on the Epigeum platform, you will be able to see all available modules, and download a Certificate of Completion for each module from the Epigeum platform, if that is required as evidence of completion.

Some Epigeum modules may be on Canvas. Supervisors have 'view' and 'read' access, while research students have 'enrol' and 'certificate of completion' entitlements.

Library Resources

The Library runs workshops to support and train research students. Details can be found on:
Library Guides and Contacts - Research Services - LibGuides at University of Galway

Appendix 4: Books for Supervisors and Research Students

The following is a bibliography of reference material for supervisors and students available from the University Library.

Books for Supervisors

- Beasley, N. and Taylor, S. (2005) *A Handbook for Doctoral Supervisors,* London: Routledge.
- Barker, K. (2002) *At the Helm - A laboratory navigator,* Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory Press.
- Delamont, S., Atkinson, P. and Parry, O. (2004) *Supervising the Doctorate: A guide to success,* Open University Press.
- Eley, A. and Jennings, R. (2005) *Effective Postgraduate Supervision,* Maidenhead. OU Press McGraw-Hill Education.
- Fry, H., Ketteridge, S. and Marshall, S. (2009) A *Handbook for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*:London : Routledge.
- Kamler, B. and Thomson, P. (2006) Helping *Doctoral Students Write: Pedagogies for Supervision,* London: Routledge.
- Pearce, L. (2005) *How to Examine a Thesis*, Open University Press.
- Phillips, E. and Pugh, D.S. (2000) *How to Get a PhD: A Handbook for Students and Their Supervisors*, 3rd ed., Open University Press.
- Rugg, G. and Petre, M. (2004) *The Unwritten Rules of PhD Research,* Maidenhead: Open University Press.
- Tinkler, P. and Jackson, C. (2009) *The Doctoral Examination Process – A handbook for students, examiners and supervisors,* Open University Press.
- Wisker, G. (2005) *The Good Supervisor: Supervising Postgraduate and Undergraduate Research for Doctoral Theses and Dissertations,* Hampshire: Palgrave MacMillan.

Books for Students

- Firth, K. Connell, L. and Freestone, P. (2021) Your PhD Survival Guide: Planning, Writing and Succeeding in your Final Year, New York, Routledge. Available in the Reading Materials folder of the 1GST1 Blackboard site.
- Burns, D. (2017) *Writing a Scientific-Style Thesis - A Guide for Graduate Research Students* available from Graduate Studies office or writing_a_scientific_thesis.pdf (universityofgalway.ie)
- Cryer, P. (2006) *The Research Student's Guide to Success,* 3rd ed., Maidenhead, McGraw Hill.
- Delamont, S., Atkinson, P. and Parry, O. (2000) *The Doctoral Experience. Success and Failure in Graduate School,* London; Falmer Press.
- Markey, A. (2008) *In At The Deep End – Starting To Teach In Higher Education,* Higgs, B. and Potter, J, eds.,
- Murray, R. (2009) *How to Survive your Viva*, Open University Press.
- Pearce, L. (2005) *How to Examine a Thesis,* Open University Press.
- Phillips, E. and Pugh, D.S. (2000) *How to Get a PhD: A Handbook for Students and Their Supervisor*s, 3rd ed., Open University Press.
- Potter, S. (Ed) (2002) *Doing Postgraduate Research*, London: Sage.
- Rugg, G. and Petre, M. (2004) *The Unwritten Rules of PhD Research*, Maidenhead: Open University Press.

- Thinkwell. PhD Book Set Comprising 5 books: *Turbocharge Your Writing, The Seven Secrets of Highly Successful Research Students, The PhD Experience, Time for Research and Defeating Self-Sabotage* *http://www.ithinkwell.com.au/bookshop*

- Tinkler, P. and Jackson, C. (2009) *The Doctoral Examination Process – A handbook for students, examiners and supervisors,* Open University Press.

- Torres, A. (2012) *PhD Viva Guide - A Springboard for your PhD Viva Preparation* available from Graduate Studies office or phd_viva_guide.pdf (universityofgalway.ie)

- Wellington, J, Bathmaker, A.M., Hunt, C., McCulloch, G. and Sikes, P. (2009) *Succeeding with your Doctorate,* London; Sage.

- Wisker, G. (2005) *The Postgraduate Research Handbook (Succeed with your*
  MA, MPhil, EdD and PhD), Palgrave study guides.

Appendix 5:   Process from Softbound Thesis Submission to Conferring

Examinations Office:

Thesis Submission - University of Galway
(and procedure for payment of expenses to External Examiners - QA226)

Marks & Standards QA236 Policies and Procedures - University of Galway External Examiners - University of Galway

Library Submission

How to submit your final, equivalent to hardbound, thesis to the University
Login to Research Repository

Conferring Office:

Conferring - University of Galway

Appendix 6:   Useful Resources

Refresh of the National Framework for Doctoral Education
National Framework for Doctoral Education | Quality and Qualifications Ireland (qqi.ie)

HEA Principles of Good Practice in Research within Irish Higher Education Institutions
HEA Principles of Good Practice in Research within Irish Higher Education Institutions | Policy | Higher Education Authority

Postgraduate Academic Co-Ordinators Contact information on key postgraduate research student contact points in the Colleges
PG Academic Co-Ordinators - University of Galway

The University Governance Hub, 'The Kube'
The Kube - Our Governance Hub - University of Galway

Group Study Spaces and Recreational Spaces for students on campus
Landscape & Grounds Maintenance - University of Galway

GTA Policy QA135
Teaching Support Staff - University of Galway Policies and Procedures - University of Galway

Procedures for Managing PhD Scholarships FR.23.A13.10 With effect from 1st September 2022, procedure for 'Managing PhD Scholarships' clarifies for research students, who do not complete within time.
Policies and Procedures - University of Galway

QA220 Academic Integrity Policy
QA220-Academic-Integrity-Policy-Final.pdf (universityofgalway.ie)

Policy on Inter-institutional Co-Supervisory PhD Awards, QA212
University Guidelines, Regulations and Forms for Research Degrees - University of Galway