

Heriot-Watt University's Mapping to the UK Quality Code Research Degrees

Contents

Regulatory contexts for the Quality Code

Terminology

Expectations and Practices

Guiding principles (with mapping from HWU practice)

Regulatory contexts for the Quality Code

The Expectations and Core practices of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (Quality Code) are mandatory for higher education providers in all parts of the UK. Common practices are mandatory in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and while providers in England may choose to work towards them, they are not required to do so as these are not regulatory requirements and will not be assessed as part of the OfS's regulatory framework. National regulators and QAA are not bound by the information in this advice and guidance and will not view it as containing indicators of compliance. This guidance does not interpret statutory requirements.

Terminology

Doctoral degrees: Doctoral degrees are qualifications rooted in original research - the creation of new knowledge or originality in the application of knowledge. The doctorate is, therefore, unique in the array of qualifications offered by higher education providers. Other key reference points for doctoral degrees are the doctoral qualification descriptors included in the national higher education qualification frameworks for England, Wales and Northern Ireland and for Scotland, and the QAA [Doctoral Degree Characteristics Statement](#) (2015).

Masters by research: Research master's degrees and doctorates are closely linked because of the emphasis in both on independent research. Research students may choose to register for a research master's degree either as a standalone research qualification or as an entry qualification for a doctorate. The QAA [Master's Degree Characteristics Statement](#) (2015) summarises the main features of research master's degrees, including a general description of the characteristics relevant to research master's degrees.

Research students: The higher education sector recognises the diverse needs of research students and aims to encourage consistency of provision for all students, regardless of background or circumstances. The Expectations and Core and Common practices are therefore intended to apply to the many different types of students undertaking UK research degrees. These include full and part-time students, UK and international students, students from all backgrounds, and those with a range of protected characteristics and prior educational experience.

Graduate schools: Within the UK, research students are often part of a cohort. As well as having a subject identity, they may belong to a graduate school and/or doctoral training centre. Doctoral training centres and other arrangements where higher education providers work together, help to shape the way that many doctoral students are trained.

Codes of practice: Codes of practice for research degrees help both prospective and current research students and staff to know what their responsibilities are and what they can expect from one another. All codes and related guidance are written clearly for, and are accessible to, those who need to use them and contain sufficient information for all intended users, including any externally located supervisors.

Expectations and Practices

The advice underneath the Expectations and Practices is not mandatory for providers but illustrative of a range of possible approaches.

This Theme relates to higher education research in the specific context of research degrees and particular requirements for doctorates and research master's degrees. It refers to the research environment and the supervisory process which are distinct requirements of research degrees and enable higher education providers to provide an effective student experience and maintain academic standards for research degrees. A number of the Themes in the advice and guidance are equally applicable to research degrees and some outline specific guidelines in the context of research degrees.

EXPECTATIONS FOR STANDARDS		EXPECTATIONS FOR QUALITY	
<p>The academic standards of courses meet the requirements of the relevant national qualifications framework.</p> <p><i>This Expectation ensures that research degree-awarding bodies align their postgraduate awards with the relevant qualification framework.</i></p>	<p>The value of qualifications awarded to students at the point of qualification and over time is in line with sector-recognised standards.</p> <p><i>This Expectation ensures that research degrees awarded by providers continue to reflect sector-recognised standards such as the QAA Doctoral Degrees Characteristic Statement.</i></p>	<p>Courses are well-designed, provide a high-quality academic experience for all students and enable a student's achievement to be reliably assessed.</p> <p><i>This Expectation relates to the provision of research supervision, environment, progression and examination of research degrees. Higher education providers have in place mechanisms for the monitoring and enhancement of the quality of their provision of research degrees that is both inclusive and supportive of students.</i></p>	<p>From admission through to completion, all students are provided with the support that they need to succeed in and benefit from higher education.</p> <p><i>This Expectation encompasses the breadth of subject and supervisory expertise available to research students and the research environment, which will enable students to develop and generate new knowledge through exploration and learning of research.</i></p>
<p><i>HWU is able to confirm that it meets the above Expectations for Standards. Reference should be made to the detailed mapping provided against each of the Guiding Principles.</i></p>		<p><i>HWU is able to confirm that it meets the above Expectations for Quality. Reference should be made to the detailed mapping provided against each of the Guiding Principles below, as well as the mapping documents to the 'Enabling Student Achievement' and 'Monitoring and Evaluation' themes.</i></p>	
Core Practice (Standards)		Core Practice (Quality)	
<p>1. The provider ensures that students who are awarded qualifications have the opportunity to achieve standards beyond the threshold level that are reasonably comparable with those achieved in other UK providers.</p> <p><i>In practice, this means that the provision of a research environment conducive to learning and developing research combined with the provision of encouraging and supportive supervision, would improve opportunities for research students to achieve beyond the threshold level.</i></p>	<p>1. The provider designs and/or delivers high-quality courses.</p> <p><i>In practice, this means that supervision of research students equates to the delivery of a course (albeit a programme of individual research) to ensure that the progress stages and support provided effectively contribute to the delivery and outcomes for research students.</i></p> <p>2. Where the provider offers research degrees, it delivers these in appropriate and supportive research environments.</p> <p><i>In practice, this means that supportive research environments and infrastructure serve to enable positive research outcomes through contextualising research, exposing research students to research culture skills, responding to research students' changing needs, and encouraging creativity, critical independent thought and originality of research outcomes.</i></p> <p>3. The provider supports all students to achieve successful academic and professional outcomes.</p> <p><i>In practice, this identifies the need to enable successful outcomes through the support infrastructure and contributing factors including regulatory frameworks, research environment, supervisory processes, research skills support, progress and review arrangements, and clarity of responsibilities.</i></p>		
Common Practice (Standards)			
<p>1. The provider reviews its core practices for standards regularly and uses the outcomes to drive improvement and enhancement.</p> <p><i>In practice, this means that research degrees form a distinct area of provision and therefore review and enhancement activity should be viewed across both in the context of provider practices, across all provision in order to consider any implications for research degrees and provider practices that only relate to research degrees.</i></p>			
<p><i>HWU is able to confirm that it meets the above Core and Common Practices (Standards). Reference should be made to the detailed mapping provided against each of the Guiding Principles below, as well as the mapping documents to the 'Monitoring and Evaluation' theme.</i></p>		<p><i>HWU is able to confirm that it meets the above Core Practices (Quality). Reference should be made to the detailed mapping provided against each of the Guiding Principles below, as well as the mapping document to the 'Enabling Student Achievement' theme.</i></p>	

Guiding Principles with Mapping from HWU Practices

A 'Reference' document is available to use in conjunction with this mapping document.

The guiding principles given here are not mandatory for any provider. They are a concise expression of the fundamental practices of the higher education sector, based on the experience of a wide range of providers. They are intended as a framework for providers to consider when establishing new or looking at existing higher education provision. They are not exhaustive and there will be other ways for providers to meet their requirements.

Guiding Principles (Standards and Quality)	Heriot-Watt University Practice
<p>1. Provision of information is clear and accessible to research students and staff. Providers that have research degree awarding powers have specific regulations and codes of practice for research degrees that are clear, regularly reviewed and accessible to research students and staff, including examiners. Responsibilities of research students and staff supervising, assessing and supporting research students are clearly communicated.</p>	<p>A. Academic Regulations that govern research degrees are available on the University's website:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Academic Regulation 6: Degree of Doctor of Philosophy ○ Academic Regulation 7: Degree of Doctor of Science and Doctor of Engineering ○ Academic Regulation 8: Degree of Doctor of Letters ○ Academic Regulation 37: Degree of Doctor of Engineering (EngD) ○ Academic Regulation 41: Degree of Doctor of Business Administration ○ Academic Regulation 43: Degree of Doctor of Philosophy by Published Research ○ Academic Regulation 49: Higher Degrees of Master (Research) <p>B. Research degrees are also regulated and supported by other Ordinances, Regulations and Policies, also available on the University's website, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ordinance 1: Admission and Matriculation ○ Academic Regulation 2: Admission ○ Academic Regulation 46: Recognition of Prior Learning (APL) ○ The PGR Code of Practice (noted in more detail, below) ○ Research Integrity: Procedures for Investigating Research Misconduct, policy (under the Research and Knowledge Transfer policies and procedures section). ○ A PGR Resource Pack, to be introduced by the start of the 2019/20 academic year. <p>C. As part of the online application process applicants are asked to confirm an understanding of, and compliance with, relevant University Ordinances and Academic Regulations.</p> <p>D. Information is also communicated to students through various other methods, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Various sections of the University's website. ○ Formal offer letters (by email). ○ The University's triannual induction events (delivered by the University, the Research Futures Academy (RFA)) and induction events of individual Schools. Further details of induction events and how and where these are communicated to research degree candidates are provided below. ○ Supervisor training and update sessions provided by the Research Futures Academy. <p>E. The Postgraduate Research Student Code of Practice ("the Code of Practice"), which is relevant to both students and staff, and is provided to external supervisors, sets out a comprehensive framework for the responsibilities of all of the institution, the School and individual categories of staff (such as Examiners and Directors of Postgraduate Research study), to enable the consistent implementation of the University's Academic Regulations that govern research degrees. A thorough review of the Code of Practice was undertaken in 2019. It was reviewed for alignment with this UK Quality Code for Higher Education Guidance - Research Degrees. The Code of Practice provides information on all aspects of PGR study, such as: selection; admission; enrolment; induction; evaluation, monitoring and supervision arrangements; plagiarism; intellectual property rights and responsibilities; and matters such as research integrity. The Code of Practice, is provided to all students, either as part of their unconditional offer or at the induction stage and may also be accessed online by any audience. It sets out the responsibilities expected of students, supervisors, Schools within the University and the wider University. Further detail on its content is provided in a number of places, below. All students must sign to confirm adherence to the contents of the Code of Practice. With regard to the diverse needs of research students, the Code of Practice (section 2.2) applies equally to all research degree candidates (for example part-time, off-campus and international students). Where there is any expected additional consideration, for example, in relation to access to resources (4.3.9), this is noted in the Code of Practice.</p> <p>F. Amongst other matters, the Code of Practice sets out the following support structures at the various levels within the University, signposts essential information and states the responsibilities and expectations on Research Degree Candidates (Note: the relevant Code of Practice section is noted in brackets):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Remain in regular (approximately monthly) contact with the Supervisory Team (6.1.1) and record Supervisory Meetings in the PGR Portfolio (6.1.2). ○ Discuss progress with their Supervisory Team as a part of regular (approximately monthly) Supervisory Meetings and keep a record (8.1.1). ○ Participate in induction and transferable skills training courses (7.1.1). Assess their own training needs and create a Personal Development Plan, actively seeking out development opportunities (7.1.2). Demonstrate that they have undertaken at least 10 days per annum of skills training during each year of their course of study (7.1.3). ○ Inform the Primary Supervisor of any circumstances, such as illness, adversely affecting their attendance and performance (6.1.3). Encouraged to provide feedback on progress made and issues arising within their studies (9.1.1). ○ Expected to behave professionally in the research environment and maintain it for other researchers (4.1.1). ○ Attend scheduled University, Campus (where provided) and School Induction sessions (5.3.1.2). On Campus Research Degree Candidates are expected to attend appropriate instruction associated with health, safety, security and emergency procedures. Alternative arrangements will be made for Off-Campus Research Degree Candidates where appropriate (5.3.1.1). ○ Refer to the assessment of support in relation to special educational needs and/or disability, with support from the Primary Supervisor, via a consultation with the Wellbeing Services (5.3.1.4). ○ With support from the Primary Supervisor, assess their own training needs and create a Personal Development Plan as a part of their induction (5.3.1.5). ○ Be aware of any ethical issues associated with their research and to conduct their investigations in a manner that is consistent with the Research Ethics Policy (6.1.5). ○ Agree to conform to all University Ordinances, Regulations, Policies, and Procedures (5.2.1.4) including the policy on Intellectual Property, Confidential Information and Commercialisation (4.1.5). Abide by the expectations set out in this Code of Practice (3.1.1). Read and sign the Student Supervisor Agreement (5.3.1.3).

- G.** Students receive an email directly from the RFA informing them of University induction events. However, the content of inductions was discussed at the Research Degrees Committee meeting in March 2019, as Schools also offer their own inductions. PGRs may not be aware of the difference between University and School events and need to attend both. With the move to fixed start dates for research students enrolling after September 2019, a more structured and extended programme designed to give each new cohort, whatever its location, the right information at the right time, is being developed by Research Futures Academy and affiliated colleagues in Dubai and Malaysia. This will use a mix of on-line, webinar and locally delivered material to give a globally consistent induction. Delivery of the new format will commence in 2019-2020.
- H.** Amongst other matters, the Code of Practice sets out the following responsibilities and expectations for the Research Degree Candidate's Supervisor or supervisory Team (Note: "(ST)" is used to denote where the responsibility or expectation falls on the Supervisory Team as opposed to the Primary Supervisor)(the relevant Code of Practice section is noted in brackets):
- Arrange for the Research Degree Candidate to meet appropriate staff (research, IT, laboratory, secretarial, administrative) and other Research Degree Candidates (5.3.2.4).
 - Support the Research Degree Candidate to identify specific training needs and to create a Personal Development Plan, ensuring that the Research Degree Candidate is aware of development opportunities offered by the Research Futures Academy (5.3.2.6 and 7.2.1).
 - (ST) Meet regularly (approximately monthly) with the Research Degree Candidate and return submitted work promptly and with adequate written and/or verbal feedback (6.2.1).
 - (ST) Review and discuss progress with Research Degree Candidates at regular supervisory meetings (8.2.1).
 - (ST) Provide responses to feedback after Supervisory Meetings and keep a written record of feedback and responses in the PGR Portfolio (9.2.1).
 - Inform the Research Degree Candidate of the University Health and Safety Policy, School-specific practices and guidance, security and emergency procedures, opening hours and access rights (5.2.3.1).
 - Support the Research Degree candidate with referral for the assessment of support in relation to special educational needs and/or disability, in consultation with the Wellbeing Services (5.3.2.5).
 - Be aware of the Institution's Research Ethics Policy and consult with the University Research Ethics Committee when applicable (6.2.4).
 - (ST) Encourage Research Degree Candidates to participate in School and Institution research seminars, and national and international fora (4.2.3) and help them to obtain funds to do so (4.2.4).
 - Ensure that the Research Degree Candidate attends University, Campus and School induction sessions (5.3.2.2).
 - Be knowledgeable in the area of research offered (4.2.2). Attend appropriate training before undertaking selection (5.1.2.1). Be self-reflective in their supervisory role and keep up to date with supervisory techniques and research practice (6.2.7). (ST) Reflect on their own performance and seek feedback to help them improve and identify their own training needs via the PDR process (9.2.3).
 - Ensure that the Research Degree Candidate is aware of this Code of Practice and that the Research Degree Candidate reads and signs the Student Supervisor Agreement (5.3.2.3).
- I.** The University has in place an online postgraduate application process which articulates the common stages of application, including acceptance of offers. Guidance and support on the application process is provided by the Admissions Office and documentation is available to staff on SharePoint and to applicants as part of the self-service admissions portal. This personalised portal provides details on each stage of the application process. The process provides a robust framework by which the suitability of applicants for entry onto a research degree programme can be determined. Applicants receive notifications and emails via the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system. These can range from friendly reminders about submitting an application or uploading missing supporting documents, to important communications such as notifications of offers being made.
- J.** Schools have their own PGR admission procedures managed by School academic colleagues and/or administrators. Admission policies and procedures comply with and are guided by national and institutional regulations, policies and guidance, such as Disability, Equality and Diversity and data protection. Postgraduate Admissions Guidance is circulated to all admissions staff by the Admissions Team, and documentation is available on SharePoint, which includes the consideration of applicants declaring a disability or special need, information on English language requirements, links to appropriate regulations and help with using systems. The guidance document ensures the operation of a consistent structure for the consideration of applicants regardless of background and decision-making, based on published entry requirements and free from bias relating to personal characteristics. Successful applicants are provided with a confirmation of their place and, if required, information on applying for a visa. This confirmation includes details on fees and start and end dates. Prior to enrolling students will be provided with information on what to do, this will be sent by their School. Usually applicants are in regular contact with their future supervisor, who provides further detail on the offer, enrolling and requirements on them as a research student.
- K.** As guided by the Code of Practice, the supervisor is responsible for attending appropriate training before undertaking selection. In 2019/20, the Research Futures Academy will deliver a 'Supervise' workshop, which will be delivered face-to-face for supervisors on the Edinburgh campus and last for around 2 hours. Supervisors are required to attend this course once every three years. There will be three days in the 2019/20 academic year where this training will be available, which are timed around the PhD inductions. This will be supplemented by a further course that is being prepared by the Chair and Clerk of the Research Degrees Committee. This will cover updates to the Code of Practice, along with any new procedures that Supervisors must follow. This will run after the 'Supervise' course and will be for 1-2 hours. The Research Futures Academy also has two introductory workshops for supervisors. This is for brand new supervisors and supervisors who require more support.
- L.** The communication of academic and procedural requirements for particular postgraduate research qualifications, including the requirements for progression, monitoring and review are outlined further in Guiding Principle 5.
- M.** Assessment methods, requirements and procedures, including the criteria for achieving the qualification are included in the Handbook on Examining for Research Degrees. This is available on the web and is provided to all externals examining research degrees upon appointment.
- N.** As well as being addressed in the Code of Practice, the Student Agreement webpage includes details and guidelines on intellectual property. Also, in relation to intellectual property, the following documents are available from the web:
- The University Policy on Intellectual Property, Confidential Information and Commercialisation
 - Intellectual Property in Heriot Watt – A Guide to the Policy
- O.** Information on [complaints and appeals](#) is provided to research students in the Code of Practice but are managed by Academic Registry through the University's Complaints and Academic Appeals policies and procedures.

2. The research environment is supportive and inclusive for all research students.

Providers accept research students into a sustainable, inclusive and supportive research environment for undertaking and learning about research throughout the programme of study. The environment should support/facilitate research achievement, taking account of the diverse needs of research students.

- A.** Research degree candidates are exposed to an active research environment in a number of ways including:
- HWU produces a significant volume of high quality peer-reviewed research outputs. Our world-class research delivers real results with far-reaching impact, as recognised in the current Research Excellence Framework, with 82% of our research assessed as world-leading or internationally excellent.
 - For research impact, Heriot-Watt is the top University in Scotland and 9th in the UK. Example case studies in Environment, Health and Well-being, Industry and Innovation and Policy and Public Engagement give a snapshot of our recent research and our Research Gateway gives access to the full database of our research outputs and activity.
 - The University also limits supervisory loads to ensure supervisors have capacity and therefore that research degree candidates have access to our world-class researchers. The Code of Practice specifies the recommended maximum number of students per supervisor (primary and secondary) (section 6.2.7).
- B.** The research environment and infrastructure are enabling, instructional and adaptable:
- Many of our students, DBA in particular, are undertaking work-based or practice-based study and Edinburgh Business School has a proven approach to supporting such students.
 - The University offers a range of support services for students within and outwith the supervisory team, including:
 - Those set out in the Code of Practice and noted at 1O above;
 - Library/Information and IT services noted at (2K and 3J below);
 - The Student Wellbeing Services noted at (2K);
 - The Research Futures Academy noted at (4B);
 - Networking opportunities (2M); and
 - The Student Union Advice Hub (3T).
 - The University also has processes in place to support students who need a temporary suspension of studies (noted at 6.1.3 of the Code of Practice) or to change from full to part time or On to Off-campus (section 12 of the Code of Practice). The University also makes arrangements, for example, for those with carer responsibilities. The University also has processes in place to support those who may become ill during their studies.
- C.** All Schools, and the majority of academic staff, are conducting research at international levels, which enhances the research environment and encourages research achievement. This supports the fact that the University operates within a high level international research excellence environment, actively engaging in the Research Excellence Framework. Over 80% of our academic staff are engaged in research at internationally recognised levels, delivering impact across society in areas as diverse as providing greater equality for deaf people, managing risk in the insurance industry and enhancing oil extraction from our seas.
- D.** The University's Bicentennial Research Leaders is the primary recruitment mechanism for new academic staff which ensures that the University's academic complement carries out research at internationally competitive levels.
- E.** All of the University's research outputs are being collected for public access through the HWU Research Portal; which improves awareness of the University's research quality and environment.
- F.** Further details of the practical application of research conducted by the University can be found on the Research Public Engagement webpages.
- G.** Information, requirements and expectations, in relation to the research environment and infrastructure, are clearly outlined in the Code of Practice, which has been developed to ensure consistency across the Schools and Institutes. The Code of Practice states that Schools offering a place to a Research Degree Candidate shall be able to show evidence of appropriate national and international excellence in research and the facilities necessary to allow a diligent Research Degree Candidate to complete the anticipated research within the normal period of study for the degree (section 4.3.1).
- H.** In relation to the research environment, the Code of Practice (section 4.2.2) states that the Primary Supervisor should be knowledgeable in the area of research offered. It also sets out various responsibilities on Research Degree Candidates and Supervisors, including:
- Research Degree Candidate collaboration with members of their research group and external groups (4.1.2).
 - Research Degree Candidate attendance (4.1.3 and 4.2.3) and presentation (4.1.4) at appropriate seminars and fora.
 - The Primary Supervisor ensuring that sufficient resources (stipulated in the Code of Practice) are available for a Research Degree Candidate to complete the anticipated research, within the normal period of study for the degree, before offering a place (4.2.1).
- I.** In relation to infrastructure, the Code of Practice also sets out that:
- For on-campus Research Degree Candidates, each School will:
 - Provide a designated study space with appropriate computing and experimental resources to undertake the programme of study (4.3.4);
 - Provide individual access to a computer with email, Internet access and print facilities (4.3.6);
 - Provide telephone and photocopying facilities (4.3.7);
 - Ensure access to the appropriate specialist library resources and inter-library loans (4.3.9);
 - Ensure that the full range of facilities are made available to Part-Time on-campus Research Degree Candidates (4.3.10); and
 - For Off-Campus Research Degree Candidates, each School will:
 - Provide a designated lockable space (4.3.5),
 - Ensure access to equivalent research and study space (4.3.8).
 - Ensure access to appropriate external or internal resources (e.g. specialist library resources and inter-library loans) (4.3.9).
 - Ensure that the full range of facilities are made available to Off-Campus Research Degree Candidates when visiting campus (4.3.10).
 - The University is responsible for providing:
 - Appropriate library infrastructure and IT infrastructure support (4.4.1).
 - Through the Research Futures Academy, a research training programme (4.4.2)
 - Access to the Institution's Student Wellbeing services, including the Institution's mental health service (4.4.4).
- J.** The University provides a variety of opportunities and encouragement for PGR students to work and exchange ideas with people and organisations at both School and University level. PGR Representation and opportunities to develop support networks are supported by Schools, the Student Union and the Research Futures Academy. Example of opportunities include:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Edinburgh Business School (now part of the School of Social Sciences) runs 'Moving Forward Workshops' to assist students to prepare a research outline. It has also introduced 4 day seminars for the existing research methods courses with a view to supporting students to complete successfully. ○ The School of Social Sciences run a variety of regular workshops and showcase events involving and in partnership with PGRs, in Psychology, Economics, and Accounting & Finance. ○ The School of Textiles and Design has a research seminars programme at which PGR students attend (and can also present, although to date only staff have volunteered to present). The School is working on increasing the PGR engagement with these seminars (which were designed primarily for PGRs). ○ The School of Mathematical and Computer Sciences offers a range of events to help support research culture and PGR experience e.g. an annual lunchtime 'pizza event' as a forum for PhD students to ask questions and give feedback. ○ The Heriot-Watt University Research Culture Grants. These grants support postgraduate research students and research staff, at all Heriot-Watt University campus locations, to create initiatives which foster research culture and provide opportunities to share and discuss research work with others. Examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Creating a cross-disciplinary user group to develop and share expertise around a common research methodology or technique; ▪ Launching a 'Research Culture Café' as a forum to discuss research ideas, challenges and solutions; ▪ Building a cross-campus community through an on-line platform for celebrating successes and sharing research failures and lessons learned; ▪ Developing a transferable skills development opportunity not already provided by Research Futures Academy (mapped to Vitae's Researcher Development Framework); ▪ Organising a PGR research or career conference at Heriot-Watt; and ▪ Raising awareness of, and participation in, professional skills development. ○ Student representation on the main University and School level decision making Committees: the University Committee for Research and Innovation; the Research Degrees Committee; School Research Committees and School Research Student Committees. <p>K. To assist with ensuring that supervision encourages the development and successful pursuit of a programme of research and to support a positive experience for our PGRs, the University provides training for supervisors (Research Futures Academy Workshop Programme). This is noted further below at 3F to H.</p> <p>L. The research environment is informed by feedback received from research students through the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES). The RDC is responsible for actions taken in relation to the PRES and PGR student experience, generally, and has made a number of recent decisions to begin to address the PGR student experience; for example, in relation to 2K above, to bring about a consistency of and improvements in the supervisor/research student relationship, across Schools and the University.</p> <p>M. The Research Futures Academy also offers training for PhD students and early career researchers, as well as training for researchers at all levels in the University. All training courses produced for delivery to PhD students and research staff are mapped to the Vitae Researcher Development Framework. In addition to the provision offered by the Research Futures Academy, Centres for Doctoral Training are developing new professional skills training courses, and subject specific training and development is offered from within Schools.</p> <p>N. As noted above at 2M, various events also take place within Schools which allow students and staff to present their research, such as poster events and seminars. School research seminars provide an opportunity to disseminate research carried out within the University and to extend knowledge via regular external speakers.</p> <p>O. Guidance on the ethical pursuit of research and the importance of academic integrity from the perspective of research misconduct is covered in the University's Research Integrity policy.</p> <p>P. The University follows the principles of the Concordat to Support the Development of Researchers and has received an award from the European Commission for HR excellence in research which recognises the positive actions the University takes to support the career development of researchers which is vital in ensuring continued research excellence.</p> <p>Q. As noted in Guiding Principle 1, above, research students have access to the University's Careers Service.</p>
<p>3. Supervisors are appropriately skilled and supported. Providers ensure that each student has an appropriately skilled and knowledgeable supervisory team, which includes a main supervisor as the key contact. Supervisors should be provided with sufficient time, support and opportunities to develop and maintain their supervisory practice.</p>	<p>A. Supervisors for PGR students (on- and off-campus), are appointed in compliance with Academic Regulation 6 and Academic Regulation 54. Academic Regulation 6 governs the arrangements for the supervision of students, including the appointment, approval, and arrangements for identifying training requirements of staff as Supervisors. At least one Supervisor should be a member of academic staff of the University. Section 17 of Academic Regulation 6 devolves responsibility for the appointment of the Supervisory team to the RDC. Academic Regulation 54 makes provision for the appointment of Approved Supervisors who need not be members of academic staff and can be appointed from outwith the University. It also states that training requirements for Approved Supervisors are arranged by the Chair of the Research Degrees Committee, in conjunction with the School Director of Research or Head of School.</p> <p>B. Criteria for appointing Primary Supervisors and the Supervisory Team are also specified within section 6.3 of the Code of Practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The School, through its School Research Committee, will nominate a Supervisory Team for each Research Degree Candidate, to meet academic and practical demands of the research and to avoid conflicts of interest (6.3.1). ○ Primary Supervisors should normally be members of the academic staff of the University with a PhD, or other doctoral degree, and experience of having supervised a previous doctoral degree candidate to successful completion (not necessarily at this Institution) (6.3.2) or with equivalent research experience (6.3.2.1). ○ Where an early career researcher has won funding for a doctoral research project, but has not yet supervised a previous doctoral degree candidate to successful completion, the School may nominate them as Primary Supervisor so long as they are nominated alongside a Secondary Supervisory with a previous successful completion (6.3.2.2). ○ Secondary Supervisors may be academic staff of the University with a PhD, other doctoral degree, or equivalent research experience, or may be another 'Approved Supervisor' as approved by the RDC (6.3.3). ○ One member of the Supervisory Team should be research-active in the area of the proposed research project (6.3.4). ○ One member of the Supervisory Team will be contracted to undertake research (6.3.5). ○ For On-Campus Research Degree Candidates, at least one member of the Supervisory Team will be based at the same Campus as the Research Degree Candidate (6.3.6). <p>C. Section 6.4 of the Code of Practice identifies that the Research Degrees Committee has responsibility for approving the Supervisory Team. The Committee will ensure that the necessary skills and experience are met by the Supervisory Team, as a whole. In addition, as noted at 2A above, the University limits supervisory loads to ensure supervisors have capacity. The Code of Practice specifies the recommended maximum number of students per supervisor (primary and secondary) (section 6.2.7). Where a Supervisor is being nominated for a greater number, the nomination should be accompanied by a statement setting out how workload will be managed to ensure that all Research Degree Candidates receive sufficient support.</p>

- D.** Criteria for appointment of Approved Supervisors are detailed within the Application for Approved Supervisor for a Research Student form. The appointment of Approved Supervisors is set out under Academic Regulation 54 and the status of Approved Supervisor is required of anyone who is not a full-time or part-time member of academic staff.
- E.** In addition, the Research Degrees Committee (RDC) has considered the matter of the appointment of Supervisory Teams at its meeting in October 2018. The RDC clarified expectations around the composition of supervisory teams, e.g. specifying that all supervisory teams would have at least one member with a 'Teaching and Research' contract and at least one member at the same Campus location as the research student. Diversity considerations have also been addressed with part-time and early career supervisors given additional opportunities. These decisions have been incorporated into the Code of Practice (sections 6.3.4, 6.3.5 and 6.3.6).
- F.** The Code of Practice notes the following in relation to Supervisor training:
- Any member of staff making selection decisions (normally the Primary Supervisor) must have attended appropriate training before undertaking selection (section 5.1.2.1).
 - The institution, through the Research Futures Academy is responsible for providing transferable-skills training for Supervisors (5.3.4.2 and 7.4.1).
 - The Supervisory Team should reflect on their own performance and seek feedback to help them improve and identify their own training needs via the PDR process (9.2.3).
- G.** Training on supervision of PhD students is provided as part of the Research Futures Academy Workshop Programme. Supervisor training runs as a 2 hour workshop which includes a networking session for supervisors. This is delivered by an external facilitator, supported by academic leaders who provide the briefings. The training covers a number of matters relating to supervision and also highlights that students may be coming from different cultural backgrounds during the session, and how supervisors can be aware of and sensitive to this. In the 2018/19 academic year the course was delivered 9 times. Some sessions were delivered in a webinar format for Dubai and Edinburgh. There will be three days in the 2019/20 academic year where this training will be available, which are timed around the PhD inductions.
- H.** The 2 hour 'Supervise' course addresses the development of supervisors directly and others e.g. 'Leadership in a Research Environment' and 'Introduction to Project Management' are relevant to current and potential supervisors at different career stages. As noted above, in 2019/20, the 'Supervise' course will run on three days each year to coincide with PhD inductions. The 'Supervise' course includes a briefing for supervisors from the Chair of the RDC which covers research governance, the University's Postgraduate Research Student Code of Practice, expectations and feedback from the University's research students on their experience. The Chair of the RDC has delivered equivalent training face-to-face with supervisors (and aspiring supervisors) at the Dubai Campus. However, our ambition is to make the Supervisor sessions globally accessible and, in May 2019, the Research Futures Academy piloted webinar delivery of Supervisor training to a primarily Dubai-based cohort of supervisors. Also to note for 2019/20, there will be a further course that is being prepared by the Chair and Clerk of the Research Degrees Committee. This will cover updates to the Code of Practice in more detail, along with any new procedures that Supervisors must follow. This will run after the 'Supervise' course and will be for 1-2 hours. The Research Futures Academy also has two introductory workshops for supervisors. This is for brand new supervisors and supervisors who require more support.
- I.** Information Services provides research support training, specialist services and resources to support post-graduate researchers and research staff throughout their careers, including helping them to find and manage information and to disseminate and publish research findings. Support and information provided includes, amongst other things, information on:
- Open access publishing;
 - Research data management;
 - Pure support;
 - The Heriot-Watt ROS Theses Repository;
 - Compliance with copyright law;
 - Publication and impact guidance; and
 - Resources available and skills improvement opportunities.
- J.** As outlined in the University's Probationary Procedures (see the "performance management" section of the HWU HR policies webpage), new members of academic staff are assigned an academic mentor for the duration of their probationary period. Supervisors' training requirements and development opportunities are identified as part of the probationary period, and through the Performance, Development and Review process.
- K.** All PhD students are assigned a minimum of two supervisors. The use of supervisory teams increases the quality of student/supervisor relationships, and provides opportunities for informal training and the sharing of good practice, to take place. Schools are responsible for monitoring supervision quality (Code of Practice Section 6.3.8). Supervisory arrangements, including the changing of supervisors, are clearly communicated in the Code of Practice. Included is information on (all under section 6 of the Code of Practice, unless otherwise stated or more specifically given):
- Primary and secondary supervisors;
 - Supervisory teams;
 - Supervisor experience;
 - Supervisor training (noted above at 3F to H);
 - Expectations of contact (6.1.1 and 6.2.1);
 - Feedback to students (6.2);
 - Recording outputs (6.2.2);
 - Supervisor absences/ changes (6.3.9 and 6.3.10); and
 - Student progress (8).
- L.** Section 9.1.2 of the Code of Practice also specifically sets out that Research Degree Candidates who feel that they are not receiving adequate supervision, or whose work is not progressing satisfactorily for reasons outside their control, should contact a member of the Supervisory Team in the first instance. If this is not appropriate, the Research Degree Candidate should raise their concerns with the School Director of Postgraduate Research Students or, if they remain dissatisfied, with the Head of School (or the Chair of the RDC if the Head of School is a member of the Supervisory Team or cannot otherwise be approached). The RFA also delivers a "Getting Started" series for new PGR students, comprising induction and seven workshops. One of these is the "Working with your Supervisor" workshop which covers:
- The ideal supervisor;
 - Responsibilities and expectations;
 - Expectations at HW ie Code of Practice;
 - Supervisory meetings;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Supervisory styles; ○ What to do when things go wrong; and ○ Managing upwards <p>M. In addition to the above regarding supervisory arrangements, as noted at 2H, above, the Code of Practice sets out standards in relation to the research knowledge of supervisors (4.2.2).</p> <p>N. Further in relation to research student support, and in addition to the requirements of supervision, the Code of Practice specifies that each School must also appoint:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A Director of Research - a senior academic member of staff appointed by a School to be responsible for leading the research activities of that School (2.11); ○ A Director of Postgraduate Research Study - an academic member of staff appointed to oversee the operation of the Code of Practice (This role is usually taken by a member of the School Research Committee) (2.10); and ○ A Research Administrator - a member of non-academic staff of a School with responsibility for administering admission, progress, and other processes for Research Degree Candidates, and the maintenance of the student file, and who acts as the administrative point of contact for the Research Degree Candidate (2.9). <p>O. The University ensures that research students are easily able to contact their supervisors and, indeed, all University staff, irrespective of their geographical location, through the use of the University's myHWU portal and "staff search" function – where the University publishes phone numbers, emails and locations of all staff, together with job titles.</p> <p>P. From the 2019/20 academic year, the University is introducing a new online PGR Portfolio, for the purpose of logging (normally monthly) meetings with supervisors and recording any comments PGR students have about that meeting. Students can access this from their self-service portal. Guidance has been prepared and will be available to students and staff, outlining how to use the PGR Portfolio. New, blank, Portfolio entries are auto-generated on the 1st of each month for students and supervisors to complete. Once the month ends, students and supervisors have an additional 7 days to complete that previous month's Portfolio, before the month is locked for editing. At the end of each month, the Director of Postgraduate Research or equivalent for a student's School will be notified to make them aware if any of the following occurs (for either the student or the supervisor):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 3 Months of records confirming that no meetings took place. ○ 3 Months in a row where no meetings were recorded. ○ 3 Months of records where no Research Student comment was recorded. ○ 3 Months of records where no Supervisor comment was recorded. <p>Q. Complaints and appeals from Research students are managed through the University's Complaints and Student Academic Appeals policies and procedures. Readers are referred to the University's QAA mapping for Concerns, Complaints and Appeals, for further information. Information for research students wishing to pursue a complaint or appeal are detailed within the Code of Practice (section 13). The process allows for students to take matters up with alternative, independent persons (13.1.1). The Student Union Advice Hub acts as an independent organisation that can offer additional advice and support to students in relation to the complaints and appeal processes.</p>
<p>4. Research students are afforded opportunities for professional development. Providers ensure that research students are provided with appropriate opportunities to regularly reflect on and develop their personal, professional and research skills in consultation with their supervisory team.</p>	<p>A. The University's training framework and training policy for research students has been devolved by the University Committee for Research and Innovation (UCRI) to the Research Degrees Committee (RDC), as noted in its terms of reference and the Code of Practice (3.4.3 and 7.4.1).</p> <p>B. Research and other professional development training is planned and delivered by the Research Futures Academy and its affiliated staff in Dubai and Malaysia. Training provision and needs are considered by the RDC. The Research Futures Academy delivers University-wide development programmes, including those which support the personal and professional development of research students. Throughout the academic year students can attend workshops designed to enhance their research and transferrable skills, as well as workshops in preparation for the completion of the doctorate, such as career management and viva training. All training courses produced for delivery to PhD students and research staff are mapped to the Vitae Researcher Development Framework.</p> <p>C. Research Futures Academy training courses are managed online through a personal development management system (PDMS), which allows the individual to keep a record of training attended.</p> <p>D. Expectations, in relation to the implementation of a training schedule, participation in University-wide training programmes and development of research and generic skills (including teaching) are addressed within the Code of Practice (7). The Code of Practice states that research students are expected to create and maintain a Personal Development Plan which will be submitted at Progress Review Meetings alongside other evidence of progress (7.1). Skills gaps would be identified through meetings with supervisors and the annual progress review process.</p> <p>E. All postgraduates who teach must gain Approved Tutor status, which can be demonstrated through appropriate prior experience, undertaking an in-School training programme or by completing the Learning Enhancement and Development Skills (LEADS) programme (delivered from 2019/20 through the Learning and Teaching Academy)–</p> <p>F. The provision of subject-specific research training is the responsibility of Schools and, for some PGR students, may involve attendance of relevant specialised Masters courses.</p>
<p>5. Progression monitoring is clearly defined and operated. Providers put in place clearly defined mechanisms for monitoring and supporting research student progress and outcomes from admission to successful completion, including formal and explicit reviews of progress at different stages.</p>	<p>A. Section 8 of the Code of Practice outlines arrangements pertaining to progression, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Frequency of progress meetings and requirements for record keeping (8.1.1, 8.1.4, 8.2.2). ○ Expectations for presentation of evidence (8.1.2, 8.1.3). ○ Expectations that review of progress is a continuous process (8.2.1). ○ Expectations for formal review Progress Review Meetings (8.3). ○ The make-up of the review team and the purpose of the review (8.3). ○ The evidence required and considered at Progress Review Meetings (8.3.2.2). ○ Requirements for providing written feedback on progress, project scope and focus, and any perceived risks to on-time completion (8.3.3). ○ Procedure for advising Research degree Candidates of concerns regarding their progress (8.3.4 and 8.3.5).

	<p>B. The Code of Practice also currently requires Schools to put into place formal mechanisms for assessing progress of Research Degree Candidates (8.3.1), in adherence with the Universities Academics Regulations.</p> <p>C. HWU does not transfer students from an MPhil to a PhD; students are registered as PhDs from the start. Therefore decisions about transferring a student's registration to a doctoral qualification do not need to take place. However, HWU does still have a significant progress review at the end of the 1st year and the Code of Practice sets out the evidence of progress that we want to see, all as noted above.</p> <p>D. Progression requirements for research students at HWU Centres for Doctoral Training may vary depending on the type and nature of the programme. This can include the completion of more structured elements of a programme before progressing, involving summative assessment. For example, in the current 4 year RAS CDT, students study a one year Masters programme followed by a 3 year PhD. Students can only progress to the PhD phase on successful completion of the Masters year (180 credits). In the new RAS CDT (also a 4 year programme) which starts September 2019, students will have to achieve 65 credits for MSc level taught courses as well as complying with the appraisal requirements to progress from year 1 to year 2. In year 2 they have to complete a group project as well as comply with appraisal requirements. Progression from year 3 to 4 is based on meeting the appraisal requirements. Similarly, the training programme run through the NERC CDT in Oil & Gas contains 100 days of bespoke training for our CDT students, spread over the first 3 years of their 4 year studentships. Whilst this is not assessed and there are no taught elements which students are required to pass before they can proceed to the PhD research part of their programme or graduate with their PhD award. The training programme is accredited by the Geological Society of London and counts in the process of becoming a chartered geologist, so there is some tangible benefit to our CDT students who complete the full training.</p> <p>E. From the 2019/20 academic year, the University is introducing a new online PGR Portfolio, for the purpose of logging (normally monthly) meetings with supervisors and recording any comments PGR students have about that meeting. Students can access this from the myHWU self-service portal. Guidance has been prepared and will be available to students and staff, outlining how to use the PGR Portfolio. New, blank, Portfolio entries are auto-generated on the 1st of each month for students and supervisors to complete. Once the month ends, students and supervisors have an additional 7 days to complete that previous month's Portfolio, before the month is locked for editing. At the end of each month, the Director of Postgraduate Research or equivalent for a student's School will be notified to make them aware if any of the following occurs (for either the student or the supervisor):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 3 Months of records confirming that no meetings took place. ○ 3 Months in a row where no meetings were recorded. ○ 3 Months of records where no Research Student comment was recorded. ○ 3 Months of records where no Supervisor comment was recorded. <p>F. Information on Feedback mechanisms are outlined in the Code of Practice at section 9, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Encouraging the provision of feedback by research degree candidates on progress made and issues arising within their studies (9.1.1). ○ Requiring students who feel they are not receiving adequate supervision, or whose work is not progressing satisfactorily for reasons outside their control, to contact a member of the Supervisory Team in the first instance or if this is not appropriate, the School Director of Postgraduate Research Students (9.1.2). ○ Asking students to support the working of the Research Student Committee (9.1.4) ○ Asking students to take part in institutional and national feedback surveys (9.1.5 and 9.1.6). ○ Requiring the Supervisory Team to provide responses to feedback after Supervisory Meetings and a written record of feedback and responses will be kept in the PGR Portfolio (9.2.1). ○ Requiring the Supervisory Team to provide feedback to the School Director of Postgraduate Research Students for the purpose of improving research degree programmes (9.2.2). ○ Requiring Schools to actively seek confidential feedback from Research Degree Candidates on a regular (at least annual) basis (9.3.3). ○ Requiring Schools to establish a Research Student Committee to discuss the School's research degree provision and to report to the School's Research Committee (9.3.4). ○ Requiring the Institution to investigate any formal Research Degree Candidate complaints (9.4.3) and appeals (9.4.4). <p>G. Common issues with supervisory arrangements, such as appropriate time available and coordination amongst the supervisory team, are also identified through the outcomes of the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES). The oversight of the PRES is the responsibility of the Research Degrees Committee. Although the 2019 PRES will be the fourth in which HWU has participated, this year will be the first year that the RDC has had such oversight.</p> <p>H. As already mentioned, the Code of Practice specifies the recommended maximum number of students per supervisor (primary and secondary) (section 6.2.7).</p> <p>I. Further information on the circumstances in which research student complaint and appeal mechanisms may be used and how to use them is set out under Guiding Principle 3.</p> <p>J. Periods of study are specified within the Code of Practice and the University's Academic Regulations that govern research degrees (for the latter see Indicator 1A above).</p>
<p>6. Higher education providers offer clear guidance and processes on assessment for research degrees. Providers, recognising the underpinning principles applicable to all assessment (see also Assessment Theme), operate robust and clear procedures for assessing research degrees, taking into account the UK qualification descriptors and characteristic statements.</p>	<p>A. The Code of Practice (section 11) and the Handbook on Examining for Research Degrees (which is made available to External Examiners) contain, amongst other things, the information listed below. The two documents vary in terms of the level of detail provided, having been produced for their specific audiences.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Research Examination procedures, including viva voce arrangements and reporting procedures. ○ Appointment of Examiners ○ Role of the Internal Examiner ○ Role of the External Examiner ○ Recommendations of the Examiners and timescales ○ Plagiarism (CoP only) <p>B. Research degree candidates are examined by at least two Examiners, one of whom is an External Examiner. The University has in place a formal approval process for appointing External Examiners detailed within the Handbook on Examining for Research Degrees. The University sets out clear criteria for the appointment of examiners in section 2 of the Handbook (both internal and external), together with the process for appointment, and has procedures in place to avoid conflicts of interest. All Examiners are approved by the Chair of the Research Degrees Committee. HWU's Academic Regulations provide the option to appoint a second internal examiner. This is done in cases where the other two examiners lack experience, where there is reason to believe that the exam might be contentious or where extra scrutiny of the process is warranted (e.g. a viva involving an element of videoconferencing). Here the Chair of the Research</p>

	<p>Degrees Committee appoints the second internal to act only as an independent Chair. However, independent Chairs are not appointed as a matter of course. Where the exam does not seem unusual, the University relies on the internal examiner to ensure the exam takes place in the appropriate manner. In that regard, section 11.2 of the Code of Practice applies.</p> <p>C. With reference to assessment and standards, students and Examiners are referred to the Handbook on Examining for Research Degrees and the Guidelines for Research Oral Examinations – Role of the Internal Examiner, accessed via the Thesis Examination webpage (the latter of which provides information on Examiner responsibilities and guidance in advance of, during, and after a viva). Guidelines on the Submission and Format of a Thesis are available on the web.</p> <p>D. Criteria against which External Examiners are required to evaluate a thesis are included within the Handbook on Examining for Research Degrees, the University Academic Regulations and the Examiner report forms. Boards of Examiners may recommend an award at a different level, e.g. Master or MPhil as guided by the University’s Academic Regulations.</p> <p>E. Internal Examiner Reports are presented to the Research Degrees Committee which will consider actions to address any issues identified. External Examiners are required to complete an Individual Examiner’s Report Form following their review of the PGR student’s thesis. Criteria against which External Examiners are required to evaluate a thesis are included within the Handbook on Examining for Research Degrees, the University Academic Regulations and the Examiner report forms. Examiners’ individual and joint reports are scrutinised by the Committee before an award of a degree can be made. Any outcomes following the consideration of the reports are fed back to the Schools.</p> <p>F. The Research Degrees Committee recently considered and approved the policies, noted above, on the submission of theses (August 2018) and conduct of oral examinations (October 2018).</p> <p>G. The Research Futures Academy provides a suite of skills and careers development activities for research students through its Research Futures Student Workshops Programme, including a workshop on ‘viva preparation’ for final year research students which includes the theoretical (the process and Examiner) and practical aspects (mock viva).</p>
<p>Monitoring and evaluation</p>	<p>A. The postgraduate research student experience is reviewed through the University’s Annual Monitoring and Academic Review processes. Refer to the mapping to the Monitoring and Evaluation theme.</p> <p>B. In response to the PGR Lifecycle review and Senate Effectiveness Review, UCRI established a Research Degrees Committee (RDC) (in April 2018) as a sub-committee, to provide institutional-level leadership on all issues affecting postgraduate research students and programmes, including admission, registration, supervision, monitoring and examination of postgraduate research students. Previously, research degrees had been overseen by the Postgraduate Studies Committee. Institutional oversight of research, including research degree programmes is now therefore exercised by the RDC, as devolved from UCRI, on behalf of Senate. School Research Committees report significant issues to UCRI via the Director of Research report template completed for UCRI meetings. As the bodies with institutional oversight of PGR programmes, both UCRI and RDC have student representation on them, with the UCRI student representative having given a presentation to UCRI in its May 2018 PGR-themed meeting. The initial RDC Terms of Reference saw the Student Union President representing the student voice but the RDC has subsequently sought additional representatives from amongst the research student community in Scotland and Dubai. A Malaysia representative will be added as numbers grow.</p> <p>C. The work of the Research Degrees Committee is supported by the “Research Administrators Forum - PGR” group. This has operated since July 2017 and brings together the School PGR administrators to share information and discuss implementation of School and Institutional initiatives. Also, the Student Union President (a member of UCRI) is informed by the PGR community of issues through meetings with School PGR Representatives. The various linkages provide opportunities for sharing feedback, more effective joined up thinking and closing the feedback loop.</p> <p>D. The Postgraduate Research Code of Practice requires Schools to establish a Research Student Committee to discuss research degree provision and to ensure that Research Degree Candidates are represented on those policy committees which are directly relevant to their research degree programmes. Review of representation structures in Schools by RDC in March 2019 indicated that Research Student Committees did not operate consistently across the University, but that Schools did have mechanisms for engaging with research students in other fora. This has identified development work required to review and evaluate the operation of these committees.</p> <p>E. The postgraduate research student experience is reviewed through the University’s periodic ‘Academic Review’ process. Review Teams meet with PhD students, PhD supervisors and early career staff to obtain their feedback.</p> <p>F. Schools also monitor and review all their research activity as part of the University’s Annual Monitoring and Review process. This includes the consideration of reports submitted by External Examiners. The 2018-2019 academic year has seen a revision of the Annual Monitoring and Review process, so as to enhance the reporting and consideration of the PGR student experience. The Research Degrees Committee is responsible for the Annual Monitoring and Review process insofar as it applies to research degree programmes.</p> <p>G. The postgraduate research student experience is also monitored through the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES). Results are compared against national benchmarked performance. From academic year 2018/19, this is now undertaken annually, whereas previously it was undertaken every 2 years. The process for analysing, reviewing, and providing feedback on outcomes from the results of PRES are outlined within the Student Survey Framework and Process. The survey is co-ordinated in the same manner as are other student surveys and with institution-specific questions aligned, where appropriate, with those in PIRLS and CROS. Results following the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey are analysed by the Research Degrees Committee and are presented to UCRI. Feedback is also considered by Schools and made available to the Student Union for its meeting of School PGR representatives.</p> <p>H. The University is committed to the Athena Swan initiative and as such is guided by national and international expectations.</p> <p>I. As part of its review of postgraduate research student activity, the University reviews statistical data in relation to pass and failure rates, referrals, and completion timescales. Results are examined by the Planning Office, the Research Degrees Committee and UCRI. Specific issues for action/further consideration may then be referred to other individuals and committees such as Directors of Postgraduate Research Study, Directors of Research, the Research Degrees Committee, the University Executive and the Research Futures Academy. The University also collects, compiles and analyses various statistics which are submitted to statutory bodies. Management Information (including protected characteristics) is compiled and reported on, internally and externally. Data is provided to external agencies such as HESA and SFC. Summaries of key information are provided in the Annual Statistics Report.</p>

J. Annual planning meetings determine recruitment targets, and various recruitment groups and management boards within Schools agree, discuss and monitor internal achievement targets.

K. External feedback is obtained from a number of sources, for example:

- industrial advisory boards;
- strategic alliance boards;
- centres for doctoral training;
- research pools;
- supervisors located in industry;
- external examiners Joint Report form via the Research Degrees Committee following vivas.