



Code of Practice for Postgraduate Research Degrees

2022-23

This *Code of Practice* must be read in conjunction with the *General Regulations for Students*, the *Postgraduate Research Degree Regulations* and any other Guidelines and Policies relating to Research degrees.

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CODE OF PRACTICE FOR RESEARCH DEGREES

Introduction

1. The purpose of this Code is to provide guidelines both for academic staff involved in research supervision and for doctoral candidates working for MPhil and PhD degrees at SOAS. It is intended to ensure that doctoral candidates are fully and effectively supervised and that every effort is made for research degrees to be completed within the prescribed period of study as outlined in the Academic Regulations for Research Degree Programmes.
2. The aim of this Code to establish a set of standard procedures for all departments in the School based upon common structures and a definition of specific responsibilities on the part of all those principally concerned. Supervision of doctoral candidates is, however, influenced by many factors including the nature of the individuals involved, the type of research undertaken, and the character and requirements of the discipline pursued. Some variation between departments and with regards to individual research projects is therefore not only inevitable but desirable. Departmental practice and individual arrangements with regards to a research project may supplement this Code but must not deviate substantially from its aims and provisions.
3. Doctoral candidates are registered for research degrees at SOAS University of London and are subject to the Regulations of the School. It is the responsibility of new and continuing candidates and supervisors to be aware of the regulations and procedures applicable to their degree registration. These are available online at <https://www.soas.ac.uk/registry/degreeregulations/>

Application and Arrival Procedures

4. As stated in the *Postgraduate Research Prospectus*, in order to be fully considered for admission as applicants you will need to submit a formal application and ensure that it is complete (all documentation and acceptable references received) by the relevant deadline. Applications deemed incomplete by the Doctoral School will not be evaluated academically until they are complete. While informal discussion between potential supervisor and applicant is welcomed, decisions on admissions should be communicated to prospective supervisees only through Doctoral School Admissions.
5. Where an applicant meets the School's normal admissions criteria for research degrees at least two selectors must be involved in the selection process. It is the responsibility of the Departmental Director of Doctoral Studies to ensure that all applications are processed expeditiously and a potential first supervisor identified. The Doctoral School must be informed of any additional requirements (e.g. with respect to language training). Where appropriate an applicant's file may be passed to another department for consideration.
6. All applicants are required to meet the School's standards for proficiency in English. If on arrival, or subsequently, it becomes evident that the candidate's knowledge and use of English is inadequate for the purpose of a research degree, he or she may be required to undertake English language tuition and a timetable for this should be agreed between the supervisor and candidate.
7. For visa nationals, it is the applicant's and candidate's responsibility to ensure they obtain a visa that permits study on the programme for which they have been accepted.

Variations and requests for variations

8. Applications for variation from the requirements and responsibilities outlined in the Code of Practice require approval from the Head of the Doctoral School by sending an email to doctoralschool@soas.ac.uk
9. Discipline specific variations to the provisions in the Code of Practice are outlined on the relevant Doctoral Programme web pages. Discipline specific variations normally relate to training (including attendance at mandatory courses and/or seminars) or the type of upgrade materials required by the Department/Centre.
10. Except during periods of approved overseas fieldwork doctoral candidates and researchers are expected to be undertaking their degree while based at SOAS University of London. In exceptional circumstances, enrolment may be permitted at distance. This is reserved for the final Extension to Writing Up (Continuation) year providing a candidate has made good progress in their work and is demonstrably expected to submit on time. The Director of the Doctoral Studies and Head of the Doctoral School must approve the request. This clause does not apply to students studying on a programme designated as being a distance or blended programme where details on attendance requirements are outlined in the programme specifications.

MPhil and PhD Degree Definitions

11. All new doctoral candidates initially enrol on the MPhil/PhD programme until they have satisfied their Supervisory Committees of their suitability for transferring to PhD status. If a candidate is not considered to have produced work suitable for transfer to PhD they may be required to withdraw or to continue enrolment on the MPhil degree and be assessed for the award of MPhil.
12. During the first six weeks following registration all candidates should be assigned a Supervisory Committee of two academic members. The details of the Supervisory Committee will be communicated in writing to all necessary parties.
13. A candidate should normally have a first supervisor, who is a member of the Department which host the doctoral programme on which they are registered. Exceptionally, where a candidate's research project crosses more than one field of study, a first supervisor may be appointed from another Department. The candidate's programme registration is unaffected by this, and the second supervisor will assume responsibility for assuring that programme specifications are followed. Hence, a supervisory committee may appropriately include supervisors from two different Departments (subject to approval by both Directors of Doctoral Studies and the Head of the Doctoral School) but the first supervisor holds primary academic responsibility for the candidate. It is expected that all members of the Supervisory Committee area actively involved in aspects of supervision. A third supervisor may be appointed in exceptional circumstances to provide advice in a niche area of expertise, such appointments required the approval of the Director of Doctoral Studies and the Head of the Doctoral School.
14. Unless formally exempted on the grounds of previous qualifications, all candidates (including those studying part-time) are required to attend a research training programme and to fulfil

the stated requirements of the course. Any further training or skills required must be discussed upon enrolment by the candidate and supervisor and thereafter reviewed annually.

15. A successful SOAS Research Degree Candidate will have successfully demonstrated completion of the following objectives:
 - a) Advancement of knowledge via completion of a successful thesis in line with the requirements outlined in the Academic Regulations for Research Degree Programmes.
 - b) Training as a researcher via completion of relevant discipline- specific, methodological and generic research skills training.
 - c) Successful definition, development and completion of a research project within constraints of the SOAS PhD progression and examination requirements
 - d) Understanding of ethical standards and research expectations for the discipline under examination

Modes of Study and Enrolment

Full-time/Part-time Study

16. Candidates may enroll on a part-time or full-time basis. Candidates wishing to enrol on a part-time basis must sign a *declaration that they are not intending to study on a full- time basis*. The conditions for part-time study are as follows:
 - a) Part-time study is half full-time and the expected attendance will be on that basis, even if the student attends methodological or other courses alongside full-time students in the first year.
 - b) A part-time PhD programme is normally six years. For students on the +4 pathway the part-time PhD programme is eight years.
 - c) Consideration of transfer to PhD status normally takes place in the sixth part-time term. For students on the +4 pathway consideration of transfer takes place during the twelfth part-time term.
 - d) If a thesis is submitted for examination earlier than the expected period of part-time enrolment the student will be deemed to have been studying on a full-time basis for some or all of the programme, with reference to the number of terms they are submitting in advance, and additional fees will be due retrospectively (pro rata at the fee level prevailing at the time of submission). Entry to research degree examination will not be permitted until any outstanding fees have been paid.
17. a satisfactory annual progression review, students are permitted a maximum of one additional year at the conclusion of their normal period of full-time or part-time study for completion of the writing-up of their thesis on Extension of Writing-up status as per section 6.2 of the Academic Regulations for Research Degree Programmes.

Terms / Calendar Years

18. Taught course term dates do not apply to SOAS research programmes. SOAS research degrees are year-long programmes with the enrolment running from the first day of the

academic session until the day preceding the first day of the next academic session. The School's convention is to use academic terms and calendar years for enrolment periods. For research candidates terms begin in September, January and April/May and end the day before the beginning of the next term. The summer vacation period counts as an extension of the summer term and does not in itself count as a separate enrolment period.

Minimum Registration/Enrolment Period

19. Minimum, expected, and maximum periods of registration are set out in the Academic Regulations for Research Degree Programmes (section 3.4). This includes details on the additional year of study that may be available to students as per section 6.2 of the regulations.
20. Candidates who transfer from other institutions may have shortened deadlines for progression and submission as a result of previous study. The School will advise applicants of the deadlines and requirements in their offer letter.

Interruption of Study

21. Candidates and supervisors are expected to familiarise themselves with the regulations relating to these forms of interruption and to comply with the relevant School regulations and procedures concerning them.
22. Research programmes are intended to be continuous. To meet the requirements for award research students are expected to demonstrate the ability to devise and manage a research project within the constraints of the degree requirements and deadlines. In some cases students may not be able to continue with their normal registration and an interruption of study may be sought through submission of an *Application for Interruption of Study Form* via PhD Manager for the consideration of the Director of Doctoral Studies. Applications for interruption must be supported by the supervisor and will be granted only in exceptional circumstances. Applications must include supporting documentation. Clarification of the nature of accepted supporting documentation is available from the Doctoral School. Interruption is considered on a term-by-term basis and the maximum period of interruption allowed in any research degree programme is three terms.
23. Doctoral candidate's wishing to interrupt their studies for a period of maternity or paternity leave should consult the Maternity and Paternity Policy.
24. Extension of Writing-up (Continuation) and Interruption of Study may affect issues such as council tax exemption, travel discounts and visas. Students and supervisors should seek advice from the Doctoral School if they are unsure of these implications.
25. Doctoral Candidates should first check with their funding body if their scholarship allows for a period of interruption.
26. Doctoral Candidates granted interruption status are not actively enrolled and do not have access to Supervision during the period of interruption, but they continue to be able to use the library facilities on a visitor basis and may also to make use of some Professional Services Departments. They are encouraged to remain in contact with their supervisors in order to plan their return to study.

27. Interruption of study can neither be applied for, nor conferred, retrospectively.

Programme Requirements

Enrolment and Payment of Fees

28. All doctoral candidates must complete enrolment requirements stipulated by SOAS Registry at the start of their programme and at the beginning of each subsequent academic session of their programme. This includes payment of any required fees in accordance with SOAS policy.
29. Candidates returning from overseas fieldwork/research must complete re- enrolment requirements stipulated by Registry on return to SOAS.
30. Candidates who fail to comply with enrolment requirements will be in breach of such conditions as outlined in the Academic Regulations for Research Degree Programmes and be at risk of withdrawal.

Annual Progression Review

31. Candidates enrolled on a research degree at SOAS are assessed by an Annual Progression Review to be completed by both supervisor and student.
32. Candidates will not be permitted to progress and re-enrol for the following academic session without confirmation of satisfactory progression and expected completion within the degree requirements.
33. Failure to submit the Annual Progression Review may lead to the Doctoral School initiating the Withdrawal Policy for Research Students.

PhD Manager

34. Use of SOAS' online PhD Manager is mandatory for all research degree candidates and their supervisors. All candidates must update PhD Manager with an appropriate qualitative account of their supervisory meetings; this may vary in detail according to the discussion that took place. Supervisors are responsible for assuring that the occurrence of supervision and its form (whether face to face or not) are noted. They should also review the supervisee's written accounts of supervision.
35. All required forms for upgrade, fieldwork, change requests and examination must be completed via PhD Manager.
36. It is the responsibility of the research candidates to maintain and update PhD Manager for their own long-term benefit.

Upgrade to PhD

37. SOAS doctoral candidates are initially registered on an MPhil/PhD and, subject to satisfactory

progress, subsequently transferred to PhD status.

38. Consideration for transfer will take place after nine months' study in the first year except for students on the +4 pathway who will be considered for upgrade after nine months' of study in the second year of full-time enrolment. after nine months' of study in their second year of part- time enrolment except for students on the +4 pathway who would be considered for upgrade in the fourth year of enrolment. Candidates may not leave for overseas fieldwork unless they have completed the consideration for upgrade and submitted the Fieldwork Application Form via PhD Manager.
39. The process of transfer to PhD is appropriate to the discipline but will involve consideration by the Supervisory Committee of the candidate's progress in meeting the requirements of the MPhil training programme, in preparing written work (including draft chapters), and in making oral presentations (including seminars) to a suitable standard. Where possible, the process should include a meeting between the student and his/her Upgrade Committee, at which the candidate may be asked to give an oral presentation.
40. A transfer should not be approved unless the candidate has fully satisfied the Supervisory Committee as to their competence in written and spoken English as well as to the research content of the thesis.
41. Decisions available to Supervisory Committees are set out in section 5.5. of the Academic Regulations for Research Degree Programmes and must be entered via PhD Manager. In case of recommendations under 5.5. (c) and (d), a Research Degree Panel will be convened
42. The outcome of the process should clearly indicate that the research is in accordance with the Schools Ethics Policy and either:
 - a) that the candidate will be transferred to PhD status;
 - b) that the candidate's transfer has been deferred to a specific date and subject to certain stated requirements;
 - c) that the transfer is not approved, but the candidate can continue for an MPhil degree only; or
 - d) that the programme of study be terminated.

Training and Research

43. The PhD involves three years of full-time supervised study (six years part-time) followed by submission of the thesis for examination no later than four years from initial enrolment (seven years part-time). For students on the +4 pathway this is four years full- time and eight years part-time. PhD work in the UK differs from the typical American PhD because it places greater emphasis on individual research and less on taught courses. It is expected that candidates will have already completed postgraduate taught courses in the form of a UK taught Masters degree (MRes, MA, MSc, MMus or LLM for example), or an equivalent recognised by the School, and obtained good results before starting a PhD Programme.
44. A PhD at SOAS does include elements of teaching and of research training, especially in the first year of study (two years part-time). Training requirements vary between departments and full details of departmental training requirements will be available from the Department.

45. There are two common core modules for new first year research candidates which address essential research skills that all MPhil/PhD candidates need to develop regardless of their disciplines.
46. Research candidates should use the annual Training Needs Analysis on PhD Manager, in discussion with their supervisor, to identify courses from the Doctoral Skills Development Programme and any Departmental modules they may wish to audit. Research candidates should note that some Departmental provision may be mandatory.

Research Ethics

50. The SOAS Research Ethics Policy (<https://www.soas.ac.uk/research/ethics/file138895.pdf>) sets out the ethical principles which staff, candidates and researchers are expected to follow when conducting research under the auspices of SOAS and defines the unacceptable behavior which will be treated by the School as research misconduct.

Fieldwork

47. SOAS defines fieldwork for doctoral researchers as including periods of absence from SOAS during enrolment covering any practical research activity performed in places outside the control of the School, but where the School retains responsibility for the candidate. Specific activities covered might include, but not be limited to: participant observation, mass observation, interviewing, holding focus groups, archival research, conducting surveys, collecting samples, recording performances. Doctoral researchers and their supervisors should note that approval of fieldwork plans is not guaranteed and they should provide ample time for the processes through which application must be approved by the department and Research Ethics Panel (as necessary).
48. Many doctoral researchers will undertake periods of research away from SOAS which would not require them to be enrolled on fieldwork status. This may be for shorter trips overseas or for research undertaken elsewhere in the UK. The supervisor and supervisee must ensure that a clear record is kept of such arrangements and that any absence of over one calendar month is logged on PhD Manager in advance by submitting a Fieldwork Application form.
49. A maximum of three terms' overseas fieldwork is normally permitted in a full-time PhD Programme. In many cases a research proposal will plan a period of extended fieldwork outside the UK during the second year of full-time registration. Any longer periods require the permission of the relevant Director of Doctoral Studies who will approve cases only where clear academic grounds have been presented by (or through) the supervisor and has been demonstrated that extended or late fieldwork will not affect completion of research within the deadlines for the degree. No doctoral candidate will be permitted to proceed to overseas fieldwork until transferred to PhD status and their fieldwork has been approved by the Doctoral School.
50. A Fieldwork Application Form must be completed on PhD Manager well in advance for each period of overseas fieldwork requested or for any amendments to previously agreed arrangements. This form must be submitted, at least two months before departing for the fieldwork. Non-standard fieldwork applications will need the approval of the Director of Doctoral Studies.
51. Any ethical issues arising during the fieldwork which were not anticipated during the process

of ethical approval at upgrade must be referred to the Director of Doctoral Studies who may potentially refer them to the Research Ethics Panel for review.

52. Before overseas fieldwork is approved the doctoral candidate and supervisor should discuss in some detail and well in advance the purpose of this fieldwork, the following (this information will also be required to be added into the fieldwork application form):
- the nature, location and duration of the research
 - the need for additional research funds (and any applications that need to be made as a result),
 - what visas, letters of recommendation and other documents need to be obtained before the fieldwork begins
 - what health measures may be necessary
 - a risk assessment of the proposed fieldwork
 - how (and how often) contact between student and supervisor is to be maintained
53. A risk assessment of the proposed fieldwork must be made. It is the candidate's responsibility to assess the risk, to discuss this, as necessary, with the supervisor and others and to make sure that they take out appropriate insurance. The School advises all candidates to consult Foreign Office guidance and NOT to travel to countries or areas contrary to FO advice. Confirmation that a risk assessment has been undertaken must be given on the Fieldwork Application Form.
54. At least monthly contact with the supervisor, by telephone or e-mail, is expected while the doctoral researcher is engaged in fieldwork. PhD Manager must continue to be completed during periods of overseas fieldwork. It is important for supervisees to contact both the supervisor and the Doctoral School if fieldwork plans change.
55. On return, supervisors may expect a written report on the progress made during the fieldwork period.

Writing-up

56. The third year of the PhD (or part-time equivalent) is normally devoted to drafting and re-drafting the chapters. A complete draft of the thesis is required by the end of year three. For doctoral researchers on the +4 pathway this requirement takes place during the fourth year of full-time enrolment (or part-time equivalent).
57. Subject to satisfactory annual progression review at the end of year three (or part-time equivalent) doctoral researchers may enrol for a maximum of three terms on Extension of Writing-up (Continuation) status. For those on the +4 pathway Extension of Writing-up (Continuation) status would be considered at the end of the fourth year of full-time enrolment.
58. For MPhil candidates a completed draft thesis and transfer to Extension of Writing-up (Continuation) status is required by the end of year two (or part-time equivalent).
59. Under Extension of Writing-up (Continuation) status candidates will continue to have access to School facilities, including use of the SOAS Library.

60. Extension of Writing-up enrolment is at a reduced fee from full-time or part- time enrolment and is available on the understanding that:
- a) The candidate is at an advanced stage of writing-up; the thesis is substantially complete in conception and requires supervision; the level of supervision anticipated will normally be one meeting every two months.
 - b) The candidate will complete writing-up and submit the thesis for examination within three terms or by their thesis submission deadline (whichever is sooner).

Entry to Examination

61. The candidate for doctoral examination will need to fill in the appropriate examination entry form for submitting the thesis. *This form should be completed via PhD Manager TWO MONTHS before the intended date of submission to avoid delays in appointment of examiners and arrangement of the examination.*
62. It is the responsibility of the supervisor to recommend examiners in accordance with the nomination guidelines. At least one of the examiners will be external to the School. The Doctoral School will appoint a Chair as set out in section 6.7 of the Academic Regulations for Research Degree Programmes.
63. Only the following people are permitted to be in attendance at the viva:
- a) the candidate
 - b) the nominated examiners
 - c) a supervisor; and
 - d) a nominated Independent Chair
64. It is the responsibility of the candidate to see that the thesis is prepared in the approved format. It is especially important to follow the maximum length for MPhil (60,000 words) and PhD (100,000 words) theses. The bibliography is excluded from the word count; footnotes are included within the word count; appendices are excluded from the word count and should only include material which examiners are not required to read in order to examine the thesis, but to which they may refer if they wish.
65. For both MPhil and PhD degrees candidates are required both to submit a thesis of the required standard *and* to defend their work to the satisfaction of the examiners in a viva (oral examination).
66. At the first examination, examiners assessing a PhD or MPhil thesis are required to reach a unanimous decision on the outcome as per sections 6.11 and 6.12 of the Academic Regulations for Research Degree Programmes.

Responsibilities

Joint Responsibilities of Supervisor and Supervisee

67. It is a fundamental requirement that there should be regular meetings between the supervisee and their supervisor. These should normally be of at least one hour's duration. As a general guideline, full-time doctoral candidates and their supervisors should consider meeting fortnightly during the first year and monthly during subsequent years of the full-time enrolment (or part-time equivalent). It is understood that variations may be required to this suggested timeframe and we expect appropriate arrangements to be maintained accordingly. It is to be expected that Supervisor and supervisee availability may require adjustments to this schedule outside the School's taught course term dates. When this is the case arrangements must be agreed for these periods (whether by adjustment to the meeting schedule or by correspondence and/or telephone), to reflect that research degrees involve year round enrolment, study and academic support.
68. As far as possible, supervisor and supervisee should agree an agenda for future meetings. They should update PhD Manager with a record of when meetings are held, the nature of (and deadlines for) any work to be completed or submitted, and the date and time of the next meeting. They are also advised to keep note of the main issues and problems discussed.
69. During the first year of full-time registration, the supervisor and doctoral candidate should work together to draw up a research plan and a timetable for the research, including any periods of fieldwork. The plan should clearly mark out the stage by which a doctoral candidate is expected to have completed a given point in the research, must take into account the restraints of time and resources and should allow for completion of active research and submission of draft thesis within 36 months of initial registration (72 months part-time) and submission of the thesis for examination within 48 months (84 months part-time). For those on the +4 pathway these deadlines are varied accordingly.
70. All doctoral candidates (including those studying part-time) must attend a research training programme and fulfil any other stated requirements of their course. A Training Needs Analysis should be made with the supervisor at the start of the academic year and reviewed annually bearing in mind the demands of the doctoral project and the reasonable requirements of Early Career Researcher training. This should be recorded via PhD Manager and matched against courses available. Where necessary the advice of the Doctoral Training Advisor may be sought, and the approval of the Head of the Doctoral School sought for exceptional training needs.
71. A supervisor should respond to any written work, either orally or in writing, within one month of it being submitted. If because of the length or complexity of the written work, or because of ill health, or pressing demands on their time, the supervisor is unable to respond within one month, they should inform the supervisee of this at the time the work is submitted, or as soon as possible thereafter, and clearly indicate when a response will be given.
72. If a supervisor expects to be absent from SOAS for a period of more than one calendar month, they should inform the supervisee and departmental Director of Doctoral Studies accordingly. Where necessary alternative arrangements must be made to maintain active contact (e.g. by e-mail or through the Supervisory Committee). A doctoral candidate or doctoral researcher expecting to be absent from SOAS for more than one month during term

time (and outside agreed periods of fieldwork) must inform the supervisor, make alternative arrangements for supervision and ensure that a Fieldwork Application Form is lodged with the Doctoral School.

73. It is the responsibility of both the supervisee and their supervisor to maintain cordial and constructive relations with a view to ensuring effective supervision and satisfactory completion of the thesis. However, in situations where, in the view of the supervisee and/or supervisor, relations between them have broken down, either party should contact the Department Director of Doctoral Studies and/or Head of the Doctoral School. Initially a review will be undertaken to confirm whether the relationship can be restored, potentially utilising mediation. Or upon review an alternative supervisor may be allocated.
74. Particular attention must be given by the Departmental Director of Doctoral Studies and Supervisory Committee to the impending retirement or departure of an existing supervisor or periods of research leave. It is the responsibility of the Director of Doctoral Studies and Head of Department to ensure that arrangements are made well in advance, in consultation with the supervisee, concerning a replacement supervisor.
75. Both Supervisor and supervisee must ensure understanding of and adherence to relevant ethical standards and research expectations for the academic discipline.

Supervisory Committee Responsibilities the Supervisor

76. The responsibilities of the first supervisor are:
 - a) to agree with the doctoral candidate a suitable topic for research that can be completed and written up within the prescribed period of study. Full-time doctoral researchers are required to submit within four years (three full-time years and the Writing-up year) and part-time doctoral researchers within seven years (six part-time years and the Writing-up year). Doctoral researchers on the +4 pathway are required to submit within five years (four years full-time and the Extension of Writing-up year) and part-time doctoral researchers within nine years (eight years part-time and the Extension of Writing-up year);
 - b) to assist the supervisee in making full use of the facilities provided by the School and to encourage the supervisee to play a full part in the intellectual and social life of the School;
 - c) to assist the Director of Doctoral Studies to appoint a full Supervisory Committee, normally within six weeks of the student's enrolment on the degree;
 - d) to establish a timetable of regular meetings with the doctoral candidate at which all matters relating to, or affecting, the doctoral work are discussed. These meetings are normally held fortnightly during the first year and monthly during subsequent years of full-time enrolment or part-time equivalent;
 - e) to oversee the supervisee's maintenance of supervisory records on PhD Manager and assuring that supervisory meetings are logged;
 - f) no later than six weeks after registration to agree with the doctoral candidate the subject and basic structure of the research project, an appropriate research method, and

- a realistic plan of work, and to advise on any additional skills required;
- g) to ensure that a training needs analysis (TNA) is undertaken annually at the start of each academic session and that the needs identified are subsequently matched to provision;
 - h) to agree with the supervisee a realistic timetable for completion of the research and writing-up of the thesis. This must allow for completion of active research and a draft thesis within the deadline for submission.
 - i) to monitor progress of the doctoral research in accordance with the agreed schedule and to advise the Director of Doctoral Studies, and Doctoral School of any issues as they arise;
 - j) to arrange (in consultation with the Supervisory Committee and the Director of Doctoral Studies) for a replacement supervisor in the event of any absence in excess of one calendar month;
 - k) to maintain supervision during periods of research leave or to arrange for assumption of supervision by another member of the Supervisory Committee for the period of leave if continuing supervision is not feasible;
 - l) to ensure that the project is progressed in accordance with the School's regulations and procedures in respect of on-campus research degrees;
 - m) to inform the doctoral candidate about requirements for, and procedures relating to transfer to PhD; to initiate the transfer at the appropriate time; to liaise with other members of the Supervisory Committee concerning the transfer and to supply them with copies of written materials for assessment; to advise the Director of Doctoral Studies and to inform the supervisee of the result and consequences of the decision concerning transfer;
 - n) where transfer has not been initiated following consideration for upgrade, to raise with the departmental Director of Doctoral Studies the question of whether or not the candidate should be given a further opportunity to proceed to a PhD, remain as an MPhil student, or have his/her registration terminated;
 - o) the supervisor must make himself/herself aware of any requirements of the supervisee's funding body, report promptly on the supervisee's progress when required to do so by the Head of the Doctoral School or external funding bodies, and ensure, as far as possible, that the doctoral research is completed within the prescribed period;
 - p) to advise the supervisee on correct research procedures, including the dangers of plagiarism, and to report to the Director of Doctoral Studies any persistent research misconduct, including plagiarism;
 - q) at an appropriate point in the doctoral researcher's study (and in accordance with SOAS regulations) make recommendations for the appointment of internal and external examiners and ensure that the doctoral examination candidate enters for the MPhil or PhD examination in good time (at least two months before submission) and submits the thesis within the School deadline; and
 - r) to advise the doctoral examination candidate on SOAS regulations about research theses

and procedures relating to research degree vivas and their outcomes.

Second Member of the Supervisory Committee

77. The responsibilities of the second member of the Supervisory Committee are:

- a) where possible the second member of the Supervisory Committee should be selected before, or as soon as possible after, a doctoral candidate's enrolment and no later than six weeks of the start of the research degree;
- b) to enhance or augment the supervision of the doctoral candidate by contributing additional guidance and expertise;
- c) to maintain an active involvement with the general progress of the supervisee's work and to participate in decisions relating to his/her transfer to PhD, eligibility for enrolment on Extension of Writing-up (Continuation) Status or, where necessary, termination of registration; and
- d) to act on behalf of the supervisor during unforeseen periods of absence

78. A third member of a supervisory committee is appointed only in exceptional circumstances of demonstrable need for supervision in a niche area that the first and second supervisors cannot meet.

Supervisee Responsibilities

79. The responsibilities of the supervisee are:

- a) to attend meetings with their supervisor as and when arranged, to meet agreed deadlines for work, to agree an agenda for future meetings and bring to supervision meetings topics or research material for discussion, and to inform the supervisor and update PhD Manager of any likely absence of more than one calendar month (apart from approved periods of fieldwork);
- b) to carry out their research effectively, to an approved standard, and within the prescribed period of study and deadlines.
- c) to participate in, and satisfy the requirements of their MPhil/PhD training programme and personal training needs analysis (TNA) assessment;
- d) to agree and abide by a timetable for regular meetings with the supervisor, to submit written work (allowing sufficient time for the supervisor to read and comment on the work) and to make such oral or seminar presentations as may be required by the supervisor or departmental Director of Doctoral Studies;
- e) to be aware of the School's regulations and procedures in respect of research degrees and to ensure that enrolment and registration requirements are completed correctly;
- f) to follow the School's procedures with respect to transfer to PhD;

- g) to complete such reports and returns as are required by the supervisor and Departmental Director of Doctoral Studies via PhD Manager;
- h) to maintain PhD Manager with details of supervisory meetings, research training, research progress and issues arising. PhD Manager must be updated for every supervisory meeting; an agreed record of the number and nature of supervision meetings will be particularly valuable in order for both the supervisor and supervisee to complete the required annual report forms, and as an agreed record in the event of any appeals procedure.
- i) to contact the other members of the Supervisory Committee as appropriate;
- j) to pursue research actively while based at SOAS, University of London, except during periods of approved interruption or overseas fieldwork.
- k) to remain in contact by appropriate and agreed means with the supervisor during periods of fieldwork;
- l) to bring any complaints or problems (including those of a medical nature) to the attention of the supervisor and/or Director of Doctoral Studies, and to inform the supervisor of any problems seriously affecting the progress of research and writing;
- m) to consult in confidence with the Director of Doctoral Studies (or, where appropriate, the Head of Department) if it is felt that a change of supervisor is necessary; and
- n) to follow the requirements of the School with respect to the submission and examination of research theses.

Director of Doctoral Studies

80. The main responsibilities of the Director of Doctoral Studies are:

- a) to oversee the selection and admission of new MPhil/PhD degree applications and the allocation and notification to those concerned of supervisors and Supervisory Committees except where the Department has appointed a Research Admissions Tutor to undertake this responsibility;
- b) to organise (and, where appropriate, run) a training programme for MPhil/PhD students;
- c) to ensure the distribution and the prompt completion and return of annual report forms and other reports concerning doctoral candidates and researchers, whose progression is dependent on receipt of a satisfactory annual report from the supervisor. Enrolment for the next year of the programme will not be permitted unless this requirement is met;
- d) to ensure effective knowledge and operation of departmental procedures for doctoral candidates' transfer from MPhil to PhD status;
- e) to ensure effective monitoring of the progress of doctoral researchers on Maintenance of Registration status;

- f) to ensure timely submission of Annual Research Programme Review to the Doctoral School Management Group;
- g) to maintain, with the Doctoral School, an accurate and up-to-date record of all postgraduate researchers' registration status; and
- h) in association with the Head of Department, to achieve or maintain satisfactory completion rates within the department.

Head of Department

81. The responsibilities of the Head of Department are as follows:

- a) to exercise overall responsibility for the welfare, academic progress and support facilities of postgraduate researchers in the department;
- b) to ensure that the requirements set out in this Code of Practice are followed and in particular to ensure that the procedures for effective supervision and progress monitoring of postgraduate researchers are fully implemented; and
- c) to delegate, where appropriate, responsibility for day-to-day organisation of postgraduate training and supervision in the department to a departmental Director of Doctoral Studies, and to assist them in ensuring the maintenance of satisfactory submission, completion and success rates.

Doctoral School Management Group

82. The responsibilities of the Doctoral School Management Group are:

- a) to run the facilities of the Doctoral School in liaison with the Research Student Association;
- b) to co-ordinate the management of the School's Postgraduate Research Degrees;
- c) to report to the Research and Enterprise Committee on policy and procedural changes relating to the School's research degrees and to seek approvals from REC where required; and
- d) To consider Annual Research Programme Reviews submitted from Departments.
- e) to oversee all matters relating to research degrees including training, upgrade procedures, monitoring of progress, completion and success rates, examination procedures and quality assurance;
- f) to provide a forum for all departments and postgraduate research representatives to discuss matters relating to postgraduate researchers and research degrees;
- g) to ensure comparability in the rigour of upgrade procedures across doctoral programmes, and that information on them is available on departmental websites

Further Reading

a) Official Regulations and Procedures

SOAS research degrees are subject to the SOAS Postgraduate Research Degree Regulations (MPhil/PhD) available on the Registry website here:

<http://www.soas.ac.uk/registry/degeregulations/>

Postgraduate researchers must also be aware of individual departmental procedures relating to issues such as research degree training and discipline specific procedures for the MPhil upgrade. These are included in Departmental handbooks and are available on relevant departmental web pages.

b) Internet Resources

There are various places on the web to find further information and advice regarding SOAS research degrees including:

Research at SOAS

<http://www.soas.ac.uk/research/>

SOAS Doctoral School

<http://www.soas.ac.uk/doctorschool/>

Faculty and Departmental Websites

<http://www.soas.ac.uk/academic/>

Research Students Association website

<https://www.soas.ac.uk/research/rsa/>

SOAS Students Union

<http://soasunion.org/>

Student Advice and Wellbeing

<http://www.soas.ac.uk/studentadviceandwellbeing/>

SOAS Careers Service

<https://www.soas.ac.uk/careers/>

Information for Current Students

<https://www.soas.ac.uk/students/>

Equality and Diversity

<https://www.soas.ac.uk/equalitydiversity/>

School Policies

<http://www.soas.ac.uk/admin/governance/policies/>

Document Version

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2015/16	Marcus Cerny, Doctoral School Manager		September 2015
2016/17	Marcus Cerny, Doctoral School Manager	Clarification of 5.1 in relation to condoned fails. Approved by ADC 24.05.2016.	September 2016
2017/18			August 2017
2018/19	Jenni Rhodes, Interim Academic Registrar		August 2018
2019/20	Jenni Rhodes, Academic Registrar, in consultation with Professor Richard Fardon, Head of Doctoral School	Terminology and job title updates in line with restructuring	January 2020
2022/23	Andres Chavez Ocana, Head of Student Strategic Initiatives, Philip Ramge, Academic Registrar	Updated to reflected revised Academic Regulations for Research Degree Programmes 2022/23	September 2022