



Ollscoil Chathair  
Bhaile Átha Cliath  
Dublin City University

# Graduate Research Guide 2022 - 2023

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## Dean's Welcome

Graduate research is quite distinct from taught programmes as it offers students the opportunity to work with a high degree of autonomy. Each student pursues a unique project over several years, working closely with senior researchers, and often technical staff. This offers students invaluable developmental opportunities and it is a great strength of graduate research. The nature of this independent research presents a challenge to the University in terms of providing the best support, and developing suitable policies and regulations appropriate across all disciplines.

For most students, the need for specific knowledge about the DCU environment, regulations, processes and forms arises as a once-off as they encounter a new need or requirement in progressing through their work. Understandably, students only need (or want) to know some things at the point in time when they need to know them. Supervisors, and other colleagues, are more likely to have cause to check the guide to ensure their understanding is up to date, as policies change. For most, the guide is not cover-to-cover recommended reading at any stage, but parts of it will be invaluable at specific stages of candidature, at particular times of the year or when particular unexpected circumstances arise.

The Graduate Research Guide is revised annually. Particular thanks are due to Graduate Studies staff who undertake the significant task of updating the guide each year, and to Registry and RIS staff for their input. We hope the guide is a comprehensive resource, but if you need any further information or help, please contact my colleagues in the [Graduate Studies Office](#). We are also interested in hearing feedback so please feel free to contact us – details are provided on the next page.

Finally, please note that every effort has been made to ensure the information provided is correct at the time of publication and, in as much as is possible, we have used live links to ensure readers can access current information. The guide is intended as an information resource – current DCU regulations, policies and procedures take precedence at all times and in all cases.



Professor Joseph Stokes, Dean of Graduate Studies

## Keep in touch with Graduate Studies

Graduate Studies Office:

Ground floor of the McNulty Building, DCU Glasnevin Campus, Dublin 9.

[Graduate Studies Office website](#)

**Telephone:** +3531 700 5136 / 5214 / 6341 / 7655

**Email:** [graduatestudiesoffice@dcu.ie](mailto:graduatestudiesoffice@dcu.ie)

**Twitter:** @DCUGradStudies

Queries regarding this publication should be sent by email to

[graduatestudiesoffice@dcu.ie](mailto:graduatestudiesoffice@dcu.ie)

## DCU Campuses

DCU is a multi-campus university. Detailed maps of each of the following DCU campuses are available from the DCU website:

- [DCU Glasnevin Campus map](#)
- [DCU St Patrick's Campus map](#)
- [DCU All Hallows Campus map](#)
- DCU Sports Campus
- DCU Alpha



The background is a vibrant abstract composition. It features a large dark blue rectangle on the right side, which serves as a backdrop for the title. The rest of the image is filled with various geometric shapes: a large dark blue circle in the top left, a large light yellow circle in the middle left, and several smaller circles in yellow and blue. There are also thick, stylized lines in yellow and blue, some forming a path-like shape. The overall color palette is dominated by yellow, blue, and white, creating a modern and energetic feel.

# 1

## Introduction

# 1. Introduction to the DCU Research Environment

The University is partner of choice in a vast array of projects, including industry projects and projects with public or private enterprise.

## 1.1 Research at Dublin City University

A core element of DCU's vision is to be a globally-significant university, renowned for its discovery and translation of knowledge to advance society. This commitment to world-class research is central to DCU's Research and Innovation Strategy, which builds on research strengths across faculties and research centres.

### 1.1.1 DCU Research

DCU Research, under the leadership of the Vice-President for Research, is responsible for sustaining a vibrant research environment at DCU. The research component of DCU's mission is supported centrally by four core teams: [Research Development](#), [Research Support](#), [Research Project Administration](#) and [Research Infrastructure](#), with the European Consortium of Innovative Universities (ECIU) and policy functions also playing key roles.

These teams facilitate excellent research and research impact, support the enhancement of DCU's research reputation and strategic national and international partnerships, provide sector-leading and integrated professional support for DCU's research communities and enhance internal research policy and process landscape to ensure DCU's research is conducted to the highest possible standards. The unit's fundamental objective is support DCU's researchers to transform lives and societies locally, nationally and globally.

### 1.1.2 DCU's Research Engine

The DCU Research Engine is the portal through which academic staff showcase their research activity and output. Academic staff often choose to include the postgraduate students they are currently supervising on this portal. If you do not wish your name to be published on your supervisor's profile, please contact your principal supervisor to request that it is removed. This applies to principal supervisors, joint principal supervisors and secondary supervisors.

### 1.1.3 DCU Research Lifecycle Resource

Understanding the complexity of the research funding lifecycle can be challenging for early stage researchers. To assist you, DCU Research have mapped the seven stages of an externally-funded research project –

from defining your project idea and applying for funding, through to running and finishing your project. The Research Lifecycle resource clarifies research processes and provides researchers with information on where to access relevant supports and services at each stage. The content has been informed through engagements with over a hundred stakeholders across the university, including researchers and research support staff from all faculties and relevant professional support units. This resource is available via the DCU Research Lifecycle webpages and will be reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure it continues to meet researcher needs.

## 1.2 DCU Research Programmes

### 1.2.1 Research Degrees

The University's higher degrees by research include:

1. Master's by research and thesis including: MA Master of Arts, MPhil Master of Philosophy, MBS Master of Business Studies, MEng Master of Engineering, MSc Master of Science, LLM Master of Laws, and MEd Master of Education
2. Doctor of Philosophy, PhD
3. Professional Doctorates including: EdD Doctor of Education, DBA Doctor of Business Administration, DPsych Doctor of Psychotherapy, DProfElite Doctor of Elite Performance (Sport)

Further information is available from [the University's Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis](#).

#### **Distribution of DCU research degree student registrations in 2021-22:**

Degree Programme	Distribution of DCU research degree registrations (%) 2021-22
Master's by research	6%
PhD-track	36%
PhD	43%
Professional Doctorate	15%

The Higher Doctorate is the highest qualification awarded to DCU graduates and staff by the University and it is awarded in recognition of

published work and/or other material of high distinction resulting from research. It is awarded to scholars who have, over a sustained period, published a substantial body of ground-breaking and influential work and who have achieved outstanding distinction internationally in that field. Further details are available from the document: [Higher Doctorates: Provisions and Regulations](#).

### **1.2.2 Registration Periods and Modes of Study**

Candidates for a postgraduate research degree follow a programme of research and training for varying periods of time. The duration will vary depending on the degree, on whether the candidate is studying full-time or part-time and, in some instances, on the classification and content of their undergraduate degree and/or postgraduate degree.

Students register either on a full-time or part-time basis. The minimum full-time registration period required is normally two years for a Master's degree and a minimum of three, but typically four years for a PhD. Part-time registration is typically three years for a Master's degree and five for a PhD. The minimum registration period for a Professional Doctorate, which is usually part-time, is four years. The part-time research format aims to facilitate graduates who are in employment and/or balancing study with work, family or other commitments.

### **1.2.3 Programme outcomes**

The Irish Universities Doctoral Skills Statement outlines the desired learning outcomes and skills that doctoral students will have acquired during their doctoral education and training. The skills identified by the Irish Universities Association as relevant to a Doctoral candidate's education are outlined below and will vary depending on the students' experiential learning, disciplinary and professional development needs<sup>1</sup>.

#### **IUA's Doctoral Candidate Skills:**

1. Research skills
2. Ethics and social understanding skills
3. Personal effectiveness transferable skills
4. Team-working and leadership skills
5. Entrepreneurship and innovation skills

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<sup>1</sup> [Irish Universities Doctoral Skills Statement](#), 2021

VITAE, a UK based non-profit organisation supporting the professional development of researchers, has developed the Researcher Development Framework (RDF), which ‘articulates the knowledge, behaviours and attributes of successful researchers and encourages them to realise their potential<sup>2</sup>’:

Domain	Sub-domain
Knowledge & Intellectual abilities	Knowledge base; cognitive abilities; creativity.
Personal effectiveness	Professional & career development; self-management; personal qualities.
Research governance & organisation	Professional conduct; research management; finance, funding & resources
Engagement, influence and impact	Engagement & impact; communication & dissemination; working with others.

The above skills are not a rigid standard but rather a guideline, and are compatible with the European Universities Association’s Salzburg Principles<sup>3</sup> endorsed by a Higher Education Authority (HEA) forum in March 2006<sup>4</sup>. The Salzburg principles recognise that the advancement of knowledge through original research is the core component of PhD education, but PhD education must also facilitate additional skills development opportunities, which must reflect student and discipline needs. Ireland’s National Framework for Doctoral Education<sup>5</sup> equally acknowledges that the skills developed through doctoral education should ‘relate both to the research process itself and to broader professional training and development’. In Europe and beyond, these ongoing developments in doctoral education have resulted in the establishment of more structured PhD offerings, which are tailored to help graduate researchers make the most of opportunities presented from a wide range of career opportunities. For more information on DCU’s structured PhD offerings (structured/doctoral pathways) refer to guide [Section 8.1.2](#).

<sup>2</sup> [VITAE Researcher Development Framework \(RDF\)](#), 2010.

<sup>3</sup> European University Association, report on the Bologna seminar: doctoral programmes for the European knowledge society, Salzburg, 3-5 February 2005, p.2.

<sup>4</sup> HEA, Graduate education forum – key guiding principles (2006), p.4.

<sup>5</sup> [National Framework for Doctoral Education](#) (2015), p.3.



2

**DCU Graduate  
School**

## 2. DCU Graduate School

Graduate research studies are central to the mission of DCU and postgraduate students contribute greatly to the University as a research intensive, globally engaged University. Postgraduate research students are the most diverse group on campus – mature students, international students and part-time students are all highly represented and contribute to the rich learning environment. The DCU Graduate School currently has just under 900 research students, registered across five faculties: Business, Engineering and Computing, Humanities and Social Sciences, Education and Science and Health. DCU registers in the region of over 200 new research students each year.

The DCU Graduate School, under the leadership of the Dean of Graduate Studies, includes a number of stakeholders/collaborators/management and professional supports:

- DCU Faculties
- Academic Management and Governance: Graduate Research Studies Board (GRSB)
- Research student training and development supported by the GSO
- Linked provider: DkIT

### 2.1 The Graduate Research Studies Board and Governance

The Graduate School is overseen by the Graduate Research Studies Board (GRSB) which is chaired by the Dean of Graduate Studies (see further information below). GRSB is responsible for all policies and procedures relating to graduate research, as well as performing key quality control functions in respect of postgraduate research progression and examination. GRSB meets 8 times per year, and it is a subcommittee of the Academic Council which has overall responsibility in all matters related to graduate research degrees. [GRSB membership](#) is detailed on the [QVPA website](#).

#### The Dean of Graduate Studies

The Dean of Graduate Studies is an academic leadership position held for a fixed period. The Dean is a member of DCU Executive, represents the postgraduate agenda at several University level committees, and plays a role in external engagement on behalf of DCU. The Dean reports to the Vice-President for Academic Affairs and maintains regular contact with the





Vice-President of Research.

## 2.2 The Graduate Studies Office (GSO)

Established in October 2011, and led by the Dean of Graduate Studies, the Graduate Studies Office (GSO) supports the development and delivery of postgraduate research in DCU and provides a range of support services for its postgraduate research students. The Dean also has a role in the University's oversight of postgraduate taught programmes.

The mission of the GSO is to support excellence in the provision of postgraduate education in DCU by providing leadership and working in collaboration with the staff, the student community and external partners. The GSO also works in partnership with [DCU Research](#) in the implementation of the University's strategic aims. GSO's three principal areas of responsibility include:

- Leading the development of all aspects of DCU's postgraduate research education
- Acting as champion for the needs of DCU's postgraduate student community
- Driving the development of DCU's postgraduate policy and planning

GSO engages in a diverse range of activities under these areas of responsibility, such as:

- Policy development and implementation for best practice in graduate research
- Orientation and induction programme for new research students
- Annual calendar of skills development events, seminars and workshops
- Tell It Straight Research Communications Competition
- Scholarship and industry internship programmes
- Internal and external collaborative projects, funding proposals and consortium activities at national, European and international level

### 2.2.1 Graduate Studies Office Team

GSO Staff Member's Name	Role
Prof Joseph Stokes, Dean of Graduate Studies	The Dean of Graduate Studies role is an academic leadership position, introduced by the University in 2011. The Dean is a member of DCU Executive, Research Committee, and Education Committee among others, and is responsible for steering the University agenda in all aspects of graduate research. The Dean heads up the Graduate Studies Office and his own academic background is in mechanical engineering.
Ms Karen Keating, Graduate Studies Manager	Responsible for managing the daily operations of the unit as well as coordinating a broad range of activities arising from DCU's external graduate research engagement projects including relationships with linked colleges, regional Graduate School partners, government agencies, national sectoral bodies and international partners. Also supports strategic planning of the University's postgraduate provision.
Mr Jonny Hobson, Research & Scholarships Administrator	The Research and Scholarships Administrator is responsible for the support and administration of IRC postgraduate scholarship schemes and internal DCU postgraduate scholarship schemes. Also responsible for the processing of monthly scholarship payments, conference and travel grants, Card Fee applications, while working closely with the University Fees Office with respect to postgraduate research fees.

GSO Staff Member's Name	Role
Ms Sharon King, Graduate Studies Project Officer	The Graduate Studies Project Officer organises and supports the annual Research Integrity Training Programme for research students.
Ms Linda Prosa, Graduate Skills Officer	The Graduate Skills Officer is responsible for the provision of postgraduate research skills training and the Orientation Programme, its internal and external communications, and reporting. Also supports the University's postgraduate provision.
Ms Taylor Gonzalez, PA to the Dean of Graduate Studies	The PA to the Dean is responsible for providing administrative support to the Dean, including diary management, preparation of agenda and meeting papers, travel and accommodation, and hospitality arrangements.

## 2.3 Academic Regulations, Roles & Responsibilities

### 2.3.1 Academic Regulations

The University's [Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis](#) detail and govern the entire process of undertaking postgraduate research at DCU. Their purpose is both to safeguard the academic standards of the University and the interests of individual students. The regulations are reviewed annually by GRSB.

### 2.3.2 Academic Roles and Responsibilities in Graduate Research

DCU research students are registered in an academic school (irrespective of affiliation to a research centre or institute) with the exception of students on the Professional Doctor of Education programme who register with the faculty. This means that in addition to the frequent practical support students receive from administrative and technical staff, they are also supported by a number of academics in their area, by their supervisor and other panel members, the Head of School, the faculty management and by the Dean of Graduate Studies.

Each student has a number of academic supports, including:

- Supervisor(s) and other panel members
- Head of School (Home School)
- Executive Dean of Faculty and/or Associate Dean for Research
- Dean of Graduate Studies

The roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder are defined in the [Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis](#), and are presented succinctly in the [DCU booklet Academic Roles and Responsibilities in Graduate Research](#).

### **2.3.3 Academic Calendar and Milestone Dates for Research Students**

The University's Schedule of Meetings provides information on [Graduate Research Studies Board meeting dates](#).

The [Academic Calendar](#) provides information on:

- Registration information: dates for online and in-person registration and changes of module choice
- Orientation for new postgraduate students
- Faculty Award Board for Research Degrees (FABRD) meeting dates
- GTE Award Board meeting dates
- Graduation ceremony dates
- Online Annual Progress Report submission deadline

#### **Key dates for Registry Postgraduate Research:**

- Online Annual Progress Report submission deadline
- Deadline for thesis submission for Spring and Autumn Conferings
- Submission deadlines for all PGR forms (see guide [Section 9.1](#) for full details of PGR form administration)

## Research Degree Stages and Progression

Research Degree Stage/Activity Phase	Master's Indicative Timeline (months)	PhD Full-Time Indicative Timeline	Key Activities and Milestones
Foundation	0-3	0-6	Registration; Orientation & Induction; Acclimatisation; First formal supervisory panel review (optional); Supervisory meetings; Personal and Professional Development Planning.
Consolidation	3-9	6-18/21	Registration; Formal supervisory panel meetings; Annual Progress Review submission; If PhD: PGR3 Application for Confirmation/Transfer to the PhD Register at 12-21 months.
Continuation	9-22	21-42	Registration; Annual Progress; Review submission; PGR4 Intention to Submit form; Thesis submission approved by supervisor; Submission of thesis within 3 months of PGR4.
Completion	22-24	42-48	Viva examination (doctoral students); PGR6 Examination Report;

<b>Research Degree Stage/Activity Phase</b>	<b>Master's Indicative Timeline (months)</b>	<b>PhD Full-Time Indicative Timeline</b>	<b>Key Activities and Milestones</b>
			PGR7 Thesis Access Consent form or PGR8 Restriction of Access to Thesis form; PGR12 E-thesis Submission Declaration form; Submission of hardbound thesis FABRD/AC Approval



**3**

**Admission**



## 3. Admission

### 3.1 Entry Requirements

#### 3.1.1 Entry to the PhD, PhD-track and Master's Registers

The entry requirements vary for each research degree and in all cases should be checked first by prospective applicants. Full details on [entry requirements for DCU's research programmes](#) are given on the Registry website.

#### 3.1.2 Entry to Professional Doctorate Programmes

The entry requirements differ for each of the Professional Doctorate programmes and prospective applicants are referred to the programme web pages for more information.

#### 3.1.3 Recognition of Prior Learning

The recognition of prior learning (RPL) is inherent to DCU. The purpose of RPL is specifically to support students with diverse prior learning experiences who, based on this prior learning, are judged to be suitably prepared for postgraduate study and who can greatly benefit from such study. Students are admitted to research programmes through recognition of prior accredited and experiential learning, or a combination of both. Students will be registered on the research master's register in the first instance. More detail is available in the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy for Research Programmes.

#### 3.1.4 English Language Entry Requirements

A sufficient level of English language achievement is both necessary and important in order to undertake a DCU research degree, in terms of:

- the effective conduct of research and the interaction of the student with peers and staff (which have follow-on implications for wider student and staff welfare and safety, as well as equipment usage and appropriate interaction with technical support staff and other staff in the University)
- the ability of the student to effectively and fruitfully engage with all modes of instruction and supervision available to them
- the communication of the research work in various fora (including in the context of examinations), and the expectations of other

stakeholders around English language attainment levels of DCU graduates

- Non-native speakers of English are required to provide evidence of their English language competency as part of their application. In the case of successful applications, non-EU students may be asked to provide a formal English qualification for visa purposes. Further information on [English language requirements](#) is available from the Registry website.

### 3.2 The Application Process

Step Number	Action involved
1	Ensure that you have met all appropriate entry requirements before making an application.
2	Define the project/prepare draft of the research proposal.  Find a potential supervisor.  Investigate/discuss funding opportunities.  Discuss agree research proposal with potential supervisor.  Agree/apply for funding
3	Submit formal application via the DCU Student Application Portal.
4	All correspondence on the status of your application will be issued by email. You will receive notification by email when a decision has been made.

All students must formally apply to the University for admission to the Register, even those who have successfully received funding. Once the acceptance has been received the applicant will be able to register (see guide [section 4.1](#)).

### 3.2.1 Information for Applicants

#### **Defining a Project, finding a supervisor and exploring funding opportunities**

All formal DCU research degree application require the following:

- A project proposal
- Agreement of at least one named qualified Principal Supervisor to supervise the project
- Approval of the Head of School of which the Principal Supervisor is a member, or affiliated to

This process applies to applicants for PhD and Master's by Research degree programmes. Visit the website of the relevant faculty/school for information on applying to a Professional Doctorate degree programme.

#### **Routes to finding a supervisor, project and potential funding**

There are several routes to finding a supervisor/project and potential funding:

- Respond to a specific research project opportunity offered by a supervisor/school/research centre
- Apply for an advertised scholarship/funding opportunity offered by a funding agency/DCU/individual supervisor/school/research centre (see guide [Section 7.2.1](#))
- Make contact with a member of academic staff to discuss the possibility of undertaking a research project under their supervision<sup>6</sup>

#### **Where to look**

Opportunities for postgraduate research (funded and non-funded projects and scholarship funding) are advertised on the [Graduate Studies Office Scholarships and Opportunities web page](#), on individual school/faculty web pages, and on funding agency websites (see guide [Section 7.2.1](#)).

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<sup>6</sup> Applicants are advised to have an outline of their proposed area of interest/research project before contacting an academic member of staff to discuss the possibility of supervision.

Potential applicants should also consult DCU's range of research areas and the research interests of its academic staff via the DCU web site:

- DCU key research areas
- DCU faculties and schools
- DCU research centres and institutes

### **Making a formal application to DCU**

All formal applications to undertake postgraduate research with DCU must be made online through the Student Application Portal. An application fee is payable online at the time of application. [The Graduate Studies Office 'How to Apply' for a research degree](#) web page provides further information on making an application, including a pre- application checklist, supporting documentation requirements and FAQs. See also [Section 3.2.4](#) below.

### **Assessment of application and notification of outcome**


When the application form has been completed and supporting information has been uploaded, the Registry's Admissions unit will assess the application and ensure all documentation has been provided. After ensuring all requirements have been met, the application is forwarded to the relevant Faculty Office for final decision. When a decision has been made on your application, you will be notified via email to log into the portal. If you have been successful you will receive an offer which you can confirm acceptance of on the portal. On acceptance of the offer, you will then be required to pay a deposit by the Acceptance Deadline mentioned on your offer letter to secure a place on your chosen programme.

### **3.2.2 Information for Supervisors**

Potential supervisors are directed to [DCU's Guide of Good Practice in the Recruitment and Selection of Research Students](#) which draws heavily on relevant publications in the area and sets out the principles of good practice that each school/research group can integrate in discipline or area specific processes in the recruitment of research students.

### **3.2.3 Information for Heads of School**

Heads of School have oversight and approval authority over all applications, subject to postgraduate research entry requirements. An application should not be approved until the Head of School is satisfied that necessary resources are in place and responsibility for fee liability



over the expected period of registration is clear. The Head of School ensures that entry requirements are met, supervision is appropriate, that the supervisor has the capacity for a new student, and that appropriate resources are in place for the project and student support.

The Head of School also ensures that an Independent Panel Member is appointed for each new student within 3 months of initial registration, and that Registry is informed of the panel's composition. Further details are provided in the document [Academic Roles and Responsibilities in Graduate Research](#) and the [Guide of Good Practice in the Recruitment and Selection of Research Students](#).

### **3.2.4 Other issues to consider before making a formal application**

#### **Is there a closing date?**

The majority of research degree applicants can apply and start at any time during the year but most aim to start in September to align with the beginning of the academic year and thereby maximise time for fees paid. Some research degree programmes, such as Professional Doctoral programmes, have a specified closing date – applicants should check with their potential supervisor if a closing date applies.

#### **Is a visa required for study in Ireland?**

Current immigration and visa regulations are detailed on the [DCU website](#). In the case of successful applications, non-EU students may require a formal English qualification for visa purposes.

#### **How will the research project be funded and what will the funding cover?**

See guide [Section 7](#) for more information on funding and grants.

#### **How much are the programme fees?**

Research fees differ depending on the research discipline and whether the applicant is full-time or part-time, and categorised as EU or Non-EU (see Finance Office EU/Non-EU Fees Criteria webpage). For further details on fees see Guide [Section 7](#) or see the Finance Office fees booklet.

#### **Are there any school/faculty conditions?**

Applicants should check if the school/faculty requires any other information or have other requirements before a formal application is submitted to the university.

## **Does the Recognition of Prior Learning Policy for research programmes apply?**

See guide [Section 3.1.3](#). More detail is available in the [Recognition of Prior Learning \(RPL\) Policy for Research Programmes](#).

## **What specific details are required at application stage?**

The following details should be confirmed prior to submitting an application:

- The specific research degree and associated programme code and register (Master's, PhD-track, PhD) to which the applicant is applying
- The study mode (full-time/part-time)
- The expected duration of the research degree
- Other details which can be discussed between applicant and potential supervisor prior to application include the day-to-day work involved in the project, the school requirements for learning support duties, research facilities and other supports on campus, performance monitoring and examination procedures, and opportunities for additional training during the research degree.



# 4

## **Registration and Induction**



## 4. Registration and Induction

### 4.1 Registration and Student Records

#### 4.1.1 Initial Registration

Following a successful application, new research students receive a welcome communication from Registry with registration information. All new research students must register at the start of their research degree and at the start of each subsequent year, subject to satisfactory progress – see Guide [Section 9](#). Registration is a separate process to the application process, and it is required of all students.

New students commencing in September can register online during the specified registration period (see the [Academic Calendar](#) for dates), using the login information provided in the welcome communication from Registry. [Registration information and registration FAQs](#) are available from the Registry website.

During online registration, students must:

- Accept the rules and regulations of the University
- Register for their programme of study
- Confirm the graduate training modules they wish to take
- Pay the relevant fees, if applicable<sup>7</sup>
- Check/update any biographical/other personal details for the coming academic year
- Accept the information contained in the Data Protection Notice

Step	Registration process for new research students
1	Successful candidates are notified of the outcome of their application by email
2	Students register online (or as required) for their research programme, choose modules and pay their fees

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<sup>7</sup> Not relevant when the student's fees are paid by the school/research centre. In cases where a student's fees are funded, the student must submit a copy of the funding agreement/offer letter to the Fees Office.

Step	Registration process for new research students
3	Registry issues Student ID card

In the context of maintaining correct student records and obtaining access to facilities and training, where required, all students should do the following:

- Ensure they are properly registered
- Check their @mail.dcu.ie email inbox regularly
- Ensure that their student card has swipe access to required areas on campus including DCU Library, labs, car parks and other restricted areas
- Register for, and attend Orientation and Induction for postgraduate research students
- Attend any local school/faculty/research centre Induction for research students
- Register for Graduate Training Elements (GTEs), with their supervisor's approval
- Notify Registry and their school of any change in biographical details

#### **Note on the registration 'Grace Period':**

New research students who register during the 'Registration Grace Period' (2nd March to 31st July) will register as Year 1 students, and must register again as Year-1 students during the Online Registration Period between August and September. See guide [Section 7.1.2](#) for details on fee implications.

#### **4.1.2 Registering for Graduate Training**

In DCU, 'Graduate Training' refers to credit-bearing, discipline-specific and generic modules known as Graduate Training Elements (GTEs). See guide [Section 8.1.2](#) for more information.

#### **GTE registration**

Supervisor approval is mandatory in order to register for GTEs (credit bearing graduate training modules). This is to ensure that the training

chosen fully supports the completion of the student's research project, and that the time available to the core research and its associated activities is not compromised (see Guide [Section 8.1](#)). It is the responsibility of supervisors and students to agree which GTEs a research student can undertake in any given year, prior to registration for that year. Further information on GTE availability will be communicated by the Faculty Office prior to the commencement of each academic year. Students should consult this list, and also their school/ faculty Structured Doctoral/Research Pathway, and discuss their training needs with their supervisor. Further [information on GTE modules](#) is available from the Graduate Training Section of the Graduate Studies Office website.

While the range of GTEs on offer is reviewed on an annual basis, it is envisaged that many elements will be on offer from year to year. Students may therefore have the opportunity to register for an element in a subsequent year if it is not possible or appropriate for them to register for it in the current academic year.

Research students should register online for Graduate Training Elements (GTEs) via the DCU registration process provided (see the [registration page of the Registry website](#)). Non-accredited workshops, events and seminars typically involve local registration through the [Graduate Studies Office Workshops and Events web page](#).

Research students taking accredited graduate training at DCU must register for both their core research project and their chosen GTEs. Once registered, the registration details appearing on the [Student Apps web page](#) ('My Details' section) will appear as follows:

CORE Research Module code: e.g. RSPD01 Research Thesis

**Note:** this code will differ depending on the research programme and year of study, i.e.:

Code	Description
RSPD	Research Thesis PhD
RSPT	Research Thesis PhD-track
RSPM	Research Thesis Master's
01	Year 1
02	Year 2 etc.

Students will see the faculty's graduate training programme code displayed, i.e.:

Code	Description
GTEBS	GTEs DCU Business School
GTEEC	GTEs Faculty of Engineering and Computing
GTEHSS	GTE Humanities and Social Sciences
GTEFSH	GTEs Science and Health
GTEIE	GTEs Institute of Education

Along with the faculty graduate training programme code, the codes for the individual GTEs chosen at registration will also appear.

Once registered, students can view their graduate training registration details alongside their core research programme registration. Students will have an opportunity to change their GTE registrations (having consulted with their supervisors) as part of the normal 'Change of Mind' process – see the Registry's [Academic Calendar for 'Change of Mind' information](#). [Registration issues/queries should be directed to Registry](#).

Students will have an opportunity to change their registrations - having consulted with their supervisors - as part of the normal 'Change of Mind' process – [check the Academic Calendar for 'Change of Mind' deadlines](#).

### **Credit Accumulation for Graduate Training Elements**

Research students are encouraged to undertake graduate training, but the number of modules should be appropriate for their research degree (see Guide [Section 8](#) for more details on selecting appropriate graduate training options). Where 20 credits are taken, the University recognises the student as being on a 'structured programme' (see below). The maximum number allowed for Master's students is 20 credits. The maximum allowed for PhD students is 90 credits.

All Graduate Training Elements (GTEs) achieved are awarded and credited on a bi-annual basis at the GTE Award Boards. A student who successfully completes a GTE but does not complete the postgraduate degree programme will still receive credits for those modules completed.

## Structured Programmes

While successful completion and examination of the research thesis is the basis for the award of the PhD degree, on a structured programme, additional training elements are included to support the primary research activity<sup>8</sup> and personal and professional development. These include education and training activities in discipline-specific topics, research skills and generic/transferable skills. The selection of elements is aligned with the student's Personal Development Plan (PDP) and/or partnership agreement (see guide [Section 8.6.1](#)), can be thematically focused, and relate to declared outcomes and graduate attributes in line with national and international best practice<sup>9</sup>. All schools have their own Structured/Doctoral Research Pathway to help students who wish to pursue a structured PhD Programme. The DCU Institute of Education has a faculty-wide pathway. See [Section 8](#) of this guide for further information.

### 4.1.3 Inter-institutional Mobility: Registration and Credit Transfer

Some research students (for example those undertaking a recognised multi-institutional structured programme or in cases where a collaborative/consortium agreement exists) may undertake training in other institutions where such opportunities are available, but must first seek the approval of their DCU supervisor and must also be accepted by the host institution. Each institution/training provider has their own registration process and procedures for issuing results to visiting students. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure they are correctly registered by, and receive official results from, the training provider.

Details of the registration process to be followed for the seven Irish universities (DCU, UCD, TCD, NUIM, UCC, UL, and NUIG) are detailed in the IUA Guide<sup>10</sup> available on the Graduate Studies Office Training web page.

DCU has Standard Operating Procedures for the Inter-institutional Mobility of Postgraduate Research Students which outline the steps to be taken to enable module delivery, student mobility and credit exchange for DCU postgraduate research students, and research students of DCU's partner institutions, who are undertaking a module(s) as part of a formal

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<sup>8</sup> Candidates who wish to pursue a structured PhD programme will undertake discipline-specific modules, research skills courses, and generic and transferable skills courses, as agreed in their Personal Development Plan (PDP) and/or partnership agreement (see [Guide Section 8.6.1](#)), to the value of at least 20 ECTS credits, no more than 90 ECTS credits, but typically in the range 30-60 ECTS credits.

<sup>9</sup> For example, see [guide Section 1.2.3](#) for details of the Irish Universities Association Irish Universities Doctoral Skills Statement (2021) and Vitae's Researcher Development Framework (RDF), (Vitae, 2011).

<sup>10</sup> IUA Inter-Institutional Agreement on Collaborative Graduate Programmes: Information for Research Students going to a host institution to undertake graduate training.

institutionally agreed (i.e. covered by a Memorandum of Understanding or other formal collaborative agreement), thematic, structured or multi-institutional graduate programme.

#### 4.1.4 Registration of visiting research students

Research students from other institutions may visit DCU for a number of reasons including, but not limited to, the following:

- To undertake a module(s) or lab rotation as part of a multi-institutional postgraduate research programme
- To undertake part of their research degree in DCU as part of an International Consortium Agreement
- To work alongside a research team or staff member for a short period
- To attend short training or educational course
- To undertake a single module programme

Visiting research students register with the University in one of the following ways depending on the purpose of their visit:

Purpose of visit	Process/Form
To undertake a module(s) or lab rotation as part of a structured multi-institutional postgraduate programme/consortium agreement	R26H Form, Submitted to Registry
To work alongside a research team or staff member for a short period	Visitor ID Form, Submitted to Human Resources

The R26H registration form, which includes full instructions, is available from the [Registry website](#). Further information for international research students visiting DCU is provided under [Section 4.3](#) of this guide. The Visitor ID Form is available from the [Human Resources website](#).

## 4.2 Induction and Orientation

### 4.2.1 Induction and Orientation for new research students

An annual Induction programme is offered to new research students in year 1 and it is an important part of initiation for all postgraduate students (see the [Graduate Studies Office Orientation webpage](#)). The programme involves an Orientation Day in September which provides new research students with vital information about DCU, the opportunity to meet other new postgraduate students and an extended induction programme which runs throughout semester-1.

Induction includes a series of seminars and workshops aimed at facilitating new students as they familiarise themselves with DCU. The emphasis here is on helping students settle in and encouraging them to become productive as soon as possible, and this time is well-invested. Details are published on the [GSO website](#) in September and also provided to students on registration. The programme is co-ordinated by the Graduate Studies Office and all details are communicated ahead of Orientation to your DCU email address.

[Loop](#) is DCU's online learning platform. This is where research students will find information on courses, workshops GTE modules and other important events and activities.


Orientation and Induction is provided to new research students arriving in DCU throughout the academic year – all presentations are uploaded to the Graduate Studies Office Loop page, including links to key web pages and any documentation distributed. Students arriving throughout the year are welcome to attend the next scheduled Orientation session in September. Further details are available from the Student Support and Development webpages and the [Graduate Studies Office Orientation web page](#).

### 4.2.2 Local Orientation

Students are encouraged to familiarise themselves with their local research support staff, including the local scholarship administrator and school/research centre secretary, the school Research Convenor who is broadly concerned with research issues within the school, technical support staff, the faculty Postgraduate Research Student (PGR) representative, and the faculty Associate Dean for Research (ADR) whose role is concerned with research strategy and oversight within the faculty.

Many schools and research centres also offer local orientation/induction, and have local operational procedures literature, for new research students. The local school/research centre secretary/administrator is





typically responsible for the following in respect of new research students, where applicable:

- Processing scholarship administration and associated forms (see guide [Section 7.3](#))
- Authorising access to restricted areas/arranging desk space
- Issuing DCU laboratory notebooks
- Issuing a copy of local school, centre or laboratory safety statement
- Arranging local Induction/Orientation
- Provision of normal office supplies

### 4.3 International Research Students

DCU regularly welcomes international researchers to work with DCU staff. Academic staff who plan to welcome an international research student, or to act as host to a visiting researcher, should be aware that some advance planning is necessary. The DCU website provides a range of online resources to ensure that the necessary support is available as required, including:

- [Before/when you arrive information for international students](#)
- [International Webinar Series for international students](#)
- Further [information for international researchers](#) is available from the DCU website.



5

**Supervision**

## 5. Supervision

DCU's regulations concerning the supervision of research students are provided in the [Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis](#).

### 5.1 Supervisory Panel

Research students are supported by one or more supervisors and an independent panel member. The independent panel member's function is to participate in formal decision-making on the student's progress, and to provide advice, support and pastoral care to the student. It is the responsibility of the Head of School in which the student is registered to appoint an Independent Panel Member for each new student within 3 months of the student's initial registration. These details are then forwarded to Registry to be added to the student's record. The Supervisory Panel is made up of the following:

- **Principal Supervisor(s):** At least one required for all research students. Appointment of Joint Principal Supervisors is possible if they undertake all responsibilities equally
- **Secondary/External Supervisor(s):** when specific expert academic input is needed or being given on a significant aspect of the project or when supervision is being provided by a person who is not a member of DCU staff such as a DCU retiree, adjunct faculty, or researcher external to DCU
- **Independent Panel Member:** one other member of panel in addition to supervisor(s) required for all students first registered in 2011/12 or later, except those initially registered as SPD or MDI students prior to March 2016

Each panel member's responsibilities are outlined in the GSO booklet [Academic Roles and Responsibilities in Graduate Research](#). [DCU's Policy on Research Supervision and Awards in Collaboration with Other Institutions](#) outlines the regulations governing cases where students are jointly supervised by individuals external to DCU.

See guide [Section 13.1](#) for information relating to changes in supervision during a student's research degree.

## 5.2 Role of the Research Student

According to the [Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis](#) the responsibilities of the student are as follows:

- To comply with relevant DCU regulations
- To conduct the research within the ethical standards of the discipline(s) and in accordance with the standards detailed by the University and any appropriate external agencies
- To undertake a periodic training needs analysis and maintain a PDP (see guide [Section 8.6](#))
- To engage positively with opportunities for professional development
- To acknowledge the supervisor's role in their research including in any presentation, publication or meeting to which the supervisor has made a contribution

This means that students have a responsibility to ensure that they are adequately informed about the regulations, policies and procedures relevant to them and their research programme. The requirement for an independent panel member does not apply to candidates registered prior to 2011/2012 or to those initially registered as St Patrick's College or Mater Dei Institute students prior to March 2016.

## 5.3 Supervisors

The requirements for supervisors' qualifications and experience are detailed in DCU's [Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis](#) and expanded on in the GSO booklet [Academic Roles and Responsibilities in Graduate Research](#). Members of academic staff should normally act as supervisors (principal or secondary) to a maximum of ten research students at any one time.



6

# Research Practice

## **6. Research Practice**

The University has a suite of regulations to ensure that a professional, open and rigorous academic environment is maintained. The regulations require reasonable behaviour and consideration for others and aim to ensure a fulfilling and rewarding university experience. All members of the University are expected to refrain from conduct liable to infringe the rights of others.

### **6.1 Responsible Conduct of Research**

Dublin City University has a responsibility to ensure that the research conducted by its staff and students conforms with current legislation and the highest possible standards of integrity.

#### **DCU Code of Good Research Practice (2021)**

The DCU Code of Good Research Practice provides guidelines on the proper conduct of research, and the standards of work performance and ethical conduct expected of all DCU staff and students and persons engaged in research at DCU. Heads of schools/centres have a general responsibility to promote research integrity in their own units and encourage attendance at relevant training opportunities. Failure to comply with the DCU Code of Good Research Practice may be grounds for instigating disciplinary proceedings. There is an onus on all staff and students to ensure that they are familiar with the DCU Code of Good Research Practice in conjunction with other relevant existing policies and procedures.

#### **DCU Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Policy (2018)**

The reputation of DCU and of its graduates depends on upholding the highest standards of learning and research. Students have a right to be assessed on the quality of their own work, and have the corresponding duty to present only their own work for assessment. Students are expected to have read the DCU Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Policy, and to understand and apply the DCU Library referencing guidelines for work that is submitted for assessment. Students undertaking research should also familiarise themselves with the DCU Code of Good Research Practice, and the National Policy Statement on Ensuring Research Integrity in Ireland. The DCU Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Policy and associated procedures apply to all individuals engaged in academic work at DCU, including all registered students on both taught and research programmes, and academic staff engaged in assessment of academic work which contributes to an award or credits.

## DCU Policy for Responding to Allegations of Research Misconduct (ARMP)

The purpose of the DCU Policy for Responding to Allegations of Research Misconduct (ARMP) is to detail the procedures the University will undertake in response to an allegation made of research misconduct. Through clarifying what is meant by research misconduct and clearly defining the responsibilities of those involved in research to report and deal with any breach of ethical practice, it is intended that this policy will help to prevent research misconduct from occurring. The Policy for Responding to Allegations of Research Misconduct is a companion document to the DCU Code of Good Research Practice and should be read in conjunction with it. The DCU Policy for Responding to Allegations of Research Misconduct (ARMP) and the associated procedures apply to all individuals engaged in research at DCU.

**Note:** a revised version of this policy will be available from Autumn 2022.

## DCU Code of Practice on Authorship

All DCU researchers, including research students, should disseminate their research in a timely fashion, and through as effective a means as possible. We have a responsibility to those who invest in research, an ethical responsibility to society, and institutional and personal self-interest in having our research output reach where it will have impact. Authorship establishes accountability as well as credit. This Code of Practice seeks to provide clarity for DCU staff and students on the issue of authorship of research papers, reports or other research outputs.

**Note:** a revised version of this policy will be available from Autumn 2022.

## National Policy Statement on Ensuring Research Integrity in Ireland (2019)

The National Policy Statement on Ensuring Research Integrity in Ireland was developed jointly by the Irish Universities Association (IUA), its member institutions, and the main national research funding organisations including the Health Research Board (HRB), Science Foundation Ireland (SFI), Enterprise Ireland and the Higher Education Authority (HEA). The Policy grew out of a commitment to the highest standards of research conduct and integrity and recognition of the imperative of having in place robust mechanisms to protect and ensure the integrity of the national research system. It is consistent and aligned with agreed international norms and best practice in managing research integrity<sup>11</sup> and is appropriate to our specific national circumstances and the Irish legal obligations.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity, European Science Foundation and ALLEA (All European Academies), March 2011, [www.esf.org](http://www.esf.org).

<sup>12</sup> Ensuring Research Integrity in Irish Research, 2010, [www.ria.ie](http://www.ria.ie).

## Research Ethics and Integrity

Dublin City University endeavours to ensure that all research carried out by DCU researchers is ethically sound and adheres to the highest standards of research integrity.

All research projects must be conducted in accordance with the law and acceptable ethical standards. Maintaining well-established ethical standards is an important aspect of upholding the integrity of the research process. Ethically questionable research can reflect negatively on the reputation and liability of both researchers and the University.

Research may place burdens on participants or put them at increased risk of harm, which could be avoided or reduced. Such burdens or harm can be physical, psychological, social or financial.

The DCU Research Ethics Committee (REC) facilitates the ethical review and approval process by providing feedback on research ethics submissions so that any risk of harm is minimised and various ethical principles are promoted. [Information on completing a submission for ethical review is available from the DCU Research Support website](#). The website also includes a range of research ethics and research integrity related resources and guidance documents relating to specific research areas.

## Research Integrity Training Programme for Research Students

In order to promote best practice in responsible research behaviour, DCU provides Research Integrity Training to all research students. Researchers have automatic access to the Online Research Integrity Training course on Loop. This course is designed to enable researchers to conduct research of the highest quality, helping them meet the criteria for key funding bodies and updating them on best practice in responsible research behaviour.

The course provides early-stage researchers with a better understanding of their obligations and responsibilities, along with practical advice on how to deal with the complex situations in which they may find themselves. The online module is mandatory for all year-1 research students, with the exception of students registered on professional doctorate programmes who must complete the module in Year-3 of registration.

Following the completion of the online course, students are required to download a Certificate of Completion from Loop for their own records. This certificate is important because it confirms that the student has met the requirements of the programme by passing the compulsory online module, and it is each participant's responsibility to maintain a record of this



accomplishment. After the annual deadline for completing the module has passed, Principal Supervisors are notified when their students do not pass the compulsory module. In addition to the online module, the programme includes a series of complementary support sessions throughout the year.

For research students with a particular interest in this area, the accredited GTE module, TP602: Research Ethics may also be of interest. Students should register for this optional module at the start of the semester, in the usual way.

## **Garda Vetting**

As part of their acceptance to DCU, all students undertaking work or activities which involve unsupervised access to children or vulnerable persons as part of their programme of study must be Garda vetted. Visit the [Garda Vetting web pages of the Registry website](#) to check whether your postgraduate programme requires Garda vetting. Here you will also find information on the following:

- Stages of the Garda vetting process
- A list of acceptable address and identity validation documents
- The vetting expiry period
- Statutory declaration & overseas police certificates
- Disclosure of criminal convictions
- Information on spent convictions

Garda vetting queries should be directed to [studentvetting@dcu.ie](mailto:studentvetting@dcu.ie) quoting your name, programme of study and application/CAO/student number in all correspondence.

The [DCU Garda Vetting Policy for Students](#) is available from the University's website.

## **6.2 Intellectual Property**

DCU's role in the creation, discovery, transmission and translation of knowledge, and the provision of public service creates an environment which is highly conducive to the conception and development of many forms of intellectual property. There is always the possibility that such developments may have commercial value, which may be enhanced through the use of patents and other such forms of intellectual property instruments. The University is committed to ensuring that its research can

be translated into outputs that help create social, cultural, economic and national policy impact.

[DCU's Intellectual Property Policy](#) sets out the principles relating to the ownership, management of and commercialisation of intellectual property arising from teaching, research and other academic and support activity undertaken in the University. It sets out incentives to encourage the creation of commercially useful intellectual property and allows the creators to benefit from any commercialisation activity. It also highlights the potential for conflicts of interest in commercialisation matters and describes DCU's decision-making and dispute resolution process.


### 6.3 Data Protection and Privacy

Personal data may be defined as any information that can identify an individual person. Data protection is a fundamental right and certain types of sensitive personal data are subject to additional protections. The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) came into effect on May 25th 2018 and provides for a uniform interpretation and application of data protection standards across the EU. The GDPR aims to strengthen the rights of individuals and increase the obligations on organisations with regard to how they collect, use and protect personal data. The Irish Data Protection Act 2018 changes the previous data protection framework established under the Data Protection Acts of 1988 and 2003. Any member of the DCU community involved in the collection, storage or processing of personal data has responsibilities under the legislation.

The core principles of GDPR are:

- collect no more data from an individual than is necessary and use only for the purposes stated
- obtain personal data fairly by giving participants notice of the collection and its specific purpose
- retain the data for no longer than is necessary for the purpose specified;
- keep data safe and secure
- give the individual a copy of his/her personal data if s/he requests it

DCU processes personal data in the course of its research and publishing activities and such processing is undertaken in accordance with the DCU Data Privacy Policy and other relevant DCU policies, for example, those which address Research Ethics procedures. While data processing undertaken by DCU in pursuit of its research objectives is supported by



the Universities Act, the University will always endeavour to strike an appropriate balance between these goals and the data protection rights of the individuals concerned.

Research students should be aware of the following:

- All research involving the use of personal data must be fully compliant with the GDPR.
- The researcher's duties and responsibilities with regard to data protection must be fully considered when submitting research applications and prior to undertaking any research project involving the collection and use of personal data. Research students should refer to the webpages of DCU's Data Protection Unit for further information, see: [www.dcu.ie/ocoo/data-protection](http://www.dcu.ie/ocoo/data-protection)
- Transparency and right of access are key principles of the GDPR. Active and informed consent must be given freely, for a specified purpose and participants have the right to withdraw consent at any time. Research participants must be given details about how their data is processed and retained. Any personal data collected during the course of a research project must be held securely.


The [DCU Data Protection Unit provides guidance and a full range of policies and procedures](#) which you may find useful, including a section specifically for researchers: 'Data Protection and Research'. The DCU Data Privacy Policy is available from the website of DCU's Data Protection Unit. Further information on GDPR is available from [dataprotection.ie](http://dataprotection.ie).

## 6.4 Health and Safety

In accordance with the requirements of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005, the policy of Dublin City University is, in so far as is reasonably practicable, to provide and maintain a safe work environment for all DCU employees and to meet the University's responsibilities under the Act in relation to DCU students and authorised visitors

The [DCU Framework Safety Statement](#) provides an overview of health and safety in DCU and provides information on the management of common hazards throughout the University. In addition, each school, unit and campus company maintains their own 'local' Safety Statement which addresses their particular areas of activity.

In addition, the University continually develops campus wide policies/procedures in areas of specific concern. The [current policies and procedures are provided on DCU's Health and Safety website](#).



Researchers will find some, if not all of the following policies and procedures of particular relevance to their work:

- The local Safety Statement for the school/research centre (normally available on the school/centre intranet or from the school/centre office)
- Sharps Injury Policy (including bites and splashes)
- Evacuation Procedure
- Occupational First Aid and Medical Incident Management Procedure
- Vaccination policy for DCU staff members including postgraduate and postdoctoral laboratory-based staff
- Mothers' Rest Room Procedure
- DCU Fire Safety Policy

### **Lone and Out of Hours Working Policy**

The DCU [Lone and Out of Hours Working policy](#) permits authorised persons to access their laboratory or office outside of normal working hours. Out of hours work is defined as follows:

- Any laboratory/experimental work undertaken outside of 9am – 6pm Monday – Friday
- Any other work undertaken outside of 8am – 6pm Monday – Friday
- Any other work undertaken at weekends or Bank Holidays

**NOTE:** All buildings must be vacated by 6pm on Saturdays, Sundays and Bank holidays when they will be subject to full lock-up. The University strongly recommends that in the interest of health, safety and personal security, lone/out of hours work should only be undertaken when absolutely necessary and no other alternatives are available.

## SafeZone

The University provides a free app service to give round-the-clock safety reassurance to staff and students. The app is designed to allow students and staff to contact DCU Security at any time. Information on [using the SafeZone app](#) is available from the DCU website.

## 6.5 Insurance

DCU students are covered free of charge by Accidental Bodily Injury Insurance. This cover is worldwide and applies three hundred and sixty-five days a year, irrespective of whether you are involved in a university activity or not.

As with any scheme, there are some provisos and full details should be sought from the Finance Office before presuming the cover is adequate for your needs. Insurance cover for part-time and Erasmus students is restricted to official university activities only. If you are working or studying abroad during your degree programme, you are strongly advised to secure private travel insurance for the duration of your trip. If you are a Non-EU student, you are required by law to obtain private medical insurance prior to arriving in Ireland.

Please note there is an initial €100 excess and that any potential claim should be notified in-person to a DCU staff member and by completing a [DCU accident report form](#). Should there be potential for medical costs beyond the excess, you should complete and submit the [AIG claim form](#) available from the DCU website at the earliest possible time and submit it to the Insurance Manager along with any supporting documentation.

For information is available from Brendan Blake, Insurance Manager  
Email: [brendan.blake@dcu.ie](mailto:brendan.blake@dcu.ie).


## 6.6 Resources and Information

The A-Z Guide for Incoming Students provides links to the full list of facilities and services available to students on campus. A selection of key resources are outlined below:

### Research Support

See guide [Section 1.1](#) for more information on support provided by [DCU Research](#).

DCU Invent is the University's commercialisation and technology transfer unit, working with companies and organisations to bring university research to the marketplace. To achieve this, DCU Invent partners with



companies of all sizes, talented DCU researchers and entrepreneurs who have a desire to innovate. Visit the DCU Invent website for further information on the full range of services available to DCU researchers: [dcuinvent.ie](http://dcuinvent.ie).

### **Graduate Studies Office and Graduate Research Studies Board**

See guide [Section 2](#) for more information on the University's Graduate Studies Office (GSO) and Graduate Research Studies Board (GRSB).

### **DCU Library**

With three landmark spaces, DCU Library offers a modern, spacious environment for learning, research and collaboration.

O'Reilly Library (DCU Glasnevin Campus) and Cregan Library (DCU St Patrick's Campus) have extensive opening hours throughout the academic year, and feature comfortable areas for group work, and individual study, as required. Excellent IT facilities and a wide range of study supports are available to all students, and are easily accessible with DCU student cards. The recently opened Woodlock Hall Library offers comfortable individual study facilities and borrowing services on the DCU All Hallows campus, in a beautifully restored historical setting. A significant collection of Humanities titles is housed here also.

Library staff are available on each site and online to provide information and support for any questions.

In addition to their substantial print collections, DCU Library offers a world-class digital collection, made available to students anywhere and anytime.

Use 'Library Search', the Library's online discovery tool, to search a wide array of collections: print books, eBooks, journal articles, dissertations/theses, newspapers, and more.

Throughout your research and learning journey, the Library's dedicated team of Subject Librarians are available to offer expert advice and help in many areas, including:

- Literature searching - planning and developing your search strategy, selecting appropriate resources
- Managing Information
- Publishing and open access
- Research communications and strategies for research promotion

- 
- Research data management

Students may also avail of the Library's scheduled classes and workshops, or request a one-to-one research consultation with their Subject Librarian.

DCU Library also has a significant range of special collections and archive material available to the DCU Community.

- Visit the [DCU Library website](#) for further information.
- Email DCU Library at [library@dcu.ie](mailto:library@dcu.ie)
- Follow DCU Library on Social Media to stay up to date on news and developments throughout the academic year.



7

**Finance**



## 7. Finance

### 7.1 Fees

Tuition fees for research students are paid to the Fees Office each year. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that their research fees are paid in a timely manner.

At the time of the initial application (see [Section 3.2.1](#)) each applicant should have awareness of who is responsible for paying their fees for the full duration of their research degree. This can be ascertained as necessary via discussions with the prospective supervisor.

Research fees at DCU cover the academic year from September to September. DCU does not apply pro-rata fees in cases where a student does not start at the beginning of an academic year or finishes up early within an academic year. See [Section 7.1.2](#) for information on the registration 'Grace Period' which deals with new students who register between 2nd March and 31st July (inclusive) in the academic year. Continuing students must register on time each year to avoid paying a late registration fee.

Students continue to be liable for full fees until an academic year when a) they qualify for a Card Fee or Examination Fee or b) they graduate or otherwise end their registration.

#### **Fee liability regarding: withdrawals and resubmissions**

**Withdrawals:** As DCU research fees are charged per annum, students who withdraw during the academic year are not entitled to refunds. So a self-funding student who withdraws before 27th January 2023 having paid 60% fees would not be refunded nor would a self-funding student who withdraws after 27th January 2023 having paid 100% fees.

**Resubmissions:** A student who has to resubmit a thesis may be liable for full fees for their current year of registration, irrespective of perhaps having qualified for a lesser fee, e.g. Card Fee.

#### **Scholarship Terms and Conditions**

In situations where the student is being supported financially by an external scholarship or grant, the student will likely receive a written terms and conditions letter from the funder. Most external agencies for example have a standard contract which is signed by the student, supervisor, funding body and the HEI. Students who are internally funded should seek a terms and conditions letter from their School if they have not received one (this may be especially useful to refer to over the duration of the

scholarship). A Terms and Conditions template is available from the Graduate Studies Office (GSO).

Queries regarding fee liability may be addressed to the Fees Office by emailing [fees@dcu.ie](mailto:fees@dcu.ie) or visiting the [Fees Office website](#).

Information on EU and non-EU postgraduate research fees, payment deadlines and methods of payment is available from the [Fees Office website](#).

### **7.1.1 Mechanisms of Fee Payment**

#### **a) Students on funded scholarships**

The GSO liaises with the Fees Office each year to process fees in respect of students who are externally or internally funded (usually late October, early November). The fees information is taken from the Scholarship Authorisation Forms (SAFs) (see [Section 7.3](#)). The SAF can also be submitted by schools to provide fees information for part-time students not in receipt of a scholarship payment.

#### **b) Students paying own fees**

The following rules apply to self-funding research students:

- EU students are required to pay a first instalment of 60% prior to registration with the balance to be paid by 27th January 2023
- Non-EU students must pay fees in full prior to registration

#### **c) Fees funded by employer/third party sponsor**

In the case of students funded by their employer, DCU does not issue invoices to individual companies for fee payment. Students in receipt of third party sponsorship must pay their fees online during the registration process. An invoice for the sponsor may be printed online during registration. Sponsorship is a matter between the student and sponsor. DCU fee liability rests in full with the student.

### **7.1.2 Registration ‘Grace Period’ for New Students**

First year research students who register between 2nd March and 31st July inclusive (i.e. during the registration ‘Grace Period’) are not liable to pay their full first year fees until the start of the next academic year in September. The exception to this is that students who are paying their own fees have to pay a non-refundable deposit of €500 which will then be

deducted from their fees in September. A student who registers during the registration 'Grace Period' must also register again as a year 1 student for the next academic year (these students are exempt from the online PGR2 submission process).

### 7.1.3 Card Fee Scheme

The Card Fee scheme facilitates research students' progression through the closing stages of their research degree by enabling them, when specific eligibility conditions are met, to avail of a reduced fee (€150) instead of the usual fee associated with their year of study.

In 2022-23 the Card Fee scheme applies only to those who have completed:

- 4+ years full-time PhD. or + 2+ years full-time Master's registration, or
- 5+ years part-time PhD. or + 3+ years part-time Master's registration

The scheme is administered by the GSO in cooperation with Registry and the Fees Office. Applicants must be in good standing in respect of their research fees. A Card Fee Declaration must be submitted in order to apply and qualification is confirmed upon submission of a soft-bound thesis by 9<sup>th</sup> December 2022. Students who do not make the submission deadline for the Card Fee will be contacted by the Fees Office and given a date by which to pay their outstanding fees in full. For more information on the scheme, please visit the [Scholarships and Funding web page](#) under the 'Current Students' tab on the GSO website.

## 7.2 Funding

### 7.2.1 Funding Sources

A proportion of research students, particularly those in science, engineering or computing, secure funding for their study. Self-funding, or partial self-funding is more common in the humanities, social sciences and business disciplines.

The Irish Research Council (IRC) runs annual funding schemes that students already registered at DCU may apply for:

- Government of Ireland Postgraduate Scholarship Scheme (GOI)
- Enterprise Partnership Scheme (EPS)
- Employment Based Postgraduate Programme (EBP)

### 7.2.2 Remuneration and Budgets

Research student funding (the SAF) does not, of itself, imply a contract of employment (students are not employees). The purpose of scholarship funding is to provide the student with financial support/ living expenses during their research degree, and the emphasis is very much on supporting an individual to complete a research award, and engage in relevant developmental opportunities. Scholarship payments are tax exempt and subject to revenue commissioner's rules.

Scholarship details should be clarified prior to initial registration (this information is a requirement of the application process – see guide [Section 3.2.1](#)). A Terms and Conditions template agreement is available from GSO.

### 7.2.3 Terms and Conditions of Funded Scholarships

Students in receipt of a scholarship funded internally or by an external funding agency should familiarise themselves with the terms and conditions of their awards. Most funding bodies have reporting requirements that students should make themselves familiar with. The student must quickly notify their school, the GSO and the funding body of any change in circumstance that might affect their scholarship.

### 7.2.4 Annual Leave

Holidays can be taken at any time in each year but must be agreed in advance with the supervisor(s), bearing in mind a student's individual funding terms and any teaching or research commitments. The normal holiday leave should be no more than 4 weeks in one calendar year. For international students who may be a great distance from home, it may mean that annual leave is either not availed of or very difficult and they may wish to take a single period of leave as opposed to a few shorter periods. Such arrangements should be discussed and agreed with the relevant supervisor(s) in advance.

### 7.2.5 Financial Assistance

Unfortunately, no financial assistance fund exists for research students<sup>13</sup>, and for this reason careful financial planning is essential for anyone considering undertaking a research programme (especially on entry and exit). The Student Assistance Fund operated by Student Support and Development is used solely to facilitate undergraduate and taught postgraduate students.

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<sup>13</sup> The Student Assistance Fund operated by Student Support and Development and is used solely to facilitate undergraduate and taught postgraduate students.

## 7.3 Scholarship Administration

### 7.3.1 The Scholarship (stipend) Payment Process

Scholarship payments processed by DCU are paid directly into the student's bank account on the last Thursday of each month (except in December when payments are made before the University closes for the holiday period). In order for the first payment to be processed, students need to provide the following:

1. Scholarship Authorisation Form (a new SAF is also needed at the start of each academic year)
2. Bank Details Form
3. Scholarship Exemption Declaration Form (tax exemption form)

Scholarship administration forms are available from the [GSO Scholarship Administration](#) web page (scroll down to the bottom of the page).

Any queries regarding payments should be directed in the first instance to the local scholarship administrator.

### 7.3.2 Payment for Learning Support Activities

Under the auspices of professional development, many scholarships or disciplines require research student engagement with a certain amount of academic activity for which students are paid. This is at a level that does not contravene revenue guidelines on scholarship payments, nor place an expectation which would detract from the main focus of completion of the research award. Outside of this context, students may be remunerated for learning support duties undertaken. Such payments are made however through a Human Resources administered mechanism, and are subject to taxation.

#### Payment process for new research students:

Step	Process
1	Student provides Irish or EU bank account details
2	Student applies for a PPS (social security) number. (Non-EU students must first obtain a GNIB card)
3	Student completes a bank details form and a Scholarship Exemption Declaration Form. If the PPS number has not been

Step	Process
	received at this point, it should be emailed to the GSO when received
4	Supervisor completes a Scholarship Authorisation Form (SAF) in conjunction with student. It is also recommended the student receives a scholarship Terms and Conditions letter
5	Scholarship documentation is passed to the local Scholarship Administrator who forwards this to the GSO by the monthly deadline
6	Student receives a monthly stipend payment into their bank account on the last Thursday of each month (except December)
7	Supervisor renews the scholarship each September by completing a new SAF

## 7.4 DCU Postgraduate Research Conference and Travel Grant

Each postgraduate research student, full-time or part-time, can apply once in the period of his or her studentship for the Conference and Travel Grant funded by the university Research Committee. The scheme is administered through the GSO. The funding can be used (Type 1 - €500) to attend a conference or to travel to use external research facilities outside of Ireland /Northern Ireland or (Type 2 - €250) to present a paper at an international conference being held in Ireland /Northern Ireland (costs must exceed €250).

To apply, a 'Conference and Travel Grant application form' has to be authorised by the student's supervisor and submitted to the GSO. Students not in receipt of a monthly tax-exempt scholarship payment should instead submit their bank details plus a current bank statement (transactions can be redacted). The conference/travel must occur in the academic year in which the student is applying. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis throughout the year and the grant is paid directly to the student's bank account. For more information on the grant please visit the [GSO Scholarships and Opportunities web page](#).



# 8

## **Professional Development and Graduate Training**

## 8. Professional Development and Graduate Training

### 8.1 Graduate Training

While a research degree is based exclusively or largely on the research work and associated thesis, and most of the students' learning is gained through undertaking the research work, research graduates are also expected to have gathered a range of skills which may require some formal or specific training (see guide [Section 1.2.3](#)). Advanced training, in the form of modules (known as 'Graduate Training Elements' or GTEs), and workshops and seminars, are therefore an important aspect of the graduate research experience. Such training aims to:

- Develop the advanced knowledge, skills and competencies required for successful original research
- Support the acquisition of both significant disciplinary learning and more generic transferable skills
- Make students aware of the opportunities to commercialise or further their research, and expand students' industry-focused skill base
- Augment and broaden research students' employment potential

At the European policy level, the EU has included doctoral training as one of the priorities to build a European Research Area (ERA)<sup>14</sup>. In the 2012 paper on ERA, the EU outlined the Principles for Innovative Doctoral Training and invited research organisations, including universities, to provide structured doctoral training based on these principles<sup>15</sup>.

### A New Kind of PhD Graduate

PhD programmes are designed to meet the needs of an employment market that is wider than academia and this is shown in the following table<sup>16</sup>:

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<sup>14</sup> European Commission (2012) A reinforced European Research Area partnership for excellence and growth. Brussels.

<sup>15</sup> European Commission (2011) Principles for innovative doctoral training. Brussels.

<sup>16</sup> Table adapted from an infographic provided by Prof Noel O'Connor, INSIGHT, DCU.



Academic Skills	Industry Needs
Scholarship	IP Aware
Domain Expertise	Thought Leadership
Team vs Independent	Project management
Development/Engineering	Business Case/Development (proposal writing, ethics...)
Adaptability/Flexibility	Project Planning/Strategy
Presentation/Writing	Breadth of Expertise
Innovation	Networking

In terms of national policy, [the Irish Universities Doctoral Graduate Skills Statement](#) outlines the desired learning outcomes and skills that doctoral students will have acquired during their doctoral education and training.

[Section 15](#) of this guide provides a list of websites and publications that offer some background on the importance and context of graduate training for research students, from an institutional, national and international perspective.


According to the League of European Research Universities (LERU) universities should, while graduation keeping in mind the principles of excellence in doctoral training<sup>17</sup>, provide a ‘doctoral training system and mechanisms which include well-rounded, versatile and customisable professional development opportunities and programmes’<sup>18</sup>. Training opportunities must allow for the professional development of research students who are fit for both academic and non-academic employment. This is achieved through engagement with employers, and other academic institutions to share best practice in skills training and development.

### 8.1.2 Types of Training

Graduate training can be categorised under two headings: discipline-specific training and generic skills training. In DCU, ‘Graduate Training’ refers to credit-bearing, discipline-specific and generic modules (GTEs). The aim is to give students the right skills at the right time to optimise their performance in research and to augment their research qualification with

<sup>17</sup> League of European Research Universities (2010) Training talented researchers for society: doctoral studies beyond 2010.

<sup>18</sup> League of European Research Universities (2014) Good Practice Elements in Doctoral Training.



skills transferable outside the academic and research arenas. The full range of graduate training options on offer by the University is reviewed and updated on an annual basis, and many elements will be on offer from year to year. Students may therefore have an opportunity to undertake an element in a subsequent year if it is not possible or appropriate for them to take it in the current academic year.

Training requirements differ depending on the research programme the student is undertaking:


- Professional Doctorate programmes: Students undertaking Professional Doctorate programmes will have a required list of elements to undertake as part of their programme
- Cohort-based thematic PhD programmes: Research students following thematic programmes are required to take the GTEs for that programme, as agreed with their school/supervisor
- Other research degrees: It is not compulsory for all DCU research students to take GTEs but they are strongly encouraged to do so, with the approval of their supervisor. All schools have defined pathways, and some funders and schools specify compulsory training and modules. Therefore, it is important you consult with your supervisor early on as to what is required

## **Faculty GTE Programmes**

Each Faculty has its own list or ‘programme’ of GTEs for which students of that faculty can register (see guide [Section 4.1.2](#) for information on registering for graduate training). Faculty GTE programmes consist of a selection of the Faculty’s own discipline-specific modules, and in some cases discipline specific elements from other DCU faculties, depending on the complementarity between the disciplines. Faculty GTE programmes also include generic skills elements which typically appear on every GTE programme and are available to students from all disciplines. Faculty GTE programmes are reviewed annually and communicated by the faculty and Graduate Studies Office at the start of each academic year.

## **Structured Doctoral/Research Pathways**

Faculty GTE programmes can contain quite a wide listing of modules for a student to choose from. As such, all schools have introduced structured ‘pathways’ that draw on the most relevant and appropriate modules from the faculty programme for their discipline. The pathways are communicated by each Faculty Office at the beginning of each academic



year, and details are also available on the [Graduate Training section of the Graduate Studies Office website](#).

When considering training needs for the coming academic year, students, in consultation with their supervisor(s), should use their school pathway as a guide. The DCU Institute of Education has a faculty-wide pathway. Some pathways include compulsory modules so each student should familiarise themselves with their pathway early in their studies. Each pathway acknowledges the individual needs of each student, and where a particular training need is not addressed in a pathway, the student should refer to the faculty programme to determine if suitable training can be identified there.

### **Writing Supports for Researchers**

DCU acknowledges the importance of developing advanced writing skills in researchers, and as such has developed a comprehensive set of GTEs, and other non-accredited supports, aimed at supporting research students in this regard (see [Section 8.4](#)).

### **Research Integrity Training Programme**

Research Integrity is a key component in the induction of graduate students, postdocs and research supervisors, and various information sessions are delivered annually.

All Year-1 researchers are required to complete the Online Research Integrity Course on Loop. Full details are communicated at the beginning of the academic year. In addition to the online course, DCU's [Research Integrity Training Programme](#) for research students includes a series of complementary support sessions delivered throughout the year.

### **Other training opportunities**

In addition to the faculty GTE programmes available to students, other training and professional development opportunities are offered on a regular basis by the Graduate Studies Office. These can include workshops on a wide variety of topics from thematic writing workshops, annual review preparation, training in data analysis packages and research communication. GSO also publicise workshops and events co-ordinated by other units of relevance to research students as they arise throughout the year. The schedule of current training opportunities are published on the [GSO website](#), where details are updated throughout the year.'

## Generic Skills Training

Generic training is offered in a broad range of areas including academic writing, presentation and communication skills, tutoring and demonstrating (see Guide [Section 8.3](#)), research design and research methods, research ethics and integrity (see guide [Section 6.1](#)), intellectual property and commercialisation (see [Guide Section 6.2](#)) and enterprise experience (see guide [Section 8.2.2](#)). The Postgraduate Research Induction Programme for new students also offers a suite of short courses in generic skills (see guide [Section 4.2.1](#)). Full details on training opportunities can be found on the GSO webpages and on our Loop page.

## 8.2 Collaboration, Mobility and Professional Experience

### 8.2.1 Joint Supervision, Remote Supervision and Joint Awards


More and more research students are spending time in other institutions for laboratory rotations, to undertake graduate training, and to access expertise for their research projects. Their experience is increasingly mobile and internationalised and can range from informal consultation on key aspects of their research, a formalised joint supervision arrangement on their project, to participation in a jointly delivered cohort-based research programme. In this context, DCU's Policy on Research Supervision and Awards in Collaboration with Other Institutions outlines the University's approach to joint supervision and joint awarding arrangements in respect of its research programmes.

The policy is built upon a framework of categories of collaboration and provides a guide to the most appropriate type of collaboration to reflect each particular situation and the type of University agreement or approval required, when appropriate. Types of collaboration can include:

- Informal Collaboration (research award by one institution)
- Formal Collaboration (research award by one institution)<sup>19</sup>, and in very limited circumstances
- Awards where more than one institution awards the research degree

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<sup>19</sup> Section 4.7 of the Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis states that 'where doctoral or Master's research is to be conducted in formal collaboration with another higher education institution, or undertaken in the context of the enterprise model, the DCU Policy on Research Supervision and Awards in Collaboration with Other Institutions applies. The context should be made clear at the time of the student's application to DCU, so that an agreement on joint supervision or joint award can be drawn up with the partner institution or company prior to registration. Significant advance planning is usually required.'



Full guidelines on how each type of collaboration arrangement should be implemented are provided in the policy supplement Implementation of the DCU Policy on Research Supervision and Awards in Collaboration with Other Institutions.

### **Remote supervision**

A formal agreement with the student is required in cases where the student is undertaking a DCU research degree while residing at a location outside of Ireland for part or all of the period of registration. Any research student wishing to reside and undertake research outside Ireland for a period of six months or more must obtain permission from GRSB using the PGR13 Permission to reside/carry out research abroad form.

### **8.2.2 Internships, Placements and Professional Experience**

Experience outside academia is increasingly seen as important and relevant for a wide range of research students. These experiences can develop the student's innovation and employability skills, while the blending of theory and practice achieved through an enterprise experience can increase student motivation, and allows a clearer view of a career path. Such experience complements the research studies being undertaken. A range of opportunities currently exist for DCU research students:

#### **Professional experience placements**

Research students frequently undertake an external work placement under the auspices of an industry partner or other professional partnering organisation. Placements are arranged by the supervisor/school. A formal agreement is required with the partnering company in these cases.

#### **Internship opportunities**

Internship programmes for research students run from time to time as part of either a competitive process or one of DCU's strategic partnerships. Opportunities arising through the University's strategic partnerships, such as that with Arizona State University, are an example of this. Full details are available on the [Graduate Studies Office Scholarships and Opportunities web pages](#).

### **8.2.3 Inter-institutional Training Options**

Opportunities often arise for DCU research students to undertake training offered by other institutions with whom DCU has partnership agreements. The student's school/supervisor can provide information on these opportunities, if applicable. Information on registration processes and credit transfer procedures can be found in guide [Section 4.1.3](#). See the



registration section of the [Graduate Studies Training webpage](#) for more information.

### 8.3 Learning Support Activities

Tutoring, demonstrating and other learning support duties can be performed alongside a student's programme of research to further enhance their skill-base. Such duties help develop important academic and transferable skills. Many students find that undertaking the DCU module Postgraduate Tutoring and Demonstrating (module GS602) further enhances their approach to such activities.

Research student engagement in undergraduate laboratories and tutorial sessions enriches taught programmes by harnessing aspects of our research expertise, and is therefore extremely important in helping the University deliver on its mission.

The amount of such work that research students are expected to undertake varies significantly between disciplines and schools.

Each school should have a policy on learning and support duties, so that expectations are transparent and students can request this when seeking clarification on:

- The minimum expectations or maximum limits for tutoring/demonstrating
- How tutoring/demonstrating roles are allocated to students within the school
- Whether payment is linked to such activities

### 8.4 Writing/Language Supports for International Students

A number of graduate training modules offer language support for international students, including English for Academic Purposes (module LC600) and Advanced Writing Support for International Students (module LC602). It's important to ensure that new research students who have only just met the entry requirements for English language take the English for Academic Purposes (LC600) module which is open to all international research students. The module aims to help students develop the language skills necessary to meet the demands of a higher research degree in an English-speaking academic environment.

## 8.5 Tell It Straight Postgraduate Research Communications Competition

Tell It Straight is DCU's annual research communications competition for graduate research students. The aim of Tell It Straight is to encourage students to communicate their research, and its potential impact, to a non-specialist audience in a concise, dynamic and innovative way. This mode of communication is now frequently favoured and often featured in funding pitches and research showcases, such as the '3-minute thesis' model. Tell It Straight provides an excellent opportunity for professional development for research students. Presentations are judged by an expert panel. Further information is available from the [Tell It Straight website](#).

## 8.6 Planning and Recording Professional Development

### 8.6.1 Personal Development Plan (PDP)


All research students are required to undertake a periodic training needs analysis and maintain a PDP, as stated in the Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis. This is normally done each year as part of the student's Annual Review in association with the Principal Supervisor (see guide [Section 9.1](#)). The PDP involves an analysis of the student's skills needs and the development of an associated plan to address these needs through specific advanced training and professional development activities. Supervisors must approve the choice of training activities to ensure that they fully support the completion of the research project, and that the time available to the core research and its associated activities is not compromised. A Skills Needs Analysis Tool is available for supervisor and student use when preparing the Annual Progress Report. Students can download this document from the GSO Loop page.

## 8.7 Loop Reflect

Loop Reflect is a learning portfolio platform available to all DCU students and faculty. The digital portfolio makes learning visible through the creation of a personalised and reflective living showcase of academic, professional, and personal achievements. This online portfolio can be shared with peers, teachers, employers and others supporting life-log and life-wide learning.

## 8.8 Supervisor Development and Support

Under the regulations, all first-time supervisors must attend training on supervision during, or prior to, the first year of supervising, and all research supervisors are encouraged to attend supervisory training as part



of their ongoing professional development. Supervisor training is offered periodically by DCU Human Resources Learning and Development Unit. Formal training for those chairing viva voce examinations is also provided each year by Learning and Development in collaboration with the GSO.





9

**Progression**

## 9. Progression

### 9.1 Postgraduate research administration

The entire course of any DCU research degree is underpinned by an underlying administrative process which deals with an individual student's registration, progression, thesis submission and examination. This process is known as the Postgraduate Research (PGR) administration process and it is managed by Registry.

There are a number of PGR forms associated with the different stages of the process (see also guide [Section 2.3.3](#)). Visit the Registry website for the full list of [postgraduate research forms](#) and [submission dates](#), including a [one-page guide to PGR forms](#).

### 9.2 Annual Progression and the Annual Review Process

Continued registration for a higher degree is dependent on satisfactory progress. A student's progress is formally evaluated on an annual basis through the completion of an Annual Progress Report<sup>20</sup> (PGR2) which is submitted online each summer by the deadline provided by Registry in the Academic Calendar. Students cannot register for the next academic year until their progression has been approved.

- Annual progress reports must be completed online via Loop - paper forms are not accepted.
- Only the student can start the online submission of the PGR2 Annual Progress Report.
- A PGR2 cannot be used to request a period of deferral or to extend the maximum registration period. Personal sensitive data should not be included in the Annual Progress Report.
- Students registered in Year 1 or 2 of a Professional Doctorate programme (Doctor of Education, Doctor of Elite Performance (Sport), Doctor of Psychotherapy or Doctor of Business Administration) commence the process in Year 3 of registration.

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<sup>20</sup> For students undertaking Professional Doctorates the requirement for an Annual Progress Report may be postponed until the student embarks on substantive research work. Details on progressing during the taught phase of these programmes will be communicated to registered students via their school/faculty.

## Panel Arrangements


Supervisor and Independent Panel Member details are pulled directly from the University's student record system. If any changes are required, form R103: 'Change of Supervisory and / or Panel Member Arrangements' must be submitted to the Faculty Office for consideration at their next Faculty Research Committee meeting. It is important to allow adequate time for approval and updating of records, should this be required.

## Outline of Stages in the PGR2 Process

Below is an outline of the steps involved in the PGR2 process. A detailed user guide is emailed to students, supervisors and heads of school annually when Registry launches the process annually. The system is managed by Registry and any technical queries should be emailed to [postgraduate.research@dcu.ie](mailto:postgraduate.research@dcu.ie).

1. **Student Submission (Section A):** The student completes Section A of the Annual Progress Report. Submitting the report will trigger an email to the Supervisor(s) and Independent Panel Member(s) requesting that they review and agree a response to the report.
2. **Supervisor Submission (Section B):** The Principal Supervisor uploads the agreed report to the system on behalf of the supervisory panel.
3. **Student Acknowledgement (Section B):** The student is prompted to acknowledge their supervisors' recommendations. Once acknowledged, the full panel will be prompted to indicate a response in the Supervisory Panel Recommendation section.
4. **Supervisory Panel Recommendation (Section B):** The full panel must indicate whether or not they concur with the progression recommendations made in Section B: Supervisor Submission.
5. **Head of School/Nominee Endorsement:** when the full panel agrees with the progression recommendations, the form will progress to the Head of School/Nominee for endorsement.
6. **The final report is submitted for processing.** This process should be finalised by the deadline specified in the Academic Calendar.

For information on negative recommendations and unsatisfactory progress see [Section 14.3](#) of this guide.



Professional development planning is an inherent part of the annual review process and a Skills Need Analysis tool is available for supervisors and students to use when preparing to complete the Annual Progress Report. See [Section 8.6.1](#) of this guide for further details.

### 9.3 Confirmation on/Transfer to the PhD Register

Research students initially admitted to the Master's or PhD track registers will have to undergo a transfer (in the case of students on the Master's register) or a confirmation procedure (in the case of students on the PhD-track register) normally no earlier than 12 months and no later than 21 months for full-time students (and at an appropriate corresponding time for part-time students). Heads of School/School Research Convenors are asked to monitor annual progress report forms for students in their 2nd year so that students do not reach 24 months registration (or longer) without completing/embarking on this process. In the case of students working within a research centre, it is desirable that the assessment at transfer/confirmation include academic colleagues from the school/group in which the student is registered.

**Note:** Procedures for applying to transfer to the PhD register from the Master's register mirror those of the confirmation process above.

The confirmation/transfer procedure involves the submission of a substantial report by the student, followed by an oral examination. The report and subsequent examination are evaluated by the supervisor(s) together with an internal examiner who submit, via Registry, an evaluation via form PGR3: Confirmation on the PhD Register or Transfer to the PhD Register for consideration by the Graduate Research Studies Board (GRSB). The report indicates the student's progress, potential and suitability for confirmation/ transfer and whether or not the future work envisaged is likely to be appropriate to merit consideration for the award of a PhD.

A positive recommendation on the PGR3 indicates that the evaluators consider that the project has the range, depth, and implementation plan to potentially deliver PhD standard, that the student has mastered basic research techniques and demonstrated knowledge of the background appropriate to this stage of work, and a capability to implement the future planned work.



# 10

**Thesis  
Preparation**

## 10. Thesis Preparation

### 10.1 Format of the Thesis

The Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis note that all theses submitted for examination must conform strictly to the regulations and requirements detailed in [Section 9](#). The regulations state that a thesis must:

- Consist of the candidate's own account of his/her research;
- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the field of study;
- Include critical analysis of related work;
- In the case of a PhD thesis, constitute a significant contribution to existing academic knowledge;
- In the case of a professional doctoral thesis, constitute a significant contribution to existing professional knowledge and practice;
- Be based on work which has been conducted while the candidate has been registered as a research student at DCU; and
- Where ethical approval was required, either the University Research Ethics Committee or Faculty Research Ethics Committee approval letter must be included in the thesis appendices.

Types of thesis include:

- PhD (monograph)
- PhD by Publication (article based PhD)
- PhD by Artefact
- PhD through Creative and/or Performance Practice
- Professional Doctorate
- Research Master's by Monograph, Artefact and Creative/Performance Practice

Specific instructions on thesis format and composition are given in the [Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis](#).

Irrespective of the format chosen for the submission of research leading to a doctoral (or masters by research) award, the standard by which the work is evaluated remains the same.

### **Note on PhD by Publication**

The format of PhD by Publication (article-based PhD) is now available in most Irish universities and has been an option across several European countries for many years. However, it has traditionally been favoured in particular disciplines (economics for example), and in particular contexts. More recently, the article-based approach has gained interest across science disciplines.

DCU regulations regarding submissions for a PhD award are given in the Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis, and they allow for submission in the format of published work with an accompanying set of chapters. Candidates considering submitting in this format should consult the regulations as well as the Guidelines for candidates, supervisors and examiners on the 'PhD by Publication' format.

### **Note on the language of the thesis**

The regulations state that, "The language of the thesis shall normally be either English or Irish. Where it is proposed that the thesis will be in another language, the Principal Supervisor must seek the approval of the Graduate Research Studies Board - providing details of the rationale - ideally at initial registration or prior to the student's first annual progress review" (Section 9.4.1 [Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis](#)).

## **10.2 Thesis Submission Procedure**

### **10.2.1 Notice of intention to submit a thesis for examination**

Through the principal supervisor(s), the student must provide 3 months' notice to Registry of their intention to submit a thesis for examination. The PGR4 form: Notification of Intention to Submit for Examination is submitted to Registry with a 300-word abstract, at least 2 weeks in advance of the next scheduled meeting of the GRSB. The supervisor is required to consult with the relevant Head of School on the selection and nomination of appropriate Internal and External Examiners. The Head of School is responsible for ensuring the nomination is in line with the regulations, and appoints an Independent Chairperson (see guide [Section 11](#)). GRSB reviews all PGR4 forms submitted to Registry and approves/rejects or recommends changes to the proposed submission and nominated examiners.

### 10.2.2 Submission of soft-bound thesis for examination

Following GR SB's approval of the PGR4, the candidate may be required to provide the Registry with one soft-bound printed copy of the thesis for each examiner ([see the Registry's Postgraduate Research website for up to date information on current thesis submission requirements](#)). The thesis must be referred by Registry to the Examiners, who cannot accept it directly from the candidate or the supervisor.

The student must provide one electronic PDF copy of the thesis for examination. This should be submitted to Registry in a single PDF file entitled with the student number and date of submission, which should be saved on a memory key. The PDF should have the wording 'pre examination copy' and the submission date included as a watermark, or as a footer, on each page of the document.

[Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis](#) require candidates for a higher degree to sign a declaration: [PGR7 Thesis Access Consent form](#) at the time of submission of a thesis for examination, permitting access to the thesis in print or electronic form (see guide [Section 10.4](#) below).

For information on GR SB meeting gates, see the [University Schedule of Meetings](#).

### 10.2.3 Submission of hardbound and e-copy of the thesis

On completion of the examination process, two hard-bound copies of the thesis should be submitted to Registry. One additional copy of the thesis shall be submitted in electronic format. The electronic copy shall contain exactly the same content as, and be an exact surrogate of, the print copy. The electronic copy shall be uploaded to a secure web space ([DORAS, DCU Library's Repository](#)) by the Principal Supervisor. All accompanying material must also be uploaded to the secure web space. The candidate will be required to sign a declaration form (PGR12: E-thesis Submission Declaration) confirming that an e-version of the approved thesis has been submitted to DCU Library. The candidate will be required to sign the completed form which should be submitted to Registry in advance of the Faculty Awards Board for Research Degrees (FABRD) meeting.

#### **Outline of Thesis Submission and Examination Process:**

1. Through the principal supervisor(s), the candidate must provide three months' notice of their intention to submit for examination.
2. Supervisor consults with the Head of School to nominate internal and external examiners.



3. Supervisor submits completed PGR4 form to Registry. Registry submits the form to GRSB.
4. GRSB considers the PGR4 form at their next meeting and approves/rejects or recommends changes. Approval is valid for 12 months.
5. Following GRSB approval, Registry issues a formal written invitation to the external examiners(s) with a copy of the abstract of the work to be examined.
6. Candidate required to submit one electronic PDF copy and PGR7 form within 3 months of PGR4 submission. Candidate may be required to submit a soft-bound thesis for each examiner.
7. Registry forwards the thesis, a web link to the Examiners' Report form and the Academic Regulations to each examiner.

**For doctoral awards:**

8. Supervisor liaises with the examiners and Independent Chairperson to arrange the viva voce examination. The examiners now deal directly with the Independent Chairperson only.
9. The Independent Chairperson notifies the candidate in writing of the arrangements for the viva voce examination and of the composition of the Examination Board. While in examination, candidates must not contact their examiners and vice versa.

**Note:** In the case of a thesis submitted for a Master's by Research award, a viva voce is not normally required but may be requested by the examiners.

See [Section 11.1](#) for details of the steps involved in the thesis examination process.

#### **10.2.4 Thesis submission timelines**

Research students who wish to be considered for spring graduation by the Spring Faculty Award Board for Research Degrees, or for autumn graduation by the Autumn Faculty Award Board for Research Degrees, must ensure that the documentation listed below is submitted to Registry by the deadlines given on the [submission dates section of the Registry website](#).

1. PGR4 Notification of Intention to Submit Thesis for Examination

2. PGR7 Thesis Access Consent form and an electronic PDF copy of thesis. Candidate may be required to submit a soft-bound thesis for each examiner
3. Two copies of final hardbound thesis (signed and dated)
4. PGR8 Application for Temporary Restriction of Access to the Thesis, where applicable
5. PGR12 E-thesis Submission Declaration Form
6. PGR6 Examination Report (submitted to Registry by the Independent Chairperson, or the Internal Examiner in the case of a Master's candidate where normally no viva examination is required)

### **10.3 Making a thesis available through DCU Library**

On completion of the examination process, an electronic version of the thesis is also submitted. It is subject to the same formatting regulations, except where they apply specifically to physical properties of print copies. In all other respects the electronic copy shall contain exactly the same content as, and be an exact surrogate of, the print copy. The electronic copy shall be uploaded to DORAS by the principal supervisor. All accompanying material, e.g. appendices, files in digital/electronic format, which are submitted with the bound copy of the thesis must also be uploaded to the secure web space. The candidate and principal supervisor will be required to sign the PGR12 E-Thesis Submission Declaration confirming that an e-version of the approved thesis has been submitted to the Library. Where confidentiality matters arise, candidates may request (on form PGR8) and obtain temporary restriction of access to the thesis for up to a maximum of four years, for sufficient cogent reasons.

The PGR7 Thesis Access Consent Form gives Dublin City University permission to make the thesis available for consultation, copying, displaying, viewing via printed and electronic medium (including via the Internet, an intranet and any other method of electronic display) (within the confines of the Copyright and Related Rights Act 2000), inter-library loan, and for inclusion in any list of theses published by the University, or in any other publication or listing of theses accepted for higher degrees, to which the University may decide to contribute. Authors should note that granting of access, as referred to above, does not in any way prejudice their rights and obligations, as set out in the DCU Intellectual Property Policy.

## 10.4 Publishing a Thesis<sup>21</sup>

DCU is supportive of graduates and their supervisors disseminating the results of their research as widely as possible. In many disciplines, this is done via publication of peer reviewed papers, but there are situations where publication in book form may be more appropriate, and this practice is standard in some disciplines.

A doctoral or a master's thesis is written with a very specific audience - the examiners - in mind. It is unlikely that a thesis would be suitable for publication as a book for a wider audience without significant rewriting and editing. In addition, any publication within which an association with DCU is identified should be professionally presented. In the case of a book, content editing, copy editing, proof reading, professional typesetting, high quality graphic design etc. are required. It is therefore important that a reputable publisher be sought; one which would add value in these aspects of the publishing process.

Many well established academic publishers are known to academic staff, who may be in a position to advise on potential avenues of exploration. There are also associations of publishers which ensure that all members provide a minimum level of service to authors. There are risks for the University associated with so-called 'vanity publishing' of theses. In this case the publishers charge authors, and may add very little value in terms of the publishing process.

DCU theses in electronic form are available on the [DCU DORAS](#) institutional repository. This is carried out under licence, and there are specific conditions imposed on individuals who download the work. The availability of the thesis via DORAS does not impinge on your copyright. However, if you are considering publishing your work as a book, you should consult with your publisher to establish whether there are valid reasons why access to the thesis should be restricted for a period to allow for publication in the other form first. It is very important that intellectual property issues, where relevant, be resolved in advance of discussions about publication. It is worth noting that while reference to DCU is appropriate in a book based on a thesis, it is not appropriate to present it as a PhD or Master's work.

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<sup>21</sup> Approved by GRBSB, 12 January 2012.



11

**Examination  
and Conferring**

## 11. Examination and Conferring

### 11.1 Examination of a Doctoral Award

Examiners assess a doctoral thesis according to the criteria provided and following the process detailed in Section 11 of the [Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis](#).

### 11.2 Examination of a Research Master's Award

Examiners assess a Master's thesis in light of the criteria provided and following the process detailed in Section 11 of the [Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis](#).

### 11.3 Examination Panel


Each candidate for a higher degree by research will be examined by at least one Internal Examiner and at least one External Examiner. Section 10 of the [Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis](#) outlines the procedures for the appointment of examiners and also sets out what students can reasonably expect from the University regarding the examination of their work. The Graduate Research Studies Board is responsible for approving the appointment of both internal and external examiners. Detailed descriptions of the roles of the examiners may be found in Tables 4-5 of the booklet [Academic Roles and Responsibilities in Graduate Research](#).

### 11.4 Examiners' Reports and Recommendations

Candidates for a doctoral degree will be assessed on the basis of a written thesis and a viva voce examination. In the case of Master's candidates, the usual expectation is that there will be no viva voce examination. However, an examiner may recommend that a viva voce examination be held.

#### **Thesis submission and examination process:**

1. The External Examiner completes their Examination Report on the thesis (Section B1 of the PGR6 form). The Internal Examiner completes their Examination Report on the thesis (Section B2 of the PGR6). Where a viva voce examination is held, the examiners submit their draft Examination Report on the thesis (Sections B1 and B2 of the PGR6) to the Independent Chair at least one week prior to the viva voce examination. Such draft reports can be modified by the examiners on the day of the examination. Where no



viva voce examination is held, the Internal Examiner sends the Examiners' Reports and Recommendations to Registry. Where no viva voce examination is held, the Reports include commentary on the work presented for examination, details of any corrections to be made and their recommendation.\*

2. For all doctoral students and some master's students, the viva voce examination takes place next. After the viva voce examination, examiners complete their Examination Report on the oral examination (Section B3 of the PGR6 form) and send these to the Independent Chair. Reports include commentary on the work presented for examination, details of any corrections to be made, and their recommendation.
3. The Independent Chairperson (where a viva voce examination takes place) or the Internal Examiner (where no viva voce examination takes place) advises the candidate of the examiners' recommendation where changes or resubmission is recommended<sup>22</sup>.
4. Where a viva voce examination is held, the Independent Chairperson sends the Examiners' Reports and Recommendations to Registry.
5. The corrected/resubmitted thesis is returned by the student and the examiner(s) sign-off that the required work has been done.
6. The candidate submits two copies of the final hard-bound thesis, a PGR12 (and a PGR8 if applicable) to Registry on completion of the examination process. An electronic copy of the thesis must be uploaded to DORAS by the supervisor or internal examiner (see PGR12 form for details).
7. Registry refers the Examiners' Reports and Recommendations to the next meeting of the relevant Faculty Awards Board for Research Degrees (FABRD), which submits a recommendation to Academic Council following consideration of the Report (see guide [Section 11.6](#)).

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<sup>22</sup> Examiners are normally expected to carry out their duties within two months of receipt of the thesis to avoid hardship to the candidate.

Examiners' reports include a recommendation, clear grounds for their recommendation and a timeframe for corrections or revisions, if applicable.

8. Registry notifies successful candidates of conferring details and issues transcripts. Registry informs unsuccessful candidates, in writing, of the subsequent decision.

See figure 10.1 for details of the previous steps in the thesis examination process (guide [Section 10.2](#)).

**Possible recommendations include:**

- that the degree sought be awarded;
- that the degree sought be conditionally awarded subject to clearly specified textual emendations;
- that the degree sought be conditionally awarded subject to clearly specified revisions to content;
- that no degree be awarded, but that the candidate be allowed to submit a revised thesis, normally within a year;
- that, where a doctoral award is sought, a Master's degree be awarded instead
- that no degree be awarded as the candidate is unlikely to reach the standard for a research award; or
- that, where a Master's degree was sought, the candidate be advised and permitted to withdraw the thesis for revision and resubmission at a later date for the award of a doctorate, subject to the conditions specified in the [Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis](#).

Where a thesis has to be corrected or revised, the examiners approve corrections within 6 weeks of receiving the revised thesis. For more detailed information see the [Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis](#). Where multiple revisions are required, and revisions have still not met the recommendations from the examination, then examiners can submit alternative recommendations.

## **11.5 Faculty Award Board for Research Degrees (FABRD)**

Each faculty has a Faculty Award Board for Research Degrees (FABRD) chaired by the faculty's Associate Dean for Research or his/her nominee, which meets twice per year, in advance of the autumn and spring conferring ceremonies. Full details on FABRD composition and remit can be found in the [Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by](#)

[Research and Thesis](#). Dates for FABRD meetings are listed in the Academic Calendar.

The FABRD meetings are timed to facilitate Academic Council and its role in approving and considering the outcomes of research degree examinations. The fixing of dates thus provides clear timelines for candidates planning to submit their theses.

## 11.6 Conferring and Award Parchment

Conferring of research degrees take place twice annually at graduation ceremonies in autumn and spring. All students eligible to graduate will receive an invitation to the ceremony to their DCU email account, including instructions on how to confirm their attendance and obtain guest tickets. Correct academic dress must be worn by graduands, and can be booked in advance through an academic robing company prior to the conferring ceremony. [Information on DCU's graduation ceremonies](#) is available from the DCU website.

In cases where a graduand does not attend the ceremony, his/her award will be conferred in absentia, and the award parchment will be sent to the graduand by registered post after the ceremony.

In addition to the award parchment, students will receive a results transcript for their research degree, and a supplementary transcript detailing the results of any graduate training elements undertaken successfully during their studies. Transcripts are sent to the student by post following the Academic Council meeting at which the award of their degree is approved. Further information on results transcripts are available on the [transcripts section of the Registry website](#).

It is important that the information held in the student record is up to date as the award parchment and transcripts will be sent to the postal address as it appears on the student record, and the name that will appear on the award parchment is the name as it appears in the student record. Students are advised to check their student record details as they appear on the Student Apps page, and should contact Registry by completing an online query form with details of any changes required.





12

**Student Support**

## 12. Student Support

### 12.1 Postgraduate Research Student Representatives

Postgraduate research student (PGR) representatives are a critical component in the effective communication between postgraduate research students and the University's senior research community and management. Their role is to represent research students by communicating issues which affect the postgraduate research experience, and to work closely with the Students' Union to engage with, and foster activities for research students. There is a PGR representative on the Graduate Research Studies Board (GRSB) who also sits on Academic Council, and a second representative who sits on the Governing Authority. Most faculties have their own PGR representative who sit on their respective Faculty Research Committee (FRC).

The role of the PGR representative is:

- To act as a conduit between research students and members of the University on matters of concern to research students
- To represent research students in appropriate discussions relating to postgraduate research policy formulation and development


Seats on university committees for PGR representatives:

- Academic Council: 1 seat
- Graduate Research Studies Board: 1 seat
- Governing Authority: 1 seat
- Faculty Research Committees: at least 1 seat in each faculty
- PGR Student Committee – all faculty PGR representatives sit on this committee with the SU Education Officer

The team of PGR representatives work closely with the SU Postgraduate Officer to facilitate the annual PGR Representative elections in April. The current team of representatives is listed on the Graduate Studies Office and Students' Union websites.

#### **Students' Union Postgraduate Officer**

As defined by article 8.2.1 of [DCU Students' Union](#) constitution, 'there shall be an Executive member elected, who is responsible for the



representation of postgraduate students within the Union known as the Postgraduate Officer’.

The Students’ Union Postgraduate Officer is a part-time position within DCU Students’ Union. Any postgraduate student, taught or research, is eligible to run for the position in the annual Students’ Union election and the position has a 1 year term (June-June). Duties of the position include:

- Attend and represent postgraduate students’ interests on relevant committees
- Ensure that postgraduate students’ interests are represented in Students’ Union policies and campaigns
- Promote Students’ Union led events and campaigns to postgraduate students
- Liaise with the Students’ Union sabbatical officers to organise specific social events for postgraduate students
- Contribute to postgraduate student induction and orientation where appropriate
- Provide training and relevant documents to successor at end of term

## **12.2 Student Support and Development Office**

[Student Support and Development](#) offers many support services to research students including:

- Student Advice Centre
- Careers Service
- Student Health
- Counselling and Personal Development
- Disability and Learning Support
- Chaplaincy Centre
- Student Learning
- Mature Students

- DEVELOP Resource Hub

### **12.2.1 Student Charter**

The DCU [Student Charter](#) contains detailed information which helps students to understand their relationship with the University. The Student Charter, created in collaboration with the Students' Union, provides a framework for students during their time at DCU.

### **12.2.2 Student Advice Centre**

The Student Advice Centre is located on the ground floor of the Henry Grattan building on the Glasnevin Campus, and in room C101 on the DCU St Patrick's Campus. It is a 'drop-in' centre where DCU students can receive advice and guidance on all matters academic, personal and financial.

## **12.3 International Research Students**

DCU supports and assists non-EU students and prospective students in the transition from their home country to life and study in Ireland, and works in conjunction with other units in the University, particularly the Student Support and Development Office, in this regard. International students are also directed to the [International Student website](#) which contains a wide range of useful information.

## **12.4 Careers Service**

The [Careers Service](#) offers careers information, education, advice and guidance to DCU students and recent alumni, and works with them to ensure a smooth transition from their research degree to employment. The Careers Service also facilitate employers and their graduate recruitment activities in DCU.

## **12.5 Resources and Contacts**

The [Graduate Studies Office Postgraduate Contacts web page](#) provides a full list of contact points within the University for research students.



13

**If Things Change**

## 13. If Things Change

### 13.1 Withdrawing or Early Exit from a Research Programme

The [guidance document for withdrawing, or exiting early from a research degree programme](#) details the procedures which must be followed by students who wish to discontinue their studies, or in cases where adequate progress is not being made and student progression is not approved. The document also outlines the implications for stipend payments. Research students withdrawing from the University must notify the Registry. For current students this can be done via the Student Apps page, or via the relevant link on the Registry webpage. For more information see the guidance for students and supervisors in respect of withdrawing, or early exit from research programmes. Students intending to withdraw from their research degree are advised to check the fee liability that applies in their particular case – see guide [Section 7.1](#) for more information.

### 13.2 Change of Supervisor and/or Panel Arrangements

Change of supervisor and/or panel member arrangements

It may be necessary in some cases for a change in supervision during the course of a student's research degree. This may involve an additional supervisor or a new/replacement supervisor and can be due to a supervisor retiring, resigning, leaving DCU or taking a leave of absence or sabbatical leave. In all cases, it is the responsibility of the relevant Head of School to ensure appropriate supervision remains in place for the research student, and the [R103 - Change of Supervisory and/or Panel Member Arrangements Form](#) is submitted to the Faculty Research Committee for approval and notified to Registry. It is the responsibility of the supervisors (incoming and outgoing) to ensure a smooth and timely transition. Section 7.7 of the [Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis](#) contains full details on the conditions pertaining to changes in supervision.

### 13.3 Change in Study Mode

Students and supervisors should capture changes in study mode (from full- to part-time or part- to full-time) in the PGR2 report. Outside of this process a request can be sent by email to Registry at: [postgraduate.research@dcu.ie](mailto:postgraduate.research@dcu.ie). Funding implications must be considered before any changes are made.

## 13.4 Extension of Registration Period

Section 5 of the [Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis](#) relate to the period of time for completion of research degree programmes. See also guide [Section 1.2](#). If a student does not submit a hardbound thesis to registry within the maximum period stipulated, he/she must seek permission from the Graduate Research Studies Board to be allowed to continue his/her studies. Such extensions will be granted in exceptional cases only. GRSB advises that prolonged registration is not in the student's best interest. To allow an extension, GRSB must be satisfied that the student has addressed the problems causing the delay, and has a plan to complete within the next 12 months which is supported by the supervisor(s) and Head of School. [Form PGR14 Request for Extension to Maximum Registration Period or Re-admission to the Research Programme](#) should include the following details:

- A summary of the exceptional circumstances pertaining to the case
- A statement on the current stage of thesis preparation
- The anticipated submission/examination timeframe
- The approval of the supervisor(s) and Head of School

## 13.5 Deferral

While it is preferable for students to conduct their research without interruption, in some circumstances, for example in the case of illness, financial or family circumstances or due to maternity leave, it is possible to apply in advance for a formal temporary cessation of registration. The deferral is requested for a specific academic year (a full year), or a six-month period. Deferrals must be approved by the supervisor and the relevant Head of School, and are processed through Registry via the [R-32R Postgraduate Research Deferral Application](#).

The Graduate Studies Office should also be notified when students in receipt of a scholarship seek a deferral. During any deferral, the student's participation on the research programme is suspended and no supervision takes place. The maximum registration period is not extended.

No tuition fees are payable during the deferred period, and the student does not receive a stipend. When a student is externally funded, he/she should discuss the situation with the supervisor(s) in the first instance, and the sponsoring agency should be consulted if a temporary cessation of study is necessary.



## 13.6 Early Submission of Thesis

Section 5 of the [Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis](#) provides information on the completion of research degree programmes. See also guide [Section 1.2.1](#). Where a student wishes to submit a thesis before the minimum period stipulated, they must seek express permission from GRSB to be allowed to do so. Such permission will be granted in exceptional cases only.





14

**If Things go  
Wrong**

## 14. If Things Go Wrong

The success of a student's research is dependent on a good relationship with their supervisor. This relationship is key, and it is very important that it works well. Sometimes, however, this may not be the case, or other issues and circumstances may arise during a student's research degree which may need to be managed. The DCU community is committed to ensuring that every student has the opportunity to have an excellent university experience, and completes their programme of study successfully. In this context, there are a number of procedures and processes in place to handle a wide variety of situations which may arise.

### 14.1 Resolving Issues Informally

Occasionally issues can arise for a student, or in the student-supervisor relationship. We encourage, where possible, that difficulties, are addressed locally and informally. The [GSO guidance document on Resolving Difficulties Informally](#) can prove useful in such circumstances.

### 14.2 Formal Complaint

The [Student Complaints and Grievance Procedure](#) has been devised to deal with students' grievances in a fair, timely and effective manner so that the student's university experience can be improved on an ongoing basis. The Student Grievance Procedure document outlines the 2-stage procedure to be followed, which includes an informal stage and a formal stage. In the first instance, a student with a grievance is expected to make a reasonable effort to resolve the matter on an informal basis and in a timely manner, prior to requesting a formal resolution. Students are encouraged to approach the relevant member of staff to discuss any issues with him/her directly.

Students must follow this procedure when submitting a grievance in relation to academic processes and procedures, administrative or student support services provided by the University. It does not include the following:

- Grievances related to personal harassment or bullying involving a member of DCU staff
- Appeals of grades for examinations or assessments
- Grievances about the Students' Union
- Appeals against decisions taken by the Disciplinary Committee
- Grievances about campus companies

## 14.3 Disciplinary Committee

The University strives to maintain the highest academic and social standards and expects students and staff to be treated with respect at all times. [DCU's Student Code of Conduct and Discipline](#) aims to ensure that a suitable academic environment is maintained within the University. The Code requires reasonable behaviour and consideration for others, and students in breach of any element of the Code or the University's regulations may be asked to present themselves to the Disciplinary Committee. This committee will decide on an appropriate course of action after hearing the events as outlined by all parties concerned. Examples of non-compliance include acts of plagiarism, cheating in exams and disorderly conduct on campus.


## 14.4 Unsatisfactory Progress and Appeals

Students can submit an appeal in respect of decisions regarding their:

- Progression
- Transfer/Confirmation procedure
- Examination

The above are the three key points at which decisions are made regarding a student's progress. In cases where the supervisory panel submits a negative Annual Progress Report and recommends that a student should not progress, the [Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis](#) takes the view that the student is unlikely to achieve the degree for which he/she is registered and the student should not be permitted to continue as a registered graduate research student.

Transfer/confirmation recommendations are approved at GRSB and the opportunity to appeal follows notification of the decision of the GRSB. Examination recommendations are approved at the relevant Faculty Award Board for Research Degrees (FABRD) meeting and the opportunity to appeal follows notification of the decision of the relevant FABRD Boards or the notification of the negative recommendation to the candidate. In respect of a negative progression recommendation, the date of decision is taken as the date the completed review form is submitted to Registry. In respect of a negative examination outcome, an appeal may not be based on disagreement with the academic judgement of the examiners or supervisory panel. For full details of the grounds for appeal and the procedure to be followed, refer to Section 13 of the [Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis](#). A guidance note on appeals of research student decisions is available on the [OVPAA website](#).



Appeals must be submitted on the appropriate form and with supporting written documentation to the Secretary of the Graduate Research Studies Board.



# 15

## Useful Links

## 15. Useful Links

### DCU Central Units

#### Graduate Studies

[Graduate Studies Office](#)

[Contact Graduate Studies](#)

[Orientation information for new research students](#)

[Postgraduate research graduate training information](#)

[Graduate Studies workshops and events](#)

[Research Integrity Training Programme for research students](#)

[Graduate Studies scholarships and opportunities](#)

[Graduate Studies: How to apply for a research degree](#)

[A-Z of GSO policies and guidelines](#)

#### DCU Research – Support Overview

[DCU Research Support](#)

[Research Ethics](#)

[DCU Invent](#)

[DCU research centres and institutes](#)

#### Office of the Vice-President Academic Affairs

[Office of the Vice-President Academic Affairs](#)

[Graduate Research Studies Board \(GRSB\)](#)

[Submission timelines \(paper/agenda\) for GRSB](#)

[Research Appeals](#)

#### Registry

[Registry](#)

[Making a postgraduate research application](#)

[Postgraduate Research Administration](#)

[Postgraduate research entry requirements](#)

[English language requirements](#)

[Diploma Supplement and Digitary Core](#)

[Garda Vetting](#)

[Registration information](#)

[Postgraduate research forms \(PGR\)](#)

[Registry submission dates](#)

[Transcript of results](#)

[Graduation information](#)



## **Finance**

[Fees Office](#)

[Fees FAQs](#)

## **International Students**

[DCU International](#)

[Definition of EU/Non-EU applicants](#)

## **DCU Library**

[DCU Library](#)

[Doras - DCU online research access service](#)

## **Student Support & Development**

[Student Support and Development](#)

[Careers Service](#)

[Student Health Service](#)

[Counselling and Personal Development](#)

[Disability and Learning Support Service](#)

[Student Learning](#)

[Chaplaincy](#)

[DCU Autism Friendly](#)

## **Students' Union**

[Students' Union](#)

[Postgraduate Society](#)

## **Human Resources**

[Human Resources](#)

[DCU Consent Framework](#)

## **Policies, Regulations and Guidelines**

[DCU's Strategic Plan 2017-2022](#)

[DCU Constituent Strategies](#)

## **DCU Regulations and Policies**

[Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis](#)

[Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Policy](#)

[Student Charter](#)

[Student Code of Conduct & Code of Discipline](#)  
[University's Regulations & Standing Orders](#)  
[Recognition of Prior Learning \(RPL\) Policy for Research Programmes](#)  
[DCU Policy on Research Supervision and Awards in Collaboration with Other Institutions](#)  
[Garda Vetting Policy for Students](#)  
[DCU Data Protection policies](#)  
[Student Grievance Procedure](#)  
[Student Sexual Misconduct Policy](#)

#### [DCU Research Policies/Guidelines](#)

- Code of Good Research Practice
- Policy for Responding to Allegations of Research Misconduct (ARMP)
- Intellectual Property
- Code of Practice on Authorship
- Health & Safety Policies

#### [Health & Safety Policies](#)

- DCU Safety Statement
- Sharps Injury Policy (including bites and splashes)
- Evacuation Procedure
- Occupational First Aid and Medical Incident Management Procedure
- Vaccination Policy
- Mothers' Rest Room Policy
- DCU Fire Safety Policy
- Lone/Out of Hours Working Policy



## **Inter-institutional Mobility**

[IUA Inter-Institutional Agreement on Collaborative Graduate Programmes  
Information for Research Students going to a host institution to undertake  
graduate training](#)

[Standard Operating Procedures for the Inter-institutional Mobility of  
Postgraduate Research Students](#)

## **GSO Guidelines/Guidance**

[Orientation information for research students 2022-23](#)

[Annual Leave Guidelines for Research Students](#)

[The Annual Progression Process - A DCU Research Student Guide](#)

[Academic Roles and Responsibilities in Graduate Research](#)

[Thesis Submission and Oral Examination - A DCU Doctoral Student Guide](#)

[Resolving Difficulties Informally - Guidance for Research Students and  
Supervisors](#)

[Guidelines for candidates, supervisors and examiners on the format of  
'PhD/MA by Artefact'](#)

[Guidelines for candidates, supervisors and examiners on the format of  
'PhD / MA through Creative or Performance Practice'](#)

[Guidelines for candidates, supervisors and examiners on the 'PhD by  
Publication' format](#)

## **Forms**

### **Graduate Studies Office Forms**

[Card Fee Declaration](#)

[Postgraduate Travel Grant Application](#)

[GSO Scholarship Administration including:](#)

- Scholarship Authorisation Form (SAF)
- Bank Details Form
- Scholarship Exemption Declaration Form (SE Form)
- Scholarship Adjustment Form

### **Registry - Postgraduate Research Forms**

- Registry Postgraduate Administration Forms (PGR Paperwork)
- One-page guide to Registry PGR forms
- R-26H Visiting Research Student Application Form

- R-103 Supervisory and / or Panel Member Arrangements
- Deferral information

## Calendars & Timetables

[Academic Calendar and Timetables](#)  
[University Schedule of Meetings](#)  
[GSO Workshops & Events](#)  
[DCU Open Timetable](#)

## External Links

### National

[National Framework for Doctoral Education](#)  
[National Policy Statement on Ensuring Research Integrity in Ireland](#) (2019)  
[Irish Universities Doctoral Skills Statement](#) (3rd Ed, 2021)  
[Ireland's Framework of Good Practice for Research Degree Programmes](#) (2019)

### EU

[The European Charter for Researchers](#), EURAXESS  
[The General Data Protection Regulation](#) (GDPR) (Regulation (EU) 2016/679)  
[The European Research Area: Priorities for Research Universities](#). League of European Research Universities (2011):  
[The Salzburg principles for doctoral training](#)  
[European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity](#), European Science Foundation and ALLEA (All European Academies) (2017)  
[Good Practice Elements in Doctoral Training](#), League of European Research Universities (2014):  
[EU Council for Doctoral Education](#)

### International

[VITAE](#)  
[UK Council for Graduate Education](#)  
[Quality in Postgraduate Research](#) (QPR)

## Scholarships and Opportunities

GSO [Scholarships & Opportunities](#) website  
[IBM Research Brazil Internship](#)  
[Irish Research Council](#) (IRC)  
[Tell It Straight Communications Competition](#)





## **How to stay in touch with us:**

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