

GUIDANCE IN RESPECT OF REMOTE SUPERVISION OF RESEARCH STUDENTS

Context

The Graduate Research Studies Board (GRSB) is receiving an increasing number of requests for research students to be permitted to reside abroad for lengthy periods, and sometimes for the entire duration of their studies. As such, the purpose of this document is to set out guidance in relation to considering remote supervision, where it is expected that a student will be resident abroad for a period greater than six months.

This document should be considered in conjunction with DCU's *Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis*¹. This document may be used to facilitate discussion and decision at school level as to the appropriateness of allowing a research student to reside abroad for part, or the entirety, of their research studies.

Current regulations

Under the current *Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis* (section 4.5 and 7.15)

- Where a research candidate is resident outside Ireland for **6 months or more** over the period of registration, and the registration is not subject to a co-supervision or joint award agreement with an external institution, **the Graduate Research Studies Board should be informed.**
- Where a research candidate is resident outside Ireland for the **full period of registration**, and the registration is not subject to a co-supervision or joint award agreement with an external institution, **approval from the Graduate Research Studies Board is required.**

In such instances the regulations stipulate that:

- A written agreement must be in place² (and an associated PGR13 form should be submitted to Registry³)
- The DCU supervisor/s must have access to relevant data and/or detailed information on facilities/field sites
- Regular contact must be maintained between the student and supervisor/s
- A mechanism for communication must be established

Existing enrolment scenarios

1. The student is resident in Ireland for the duration of their studies.
2. The student is normally resident in Ireland with permission to reside abroad for period greater than 6 months for specific purpose - PGR13 FORM AND WITH REMOTE SUPERVISION AGREEMENT IS REQUIRED.

¹ DCU regulations, policies and procedures take precedence at all times and in all cases.

² A template Remote Supervision agreement is available from: [<https://www.dcu.ie/graduatestudies/info-supervisors.shtml#Doc-policy>]

³ PGR13 – Permission to Reside / Carry out Research Abroad form: https://www.dcu.ie/registry/application_forms.shtml#research

3. The student is not normally resident in Ireland but required to attend DCU at certain times - PGR13 FORM AND REMOTE SUPERVISION AGREEMENT IS REQUIRED.

Reasons why permission to reside abroad might be sought


- For the purpose of collecting data/accessing research subjects not available locally and specific to the research context
- For the purpose of accessing specialised equipment or resources not available locally
- To spend time in a partner institution, research facility or enterprise partner
- To return to their home country/to remain in their home country for personal, family, financial or employment reasons

Areas for consideration by Supervisor and Head of School in requests for remote supervision

It is preferred that a research student conduct their studies locally to DCU to allow them to access the full range of supports and services available to students. In cases where remote supervision is being requested, the following areas should be addressed in the remote supervision agreement:

Why Choose DCU?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has consideration been given to any local Institution to which the candidate could register? Are the reasons for choosing DCU valid?
Joint Supervision Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has consideration been given to any local academic supervision (via secondary external supervision) support for the student (in the host country) during the period of request?
Training, Skills Development and other Student Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will the student access relevant training, skills development opportunities and student supports as required? • Has consideration been given to any local supports available to the student (in the host country) or online supports such as Doctoralnet etc.? • Can short visits to DCU be factored into the agreement/funding to allow the student to access certain resources and supports?
Library Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will library access be managed? • Will access to online library resources be sufficient? • Are there other physical library resources required which will necessitate access to DCU or other library during the course of the research?
Access to Research Facilities/Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will access to other research resources be required? • Have you planned how access to lab space, IT or other research equipment etc. will be managed?
Maintaining Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will communication with the student be maintained?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there certain periods that you will require the student to be physically present in DCU (annual review for example)? • Will the supervisor make visits to the student's locality? • Who will cover the costs of any visits? • Has a schedule of meetings and suitable modes of communication been agreed? <p>Note: It may prove more difficult to identify where a student is in crisis or struggling either personally or academically. Regular, planned contact is especially important in remote supervision arrangements.</p>
Access to Research / Disciplinary Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An important component of the research process is having access to a research community. How will this be addressed for the remote student? • Have you considered attendance at workshops, modules, conferences, doctoral seminars (at the candidates location or at DCU) as part of the students overall research training/experience?
Supervisor Access to site / data / research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has a data management plan been agreed by the student and supervisor/s? • Is there an agreement as to how the supervisor will access the research site/facility when required? • Has any potential IP been discussed?
Ethical Issues, Legal Jurisdictions, insurance and visas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have all ethical and legal requirements of DCU, Ireland and the host country been addressed to identify any potential issues? • Has the student been made aware that prior approval from the DCU Research Ethics Committee is required, regardless of where the research is being conducted? • Have any potential insurance issues been addressed, particularly in relation to the host labs/institutions/industry partners? • Have any potential visa issues been addressed which may prevent the student travelling to DCU as required (for the face-to-face meetings and <i>viva voce</i> for example)?

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