

XIII. Specific Progress Regulations for Doctor of Philosophy and Master of Philosophy by Distance

These regulations should be read in conjunction with the:

- [Master of Philosophy Progress Regulations](#)
- [Doctor of Philosophy Progress Regulations](#)
- *Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes approved by Senate, which is reviewed annually and made available each academic year and included in the [Handbook for Research Students and Supervisors](#)*
- [PhD and MPhil by Distance Policy](#)

These regulations use Academic Unit, as an overarching term for School and Institute.

Where reference is made to any named University role, this also includes their nominees.

A. Introduction

1. A PhD or MPhil by Distance is a distinct mode of study for a Newcastle University PhD or MPhil, either in the UK or internationally.
2. A PhD or MPhil by Distance student undertakes their research away from the University's approved campuses with remote support supplied by Newcastle University.
3. This mode of study must be approved by the relevant Academic Unit and Faculty Dean of Postgraduate Research, but it is not a separate award or programme.
4. The University reserves the right to not offer this mode of study if it deems the circumstances are unsuitable in any manner.
5. In the case of PhD or MPhil by Distance students - attend or meet can include via an online format.
6. Further details on Assessment Criteria for PhD and MPhil programmes can be found in Section 3 of the University's [Handbook for Examiners of Research Degrees by Theses](#).
- 7 Applicants, who are approved for admission as PhD or MPhil by Distance students, will be required to pay the tuition fees for a PhD or MPhil degree programme in their research area, as set out in the annual Fees Schedule (details are available [here](#)).

B. General Entrance Requirements

8. An applicant may be approved for admission to a research programme by a minimum of two Postgraduate Admissions Selectors in accordance with the University's *Postgraduate Admissions Policy* and Faculty/Programme criteria approved by respective Deans of Postgraduate Studies, where an applicant:

- a) is a graduate of this or another approved university or other approved degree-awarding body or holds other qualifications approved by the Dean of Postgraduate Research;
 - b) has completed an approved application including:
 - i. evidence of their suitability to become a student in terms of academic ability and prior training and experience;
 - ii. evidence that their English language proficiency meets the published requirements for the programme of research;
 - iii. a research proposal, if required.
 - c) has supplied details of two recent referees and evidence of prior qualifications and experience as required by the Postgraduate Admissions Selectors and/or the Dean of Postgraduate Research.
9. Where an applicant has previously studied for a Doctor of Philosophy at another institution and wishes this to be taken into account at Newcastle University, a '[Previous Study](#)' application must be submitted and approved by the Dean of Postgraduate Research
10. In considering an application, the Postgraduate Admissions Selectors must be satisfied of:
- a) the applicant's suitability for the programme, and
 - b) the availability of appropriate supervision, suitable facilities, and resources once the applicant is admitted. (It is the responsibility of the Head of Academic Unit, directly or through the Postgraduate Admissions Selectors, to ensure that these will be available to an applicant once admitted).
11. In addition to the above, an applicant wishing to apply for a PhD or MPhil by Distance must complete an additional '[By Distance Pre-Application Checklist](#)' with their prospective supervisor.
12. This 'By Distance Pre-Application Checklist' must be approved by the Academic Unit and relevant Dean of Postgraduate Research in advance of submitting the formal postgraduate application to ensure fulfilment of regulation 10b. The '[By Distance Pre-Application Checklist](#)' should be uploaded with the other application documentation.
13. The Academic Unit and Dean of Postgraduate Research should be satisfied of the following to study for a PhD or MPhil by Distance:
- a) you will have access to adequate facilities, resources, and appropriate research training;
 - b) you will have sufficient time available for study and research;
 - c) appropriate arrangements will be made for your supervision and progress monitoring during your PhD or MPhil by Distance, including arrangements for the Supervisory Team to maintain contact with and to meet with you, in accordance with requirements stated in the Code of Practice for Research Degree programmes and as often as is necessary;

- d) appropriate arrangements will be made in any case where you are attached to or working at an institution outside the University, and you are offered local supervision and support by staff at that institution;
- e) that you will be able to obtain appropriate Ethical Approval for the activities you will be undertaking on a PhD or MPhil by Distance and that you will adhere to all UK and local legislative requirements related to the research;
- f) any relevant health and safety issues have been considered and approved by the Head of Academic Unit in line with University guidelines and University Insurance policies.

14. If the Academic Unit and/or the Dean of Postgraduate Research does not approve a PhD or MPhil by Distance for whatever reason, the applicant should be advised as to whether it is possible to study in person at the relevant campus.

C. Research Degree Supervision

15. You will engage in advanced study and research under the direction of a Supervisory Team approved by the University. The Supervisory Team normally consists of at least two members of University staff, one of which will be your Academic Supervisor. Your Supervisory Team is appointed by your Head of Academic Unit, normally before you are accepted onto your programme of study.

It is expected you will have a Supervisory Team of at least two supervisors at the point of initial registration on your programme, however, review and confirmation of your Supervisory Team arrangements will be carried out at the Project Approval stage (See Regulation 23 of [Section X Doctor of Philosophy Progress Regulations](#)) and formally approved by the Dean of Postgraduate Research.

16. To be eligible to supervise postgraduate research degree students, a member of staff must hold either a degree of Doctor of Philosophy, an equivalent research degree or have equivalent research expertise. The appropriateness of an equivalent research degree or research expertise should be determined by the Head of Academic Unit, in consultation with the Dean of Postgraduate Research.

17. The Academic Supervisor will be a Newcastle University staff member and will normally have had previous experience of at least one successful supervision. The Academic Supervisor will have primary responsibility for supporting you throughout your period of study.

18. Approved PGR Supervisors will be included on the Doctoral College Fellows list and will be expected to engage with the [PGR Supervisor Development Programme](#).

19. In any case where you are studying your PhD by Distance at another institution, arrangements may also be made for local supervision and support to be provided to you by staff at that institution (see Regulation 13d). Such arrangements will supplement the role of the Academic Supervisor and Supervisory Team (*as detailed in Regulations 9 and 11 of [Section X Doctor of Philosophy Progress Regulations](#)*). Where External Advisors are added to the

Supervisory Team, the [Principles for the Appointment of an External Advisor and Development of Joint Supervisory Arrangements](#) should be consulted and are in addition to your appointed Supervisory Team. These arrangements would be discussed and confirmed as part of the pre-application checklist.

Note: The [Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes](#) provides further details on appropriate supervisory support for a research student.

D. Programme Transfers

20. An application to study a PhD or MPhil by Distance is normally only made during the admissions process. Candidates will not normally transfer between on campus study and the PhD or MPhil by Distance mode of study.

21. In exceptional circumstances, current campus-based research students may be allowed to transfer their mode of study to 'by Distance'. In those cases, the student and supervisory team should complete the '[By Distance Pre-Application Checklist](#)', which must be supported by the Academic Unit. The transfer request will then be considered for approval by the relevant Dean of Postgraduate Research.

22. In exceptional circumstances, an international student may wish to change from studying on campus with a student visa to studying on a PhD or MPhil by Distance. The student should firstly seek advice from the relevant Graduate School and the Visa Team. A move to a PhD or MPhil by Distance will require the withdrawal of the University's sponsorship of the student's visa, with the student relying on securing standard visitor visas for any further visits to the University.

23. Students studying for a PhD or MPhil by Distance may request to change to campus-based study due to their particular circumstances, for example changes to the student's personal or employment circumstances. Approval for a change in the mode of study must be sought via the PGR Code of Practice System and approved by the relevant Dean of Postgraduate Research, who will make a decision based on the feasibility of the request for both the student (in terms of practical arrangements and any visa requirements) and for the Academic Unit (in terms of available resources).

24. There is no automatic right to change from PhD or MPhil by Distance to campus-based study.

25. For international students studying for a PhD or MPhil by Distance who wish to change to campus-based study, advice must firstly be sought from the Graduate School and Visa Team.

26. If you are permitted to undertake a PhD by Distance you are still required to:

- Pay the standard tuition fees whilst within candidature.
- Have your engagement with your studies monitored as agreed in the Learning Agreement, including time registered as a pending or extended submission student.
- Adhere to your thesis submission deadline, unless an extension or interruption of studies has been agreed by the Dean of Postgraduate Research.