

Eligibility for Research Degree Supervision

The University of Leeds Graduate Board

(for appointments made with effect from session 2016/17)

Note: The accreditation Agreement between the University of Leeds (UoL) and Leeds Trinity University (LTU) have been incorporated into this policy.

1. At Leeds Trinity University it is the responsibility of the Director of Postgraduate Research or nominee, or individual to whom responsibility has been delegated to recommend suitable supervisors for appointment to the Graduate Board. Each supervisory team must satisfy the requirements of the [QAA Quality Code](#). The University of Leeds Board encourages the joint supervision of research degree candidates. Where only one supervisor is appointed for a PGR a Mentor/Advisor must also be appointed.
2. The UoL Graduate Board recognises the following key principles in respect of supervisory support:
 - reasonable accessibility of supervisors to Postgraduate Researchers (PGRs);
 - appointment of supervisors who have the appropriate skills and subject knowledge to support, encourage and monitor PGRs effectively;
 - each PGR will have at least one main supervisor, with additional supervisors as appropriate. In all cases a PGR should have an identified single point of contact which will normally be the main supervisor;
 - at least one member of the supervisory team will be currently engaged in excellent research in the relevant discipline ensuring the direction of and monitoring of the PGR's progress is informed by up to date subject knowledge and research developments;
 - the supervisory team will ensure that the PGR receives sufficient support and guidance to facilitate their success;
 - all named supervisor(s) must play an active role in the supervision of the PGR, in partnership with the other members of the supervision team, as appropriate to the FTE allocated;
 - where there is a supervisory team of 3 or more the minimum FTE allocation for a supervisors on the team will normally be at least 0.1 FTE;
 - where there is a supervisory team of two supervisors the FTE allocation will normally be no higher than 0.8FTE (80%) for one member of the team (therefore no lower than 0.2 FTE for the second supervisor). This is to ensure that a second supervisor is sufficiently involved in the supervision to maintain

- continuity of supervision if one of the supervisors' leaves or is award from the university for a prolonged period.
- The role of each member of the supervisory team must be made clear to the PGR at the start of their studies and at the point any change to the supervisory team is approved. This will include expectations around attendance at meetings and whether all supervisors will attend all or some of the meetings. It is accepted that the pattern of attendance at meetings may vary according to the precise stage of the candidature, between subject areas and supervisory roles.
 3. The Graduate Board must be satisfied that a supervisory team can provide an appropriate level of support and guidance to a candidate before confirming the appointment of the supervisor(s).
 4. A co-supervisor model is expected, with one supervisor identified as the main supervisor. It is not necessarily the case that the main supervisor will be the most senior or experienced member of the team of supervisors.
 5. Requests for sole supervision will only be considered on an exceptional case by case basis and require consideration and approval by the Dean of Faculty or Research, Director of Postgraduate Research Studies and UoL Graduate Board's Programmes and Quality Group. Where exceptionally only one supervisor is appointed for a PGR an Advisor must also be appointed from whom advice might be sought and to whom problems might be referred.
 6. In exceptional cases a supervisory team may request that a person act as an Advisor who would not otherwise be eligible to be part of the supervisory team. For example, where the person is on a fixed term contract and will only be available for part of the duration of the research degree. In each situation a case would need to be made and would require consideration by the Director of Postgraduate Research Studies and UoL Graduate Board's Programmes & Quality Group.
 7. At least one of the supervisors must be a member of the academic staff holding a permanent appointment of the University of at least 0.5 FTE (with any relevant probationary period having been confirmed. In the case of University Academic Fellows the successful completion of 3 of the 5 years probationary period will satisfy the probation requirement) and who has a minimum of three years previous experience of research degree supervision. The Graduate Board has, however, expressed the view that the preferred level of experience is supporting a doctoral candidate through to successful completion.
 8. The expectation is that a PGR will be supervised by at least one individual from within the Faculty in which they are registered. (Exceptional arrangements may be approved by UoL Graduate Board's Programme and Quality Group for some CDTs to reflect the interdisciplinary nature of the

research programme. In all cases either a supervisor or an advisors from the CDTs parent school will be appointed. The parent school will retain the responsibility for the candidature regardless of the home school of the supervisor(s)). Where two or more faculties/schools are involved in supervising a PGR the persons concerned should agree which is acting as the PGRs parent Faculty/School and inform the Research Office (research@leedstrinity.ac.uk). This faculty/School should then take responsibility for the PGR and should ensure that the PGR receives appropriate supervision.

9. Where two or more Faculties/Schools are involved in a candidature, it is normally expected that the main supervisor will be from the candidate's parent school. Permission must be sought from the Director of Postgraduate Research where this is not the case.
10. The following categories of staff may act as co-supervisor with an individual who fulfils the criteria set out in paragraph 7 and 8 above.
 - Members of academic staff who hold probationary appointments;
 - Research Fellows;
 - Members of staff who have retired or resigned and those who hold research, honorary, part-time or fixed term University posts
 - Members of staff who have had less than three years previous experience of research degree supervision.
11. Early-retired members of staff or staff who have been re-engaged on part-time contracts by the University may be permitted to act as main supervisors for existing PGRs proceeding under their supervision (The Head of School is required to provide confirmation to the Director of Postgraduate Research Studies that the terms of the re-engagement include postgraduate research supervision). Where new PGRs are commencing study early retired members of staff may act as co-(not main) supervisors with an individual who fulfils the criteria set out in paragraph 7 and 8 above.
12. External joint supervisors may be appointed provided that:
 - a) the proposed external supervisor is conversant with the level and nature of the research necessary for the degree concerned;
 - b) the external supervisor is made aware of, by the relevant School, the University's expectations of the supervisor's role and are offered the opportunity to engage in developmental activities including LTU or SDDU courses for supervisors;
 - c) the arrangements for supervision by the University supervisor meet the criteria set out in paragraphs 6 and 7 above.

13. An honorary member of staff may act as a main supervisor for an MD or DClinPsychol degree candidate provided that:
 - i. they have already acted as a Joint Supervisor at the University of Leeds, whilst having co-supervised with a tenured member of staff;
 - ii. they have attended a recognised training course in the supervision of research PGR provided by SDDU;
 - iii. they have a minimum of three years previous experience of research degree supervision;
 - iv. a co-supervisor is appointed, with at least 0.1 FTE, who satisfies the eligibility criteria set out in 6 and 7 above
14. The Graduate Board requires member of staff to attend a course on research degree supervision organised by LTU or UoL OD&PL before being recommended for appointment as a supervisor. Where a member of staff has not yet attend a course, arrangements may be agreed whereby they are required to attend the next available course.
15. The Graduate Board considers special cases from time to time.

Changes to supervision arrangements

16. A supervisory team is set up with the intention that it will remain in place throughout the research degree candidature. In some case, however, the supervisor team may need to change, for example where a supervisors leaves the university (in some cases they may continue as external supervisor), or where a supervisor is on a period of long-term leave. Where a supervisor is likely to be absent from the university in excess of two months, arrangements will normally be put in place to identify an alternative Main supervisor and/or co-supervisor to ensure the continuity of supervision is maintained. In such cases it is possible that there will be a period of time when there is one main supervisor whilst suitable alternative supervision arrangements are found. It is not necessarily the case that a co-supervisor will be expected to take over as permanent Main supervisor in these circumstances.

Leeds Trinity University Only

Policy on Maximum Number of PGRs per Individual Supervisor

Under the supervision models of the Accreditation Agreement with the University of Leeds for candidatures towards award of University of Leeds research degrees (PhD, MScRes, MRes), all supervision teams must include one senior 'qualified' supervisor: either a Leeds Trinity supervisor or a University of Leeds co-supervisor. The rules for qualification for such 'Model 1' status are:

- i. Having at least one successful, previous PhD completion

- ii. Having attended the University of Leeds approved supervisors' training course
- iii. Having completed the probationary period of employment at Leeds Trinity
- iv. Having a permanent academic contract of 0.5 FTE or greater at Leeds Trinity
- v. That they can demonstrate that they are research active and have published in peer reviewed journals.

In developing a policy for a maximum number of research students per individual supervisor the following practical considerations need to be borne in mind:

- For each student supervised, at least 30 hours are credited in the academic workload plan for both the main supervisor (40 hours allocated) and for a co-supervisor.
- Supervision should be by an appropriately qualified person (subject expert) and be approved by the Director of PGR or equivalent.
- All research students, whether undertaking PhD or MbR require the same annual supervision commitment (minimum 10 meetings per annum for full time).
- Part-time students count as 0.6 FTE since they are entitled to a minimum of 6 meetings p.a..
- Students are entitled to supervision until the degree is finally awarded (including any referral period).

It is therefore proposed that Leeds Trinity's policy should be that normally ***no individual supervisor should exceed the supervisory load of 12 FTE***, unless there are very exceptional circumstances.

The policy will be reviewed by the Research Degrees Sub-Committee (RDSC) every 12 months for the start of the academic session, and any cases of members of academic staff with a supervisory load in excess of 12 FTE will be reviewed regularly on an individual basis. Where the supervisor in question is a member of RDSC that person should declare an interest and not take part in the discussion.

Policy agreed by members of the RDSC on 20th April 2023.