

## **PART FOUR - ACADEMIC MATTERS: REGULATIONS, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES (UPDATED AUGUST 2021)**

The University has a range of regulations, policies and procedures, which exist for the purpose of protecting and supporting the highest standards within the University and PGR students are encouraged to be familiar with their existence. These are subject to annual review and the complete versions are always available from the University's website, but key points of relevant policies and/or procedures are highlighted below.

### **Postgraduate Research Regulations**

The University has [Postgraduate Research regulations](#) covering both the candidature and the examination of your programme. You should ensure that you familiarize yourself with these regulations as they provide the overarching rules for your studies and examination at Newcastle University. The regulations should be read in conjunction with the Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes (Section Two of this handbook). If your programme contains taught elements, you should also familiarise yourself with any programme specific regulations.

If you have any queries regarding the regulations, you should contact your supervisor(s), or your Graduate School.

### **Student Procedures**

Student policies and procedures, which are applicable to all students are available on the [Student Progress Service webpages](#).

In particular, you should be aware of:

- Student Charter
- [Academic Query and Appeals Procedure](#)
- [Student Complaint and Resolution Procedure](#)
- Living in the Community
- Maternity Policy
- Standards of Conduct (including [Fitness to Study Procedure and Student Disciplinary Procedure](#))

### **University Handbook for Examiners of Research Degrees by Theses**

The University is responsible for the quality and standards of postgraduate research awards made in its name. The function of examiners is to assist the University to discharge that responsibility by ensuring that the standards of postgraduate research awards at Newcastle are at least comparable to those in similar subjects in other Universities in the UK. The University expects that examiners will be rigorous and fair and that they will follow good practice. By undertaking their duties in this way, examiners not only maintain standards at Newcastle but, of course, also act as effective gatekeepers for the research community of which they are a part by ensuring candidates meet the academic criteria for membership.

The Handbook covers Doctoral and Master of Philosophy research degrees and focuses on the examination of the thesis. Additional guidance is also provided in the appendices for the examination of Integrated PhD programmes, Professional and Practice-based Doctorates.

The Handbook for Examiners of Research Degrees by Theses is available [here](#). Further information on the Research Degree Examination procedure and forms is available [here](#).

## Standards of Academic Conduct

The University requires all students to maintain high standards of academic conduct and, in particular, to avoid conduct amounting to cheating in examinations, the fabrication of research results or plagiarism.

The fabrication of research results includes: claims, which cannot reasonably be justified, to have obtained specific or general results; false claims in relation to experiments, interviews, procedures, or any other research activity; and the omission of statements in relation to data, results, experiments, interviews or procedures, where such omission cannot reasonably be justified. Any student who is suspected of having fabricated research results in relation to submitted and assessed work which contributes to an examination or degree result, will be dealt with under the University's [Assessment Irregularities Procedure](#) and may also be subject to disciplinary action as determined by the Academic Registrar in accordance with the University's [Disciplinary Procedure](#).

Plagiarism is the unacknowledged use of another person's ideas, words or work. At one extreme, plagiarism is simply a form of cheating, such as where the whole or a significant part of work submitted towards an examination or degree is the unacknowledged work of another, copied slavishly from a book or research paper. At the other extreme, plagiarism may occur accidentally, through poor standards of scholarship, or may concern insignificant parts of submitted work. Plagiarism may involve the use of material downloaded from electronic sources such as the Internet.

Further guidance is provided in Part 3 of this handbook in the 'Guidelines for Research Students and Supervisors' section.

## Code of Good Practice in Research

The University expects all its staff and students to adhere to the highest standards of integrity in research. The [Code of Good Practice in Research](#) addresses the issues involved in the proper conduct of research and provides guidance on the standards expected. It applies to all Researchers (defined here as all staff, honorary staff, students and visiting workers undertaking research within or on behalf of the University). Student research misconduct will be dealt with via the Student [Disciplinary Procedures](#), and staff research misconduct via the Policy and Procedure for Investigating Allegations of Research Misconduct.

Within this overarching framework there may be specific discipline requirements in areas such as ethics, clinical governance, data protection, legal requirements, Home Office and other government requirements, in addition to health and safety and other good laboratory

practice requirements. Some disciplines may also be subject to specific good practice requirements of external funding agencies or professional bodies. The full code is available [here](#).

The University has signed up to the [Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers](#) which governs working practices, roles and responsibilities of research staff.

## **Dignity and Respect Policy**

The University aims to promote a culture where all of the University community can play their full part in creating a positive, safe and respectful working environment for everyone. It is committed to excellence, valuing diversity and investing in its colleagues and students.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all colleagues, students and visitors to the University are treated as being of equal worth to the organisation regardless of background, age, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, position or status. 1.3 In order to create an environment where these values can flourish and people can realise their full potential, there is an expectation that all of its employees, students and visitors are treated with dignity, respect and consideration at all times.

The aim of the policy is to promote a working and learning environment in which harassment and bullying are known to be unacceptable and where individuals have the confidence to deal with harassment and bullying without fear of victimisation.

The full Dignity and Respect Policy and Procedures are available [here](#).

## **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**

**We value individual differences and the diversity that this brings.** We want to ensure that no-one is at a disadvantage because of who they are.

We are committed to developing a culture that is positive, inclusive and supportive, to which all staff and students contribute and within which all can reach their full potential. Working together to develop an inclusive environment in which all can see the difference their contribution can make, will enable the University to fulfil its vision to become a more globally inclusive institution. Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy is crucial to realising the potential of this values-led, people-focused approach to creating an inclusive, diverse and international collaborative learning community.

Through our institutional EDI strategy and dedicated working groups, events and projects we aim to create a positive, supportive culture for everyone to reach their potential.

## **Policy and Procedure on Public Interest Disclosure**

The University is committed to the highest standards of openness, probity and accountability. It seeks to conduct its affairs in a responsible manner taking into account the requirements of the funding bodies, the standards in public life set out in the reports of the Nolan Committee, and the principles of academic freedom embodied in its Statutes.

The Public Interest Disclosure Act, which came into effect on 1 January 1999, gives legal protection to workers against being dismissed or penalized by their employers as a result of disclosing in the public interest certain serious concerns. It is a fundamental term of every contract of employment that an employee will faithfully serve his or her employer and not disclose confidential information about the employer's affairs. However, an individual within the organization should have the right to disclose certain matters of public interest without fear of reprisal. The Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2013 confirmed that the legal framework that gives protection to workers who raise public interest disclosures is intended to apply only to disclosures that are made in the broader public interest, as opposed to issues in which an individual may have a personal interest.

This policy and procedure are intended to guide and assist workers and students who wish to make a disclosure, in the public interest, about what they believe to be malpractice or impropriety in order to assist the University in the maintenance of appropriate standards of propriety and good practice. Workers and students are expected to use this policy and procedure in the first instance rather than report their concerns to a third party outside the Institution.

The full policy is available [here](#).

## **Policy for Intellectual Property and Research Studentships**

Intellectual Property generated by members of staff in the University is automatically vested in the University, provided that it relates to work that the member of staff would normally be expected to carry out as part of their day-to-day activities. However, research postgraduate students are not members of staff, and there may be considerable variation in the nature and source of their funding. This note explains the IPR position of different types of studentships. It details where positive action is taken by University Research Office (URO) to protect IP and identifies where schools need themselves to take specific action.

Where a student is joining a large research effort with considerable and possibly highly commercialisable IP, supervisors must ensure that the IP position is reviewed immediately with the student, that the student is aware of the position with regard to IP, that they understand the problems that will arise for the University should the IP associated with a project be disclosed prematurely, and that the IP generated in the course of the grant is properly vested in the University in exchange for an undertaking to treat the student as if they were a member of academic staff with regard to intellectual property. A corollary of this is that where the student has clearly been responsible for 'inventive' steps in the prosecution of their research, and that research has led to a patent being filed by the University, the student's name shall appear on the patent.

The Confidentiality and Intellectual Property Policy Statement for Research Students is available [here](#). Further general guidance about Intellectual Property is available from the University's [Legal Services](#).

## Copyright

The University holds a number of licences which permit staff and students to reuse copyrighted material for the purposes of teaching, learning and assessment.

It is important to be aware that the copies must be made from either:

- An original of the book, journal or magazine owned by the HEI or
- A copyright fee paid copy of a chapter / article supplied by an organisation holding a document delivery licence with CLA (e.g., British Library)

Further information is available [here](#)

### What the Licence does not cover

The following Excluded Material is outside the scope of this Licence Agreement:

- ◆ printed music (including the words)
- ◆ maps, charts, or books of tables
- ◆ newspapers
- ◆ workbooks, workcards and assignments
- ◆ works expressly excluded by the copyright owners

Further information is available [here](#).

## Policy on Postgraduates Who Teach

This policy covers teaching and learning practices for postgraduates teaching or demonstrating on modules. Appointment practices, employment terms and conditions are covered in more detail by separate [policies](#). This policy does not cover arrangements for hourly paid bought in teaching.

The University recognises the value to postgraduates of the teaching experience it provides and is committed to providing such opportunities consistent with its desire to deliver teaching of the highest quality on its programmes.

Postgraduates may support teaching by:

- Taking small groups such as seminars, tutorials or workshops
- Helping with fieldwork
- Demonstrating in laboratories
- Providing occasional lectures on their own specialism
- Assessment under the conditions indicated in this document.

The Policy on Postgraduates Who Teach is available [here](#).