

This agreement should be completed on the [PGR Code of Practice System](#) within one month of the student's initial registration.

This Learning Agreement is not intended to be a legally binding agreement, but it ensures that students have received, understood, and accepted the expectations of their research programme. **The agreement is between the University of Newcastle, the student's supervisors and the student.**

We commit ourselves to striving for a productive, trustful and honest working relationship, aiming for the achievement of a research degree award, which can be best achieved by adhering to the principles contained in this learning agreement.

1. Supervisory and Working Arrangements

- 1.1 The supervisor/s will explain the respective roles of the academic supervisor and the other member/s of the supervisory team
- 1.2 The supervisor/s will draw the student's attention to Data Protection guidelines and the University's ['Use of Personal Information Notice](#)
- 1.3 The supervisor/s and student will identify who is responsible for arranging meetings or other formal contact and agree the agenda for these structured interactions.
For full-time students there should be regular formal contact between a student and supervisor/s at least 10 times per year, approximately monthly, until submission of the thesis.
For part-time students or those studying their programme away from an approved campus, the formal number of contacts between student and supervisor or supervisory team should be discussed and agreed at the start of their studies, as part of this Learning Agreement, ensuring there is no more than a 10-week gap between meetings.
- 1.4 The University requires that research students maintain a record of formal contact meetings in [NU Reflect](#) and that the outcomes and action points from the formal contact meetings are confirmed with their supervisor/s. The supervisor/s is required to confirm that these formal contact meetings took place (in person or at a distance) or did not take place.
- 1.5 The supervisor/s will ensure that the student is advised of appropriate Academic Unit/ Faculty/University health and safety policy and procedures. The student agrees to observe these requirements.
- 1.6 Where the student is working on a multi-disciplinary project (across different academic units and/or Faculties), the supervision should discuss appropriate working arrangements with the student at the start of their studies. The supervisor/s should identify the lead and secondary sites and liaise with the secondary site to ensure that appropriate facilities are allocated to the student, where needed.

2. Project Planning and Milestone Setting

- 2.1 The supervisor/s will give guidance about the nature of research and the standards expected, the planning of the research programme, literature and sources, requisite techniques, and the avoidance of plagiarism.
- 2.2 The student will accept responsibility for their own research activity and learning under the direction of their supervisor/s. The student will be responsible for submitting a project proposal within three months for full-time students (within six months for part-time students) and to maintaining the progress of their work in accordance with the stages agreed in the project plan.
- 2.3 Any circumstances which might require the mode of study to be modified or for University registration to be interrupted, extended or withdrawn should be brought to the attention of the supervisor/s by the student. *(An interruption is a temporary but complete break from studies during which time a student must not work on research and have limited contact with academic staff. An extension provides students with additional time in which to submit their thesis.)*
- 2.4 The supervisor/s and student will follow the appropriate method for obtaining any health and safety, ethical or outside study clearances required by the research project.

3. Intellectual Property

- 3.1 The student's attention has been drawn to the University's '[Policy on Ownership, Protection and Exploitation of Intellectual Property for Students](#)'
- 3.2 The supervisor/s will ensure that the student understands the above Policy and how it applies to them.
- 3.3 *In accordance with the Policy, where the supervisor/s identifies that a Confidentiality Agreement is required, this should be signed by the student and uploaded to the Learning Agreement on the PGR CoP System by the student. (If the need for a Confidentiality Agreement is identified after completion of the Learning Agreement, the supervisor/s and student should complete the form and send it through to the relevant Graduate School.)*

4. Training and Personal Development

- 4.1 It is agreed that a Training Needs Analysis is undertaken to identify the student's specific training needs, both personal and project related at the start of the research programme and that this will be reviewed annually.
- 4.2 It is the responsibility of the student to participate in identifying their personal training needs and to attend training programmes provided by Academic Unit/ Faculty/ University.
- 4.3 It is the responsibility of the supervisor/s to make the student aware of the importance of continued research training and to identify opportunities for training in accordance with Faculty guidelines.
- 4.4 It is the responsibility of the student to keep a record of their skills development via [NU Reflect](#), throughout their programme.

5. Progression and Monitoring

- 5.1 If at any point during the programme, the supervisor/s have concerns about the student's progress or work below the standards generally expected, they should inform the student of these concerns in writing prior to a meeting. The supervisor/s should discuss the concerns with the student at the meeting and reach agreement on additional work required, arrange any supportive action necessary as well as confirming a review date.
- 5.2 It is the duty of the student to comply with good academic practice as outlined in University and Academic Unit guidance and the duty of the supervisor/s to point out practices which are below the standard expected. Guidance is available from the [Academic Skills Kit](#).
- 5.3 An Annual Progress Review is required for all research students (until submission of the thesis) to determine continued progression on the programme. The supervisor/s will ensure that the student is aware of the requirements for progression. The supervisor/s and student will agree to participate and fulfil the requirements for progression.
- 5.4 The supervisor/s and student will agree any deadlines for submission of written work and the timescale for providing supervisor/s feedback.
- 5.5 The supervisor/s will outline the extent of assistance that will be given for students to prepare reports, presentations and the responsibility they will have to report annually on the student's progress.

6. Submission and Completion

- 6.1 The student will be responsible for submitting their thesis for examination within the timescale agreed with the supervisor/s in their project plan and in accordance with the regulations of their programme.
- 6.2 The supervisor/s will ensure that the student is aware of both the procedures for submitting their thesis and the deadline for submission, in accordance with the regulations of the programme. Further information is available [here](#).

7. Collaborating and Sponsoring Organisations

- 7.1 Both the student and supervisory team agree to fulfil their responsibility to any collaborating or sponsoring organisation, including compliance with any necessary confidentiality agreements.

The student and the supervisor(s) sign the Learning Agreement in the [PGR Code of Practice System](#) to confirm they have reached agreement on their roles and responsibilities as supervisor/s and student in accordance with the above summary.