

Key changes to University Regulations 2020/21

The following are specific changes of principle to note for 2020/21

I General Regulations for Taught and Research Programmes

Wording updated to clarify which documentation is available to support Postgraduate Research Students with their studies.

A General Requirements

2. Research students should make themselves familiar with the *Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes* and *Guidelines for Research Students* provided in the *Handbook for Research Students and Supervisors*.
(<https://www.ncl.ac.uk/students/progress/student-resources/PGR/Publications.htm>)

III Progress Regulations For Taught Programmes

Wording updated to ensure clarity with regard to programmes that have block modules. In addition, change made to timeframe by which modules transfers can be made.

B Module Registration

5. All transfers between modules must normally be completed before the end of the first second week of teaching of a semester and are subject to the written approval of the Degree Programme Director. Transfers beyond this period are permitted only in exceptional circumstances. ~~and are subject to the written approval of the Degree Programme Director~~. You should also keep a record of the approval and check that your registration is correct.

IV Regulations for Taught Programmes – Assessment Regulations

Wording added to give direction on the use of vivas in determining authorship of assessed work.

G Assessments and Conduct of Examinations

23. If your examination script, or other work submitted for assessment contains the unacknowledged work of another, either verbatim or in substance, or contains fabricated research results, or is found to be a case of self- plagiarism, you will be subject to the University's Assessment Irregularity Procedure
(<https://www.ncl.ac.uk/students/progress/Regulations/Procedures/assessment.htm>).

At an assessment irregularity interview you may be asked questions similar to a viva on your work to establish the ownership of the work

V Specific Progression and Classification Rules for Different Types of Taught Programme

Wording added to provide for potential future establishment of Foundation degrees with new educational partners.

B Specific Progression and Classification Rules for Foundation Degrees

Subsuming of Awards

22. If you successfully complete a Foundation Degree, you will be eligible for progression to Newcastle University Undergraduate programmes to either Stage 2 or Stage 3 as outlined in the relevant Undergraduate degree programme regulations.

23. If you progress to a Newcastle University Undergraduate Programme, your degree classification will be determined using the relevant regulations for Undergraduate degrees (Section C), where it is possible to do so. Any necessary variations (agreed by University Education Committee) from the regulations for Undergraduate degrees will be set out in your Undergraduate degree programme regulations

Wording removed from the Integrated Masters Regulation 63 (now 65) to follow Undergraduate Honours Regulation 35 (now 37)

D. Specific Progression and Classification Rules for Integrated Master's Programmes

~~c) — In considering a recommendation for the award of an Integrated Masters degree, the board may use discretion in line with the principles of Regulations V D 61, they may also take account of performance in second attempts at final stage modules.~~

~~d) — In considering a recommendation for a first or upper second class Integrated masters degree (of a higher class than indicated by the final programme average after the first attempt at the final stage), the use of discretion after final stage second attempts is limited to PEC recommendations relevant to consideration at the first attempt meeting of the board, and the board of examiners must make sure that decisions are consistent with those made at the first attempt meeting of the Board.~~

VI RULES FOR BOARDS OF EXAMINERS

Following the agreement of Senate the University 0-3 rating scale has been removed and replaced by binary provision: supported/not supported. The changes below have been made to clarify the position.

A The Board of Examiners

Personal Extenuating Circumstances (PEC) Committee

8. A Personal Extenuating Circumstances (PEC) Committee shall be appointed by each Board of Studies to review and consider medical and mitigating circumstances which may have an effect on a student's performance, as set out in the PEC Policy at <https://www.ncl.ac.uk/students/progress/Regulations/Procedures/change/PEC.htm>. One PEC Committee may cover more than one programme within a school. This Committee shall normally consist of a chair, secretary and two other senior members of academic staff, ~~one of whom should be selected from outside the academic unit~~. The chair should be a senior member of academic staff with experience of sitting on a Board of Examiners. If the secretary is not a member of academic staff then a fourth senior member of academic staff must be appointed to

the Committee. The chair of the PEC Committee shall report the Committee's recommendations, including a summary of action taken throughout the year by the PEC Committee, members and delegated staff, to the chair of the Board of Examiners. The Board of Examiners shall, accordingly, be made aware if medical or other circumstances have been put forward for or by a student; however, no more detail than is necessary shall be disclosed, and this shall include no personal or medical details. All personal information shall be handled by the PEC Committee and the Board of Examiners in accordance with the requirements of data protection legislation. Guidance on PEC procedures is provided by the Student Progress Service (www.ncl.ac.uk/students/progress)

9.

- i) To provide Boards of Examiners ~~with an assessment of the scope and severity of a recommendation of support/no-support depending on the severity~~ of the mitigating circumstances affecting a student, which have not been addressed by a-h above (i.e. to recommend the use of discretion where appropriate).

Detailed Guidance Documents, together with the updated PEC Procedure, are available via the University Staff webpages - <https://newcastle.sharepoint.com/hub/sp/Pages/PEC.aspx>

VII Regulations for Research Masters Degree Programmes (excluding MPhil programmes)

Where appropriate the Research Masters Degree Programmes Regulations have been amended to mirror the changes noted in the Postgraduate Taught Progress Regulations and Examination Conventions sections above and the Doctor of Philosophy Progress Regulations and Examination Conventions below.

University Education Committee (UEC) approved the following key changes to PGR Regulations.

VIII Master of Philosophy Progress Regulations and IX Examination Conventions

Where appropriate, Master of Philosophy Progress Regulations and Examination Conventions have been amended to mirror the changes noted in the Doctor of Philosophy sections below.

X Doctor of Philosophy Progress Regulations

Changes to Terminology

The term Academic Unit is used throughout the regulations, etc to refer to Schools and/or Institutes.

The term Graduate School is used throughout the regulations, etc to replace Graduate School Administrator.

F. Supervision of Students

To provide a greater degree of resilience in the supervisory team for the first 3 months of registration, the PGR Education Resilience Framework recommends that new research students should have more than one supervisor at the point of registration and that the supervisory arrangements will be reviewed at Project Approval stage. Wording has been added to the regulations as follows:

'It is expected that all new students will have two supervisors at the point of registration on their programme. Review of the supervisory arrangements will be carried out at project approval stage and approved by the Dean of Postgraduate Studies.'

J. Attendance and Progress

Section J17 d has been updated in relation to meeting requirements for part-time students as follows:

' 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 as the start of their studies, as part of this Learning, ensuring there is no more than a 10-week gap between meetings.'

The information in the following sections of the regulations have been reorganised but there are no changes of principles:

- Regulation 20 – Annual Progress Review Outcomes
- Section M – Change of Circumstances
- Section R - Pending Submission for Students Completing their Minimum Period of Candidature

A number of small text changes, and updated weblinks throughout the document.

XI Doctor of Philosophy Examination Conventions

N. Provision for an Oral Examination to be Conducted Outside the University

The examination regulations have been updated to allow oral examinations to be conducted either in-person or by video link. In addition, a video link oral examination will no longer normally require the approval of the Dean of Postgraduate Studies, provided that the guidance in the Examiner Handbook is adhered to.

51. It is expected that all oral examinations will normally take place with both the candidate and examiners present at an approved University campus.

52. A video link oral examination may be arranged where either the candidate and/or the examiners is not able to be present at the University. In order for an oral examination to be conducted in this way the guidelines outlined in the University's Handbook for Examiners of Research Degrees must be adhered to guarantee the integrity of the examination.

53. An oral examination may be arranged at a location other than an approved University campus, subject to the approval of the Dean of Postgraduate Studies.

54. A member of the supervisory team is not normally expected to attend the oral examination (via video link or at a location other than an approved University campus) unless at the specific request of the candidate, but is expected to be available to be contacted by the examiners if required, for example by telephone.

55. In all cases where the oral examination is conducted via video link or at a location other than an approved University campus, consent must be obtained from the candidate.

XII Doctor of Philosophy (Integrated) Regulations

Where appropriate, **Doctor of Philosophy (Integrated) Regulations** have been amended to mirror the changes noted in the Doctor of Philosophy sections above.

XIII Rules for the Submission of Work for Higher Degrees

The hard-bound thesis requirement has been removed completely from the research degree regulations, following a temporary suspension of this requirement due to the Covid-19 disruption. Section 6 has been updated to reflect this.

XIV Rules for the Form of Theses

The hard-bound thesis requirement has been removed completely from the research degree regulations, following a temporary suspension of this requirement due to the Covid-19 disruption. Sections 3, 4 and 5 have been updated to reflect this.