Research Degrees Handbook

Professional Doctorates

2025-26

This handbook has been prepared by the Graduate School at The Open University.

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For more information and opening hours

https://university.open.ac.uk/students/research/content/contact-us

How to use this handbook

This handbook should be read together with the Conditions of Registration for PGR Students and the Research Degree Regulations prior to registration and subsequently referred to throughout the registered period. Upon acceptance of an offer of registration, students will be bound by these documents and relevant policies on the Forms and Guidance section of the Graduate School Network website.

For readability, links have been embedded in the text. You will need to open a version online to click through to resources. Search for 'Handbook' on https://university.open.ac.uk/students/research/forms-and-guidance

While The Open University has done everything possible to ensure accuracy, the information in this handbook may change during the life of this edition due to changes in regulations or policy or because of financial or other constraints. When regulations and policies are updated, the most current edition will apply to all students irrespective of when they registered, unless special provision is made for particular groups or cohorts of students.

Contents

Introduction 6

Part 1 Research Degrees at The Open University 9

1.1 The Open University 9

1.2 Equality and Diversity 10

1.3 Research degree qualifications 10

1.4 Organisational structure 11

1.5 Administrative arrangements 13

1.6 Student opportunities 15

Part 2 Essential Information 17

2.1 Your record and personal data 18

2.2 How the OU will communicate 21

2.3 Giving feedback 22

2.4 Appeals 23

2.5 Complaints 23

2.6 Public interest disclosure 23

2.7 University regulations and codes of practice 24

2.8 Supervision 24

2.9 Student registration 24

2.10 Fees 32

2.11 Failure to pay fees and charges 33

2.12 Financial support 33

Part 3 Facilities and services 35

3.1 Library facilities and services 35

3.2 Computers 39

3.3 Statistics Advisory Services 40

3.4 Health and safety 41

3.5 Studying with a disability or additional need 43

3.6 Mental health and wellbeing 43

3.7 Participating in Open University life 46

Part 4 Exams, Awards, Ceremonies and Support 49

4.1 Examination 49

4.2 Award of degrees 53

4.3 Degree ceremonies 53

4.4 Directory of graduates 54

4.5 What a student should do if they need help 55

Part 5 Research degree complaints and appeals 56

5.1 Administrative Appeals 56

5.2 Academic Appeals 57

5.3 Complaints 57

5.4 Sources of advice 58

5.5 Other policies and statements 59

Part 6 Contact details 60

Appendix 1 Abbreviation list 63

Introduction

Welcome to The Open University

I'm Professor Clare Warren, Director of the Open University Graduate School, and I would like to welcome you to postgraduate research at The Open University (OU).

The OU's mission is to be open to people, places, methods and ideas and this is reflected in its research which has the same openness and global reach.

You're joining a research community of around 850 Postgraduate Research Students (PGRs), based at the state-of-the-art research facilities on campus in Milton Keynes, supported offsite, or working in one of the University's Affiliated Research Centres (ARCs) around the world. Here are some (approximate) statistics about the make-up of this community as of 2025.

Programme and mode of study

- Three-quarters of our PGRs are directly registered with the OU; one-quarter are based at ARCs.
- 85% are studying for a PhD; 15% are studying for a Professional Doctorate.
- Half are studying full time and half are studying part time.

Faculty breakdown

- The **Faculty of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM)** has most PGRs (including most ARC students): about 51%.
- Then the **Faculty of Wellbeing, Education and Language Studies (WELS)** (including Professional Doctorate students) with about 21% of PGRs.
- **Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS)** takes 19% of PGRs and then the **Faculty of Business and Law (FBL)** with 8%.

Research at the OU

The OU's research shapes policy and practice, drives innovation and changes lives for the better throughout the UK and around the globe.

The latest Research Excellence Framework – the UK's system for assessing the quality of Higher Education research – ranked the OU in the top third of UK universities for research power and 76% of the University's research, which spans 21 broad and distinct disciplines, as world-leading or internationally excellent.

The OU's Open Societal Challenges Programme, launched in 2022, aims to tackle some of the most important societal challenges of our time through impact-driven research.

The Programme's focus on the themes of Tackling Inequalities, Living Well and Sustainability aligns well with the OU's mission to be open to people, places, methods and ideas.

The Programme's aim is to apply excellent research by OU academics to some of the most pressing challenges facing people across the UK and worldwide to transform lives and drive societal change.

General advice

We hope that you'll refer back to this handbook throughout your programme with the OU, to check what to do around milestones and find sources of support when you need them. You may find the abbreviation list in Appendix 1 helpful while you're getting used to the OU – we use quite a few!

We hope that you're excited to get started on your research degree – it's a joy to get immersed in a topic that fascinates you – but we know you may feel lonely or overwhelmed at times.

Treat yourself and others with kindness, and please be willing to reach out if you need help. Know that you have a team to support you in this journey – from your supervisory team and Faculty support; to the Graduate School team seeing you through general training, administrative processes and additional opportunities; to the wider University, including Library help, Disability Support and Careers advice. We're looking forward to cheering you on!

Best regards,
Clare
Professor Clare Warren, Graduate School Director

Part 1 Research Degrees at The Open University

1.1 The Open University

The OU is a world leader in modern distance learning, the pioneer of teaching and learning methods that enables people to achieve their career and life goals studying at times and in places to suit them.

It promotes educational opportunity and social justice by providing high-quality university education to anyone who wishes to realise their ambitions and fulfil their potential.

Through academic research, pedagogic innovation and collaborative partnerships, the University is a world leader in the design, content and delivery of supported open learning.

The University's central headquarters is at Walton Hall, Milton Keynes, and it has 4 faculty-aligned Student Recruitment and Support Centres (SRSC's) and national centres located in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Over 1,000 academic and research staff are employed by the University, the majority of whom are based at Walton Hall which is the administrative and operational centre of the University, and where most of the research is undertaken.

The Open University Graduate School launched in October 2016, and is a focal point for research degree community support. It leads on the development of research degree community networks, partnerships and training pathways to

support an open, engaged and digitally literate research student community. It promotes wellbeing and personal development and widening access to postgraduate opportunities.

1.2 Equality and Diversity

For more than 50 years, The Open University has been promoting social justice and equality of opportunity which is core to our mission and is as important today as it was when The Open University was founded.

The Open University is creating an inclusive university community and a society, where:

- People are treated with dignity and respect
- Inequalities are challenged
- It anticipates and responds positively to different needs and circumstances.

For further details about equality and diversity at the OU, including its Equality Schemes, please visit the Equality and Diversity website.

1.3 Research degree qualifications

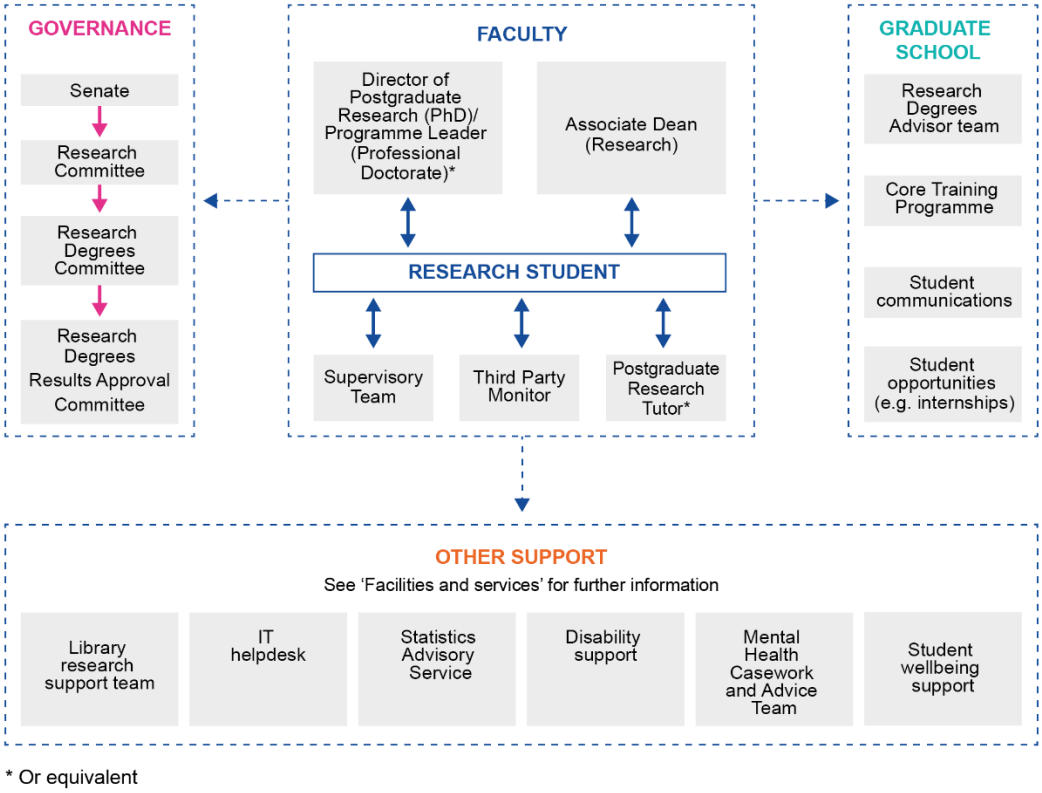
The University's research degrees are:

- Master of Philosophy (MPhil) (full or part time)
- Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) (full or part time)
- Professional Doctorate, e.g. Doctorate in Education (EdD) (part time) and Doctorate in Health and Social Care (DHSC) (part time).

A thesis for a Professional Doctorate must be a significant contribution to professional and academic knowledge, worthy of publication and demonstrate the ability of the candidate to undertake further research without supervision. In order to be awarded the degree, students must demonstrate that they have met the expectations for the doctoral degree as specified in the QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (see Appendix 1B of the Research Degree Regulations).

1.4 Organisational structure

Figure 1 shows the main teams and structures that support the research degree journey.



* Or equivalent

Figure 1 Organisation of research degrees

Governance

Senate retains overall responsibility for the governance and award of research degrees at The Open University. It delegates responsibility for the development of research degree strategy, policy and regulations to the Research Committee and the Research Degrees Committee. Research degree policies, regulations and services for research students are reviewed annually and are aligned with the UK Quality Code for Higher Education.

Research degree policy is formulated by the University's Research Degrees Committee, which makes recommendations to Senate through the Research Committee. The Research Degrees Committee includes representatives of the University's faculties and research degree students; one full time and one part time.

Decisions about individual student cases are made by the Progress Board, chaired by the Graduate School Director with members including Head of Research Degrees, the Faculty Directors of Research Degrees and ARC Academic Lead.

Management in Graduate School and Faculties

The management of the day-to-day operation of the research degree programme is the responsibility of the Graduate School and the Faculties.

The **Research Degrees Team within the Graduate School** fulfils the registry function, providing quality assurance, managing student records and ensuring that student registration and progression is managed in accordance with the University's regulations, policies and legislation. The Graduate School runs the

Graduate School Network (GSN) website and PGR Manager tool (more information about these in section 3).

Research students are recruited into research groups within a School in one of the **University Faculties or Institutes**. Where a research project spans more than one School, one School/Faculty will take the lead in all administrative matters relating to the registration.

Upon registration, each student will be assigned a supervisory team and a third party monitor. Further details regarding the roles of supervisor and additional support from the third party monitor can be found in the Research Degree Regulations.

The Associate Dean (Research) or Director of Postgraduate Research Studies (or equivalent) has oversight of all research students in their faculty. This person is responsible for ensuring students are supported and progressing well throughout their studies. They work with administrative staff within the faculty who help with the day-to-day management of the research student journey.

The EdD/DHSC Programme Leaders liaise with the Associate Dean (Research) and the Director of Postgraduate Research Studies about the Professional Doctorate (PD) Programme management and administration.

1.5 Administrative arrangements

The PD Programme Administration Assistant is based in the Faculty and administers the PD programme on a day-to-day basis. This involves dealing with student and supervisor enquiries, setting up and maintaining systems and

procedures, organising and supporting residential events, and organising and arranging oral examinations (vivas) (email: WELS-Prof-Docs@open.ac.uk).

The Research Degrees Team within the Graduate School will be the main point of contact with the University on administrative matters. The Graduate School plays a major role in enhancing the quality of the University's research degree provision and the experience of its research students, and develops and implements policy that is approved through the governance structure.

The team of Research Degree Student Advisors provides advice and guidance on a wide range of topics at any point before, during or after a student registers. This includes information on registration and fees, payment of grants and expenses, financial support, key points in a student's studies such as upgrade, progress reporting and examination.

The Research Degree Team within the Graduate School is based in the Betty Boothroyd Library Building; see contact details and opening times.

The Graduate School is part of the Research, Enterprise and Scholarship unit, which is responsible for the Code of Practice for Research, which sets out the standards that govern the conduct of research at The Open University. The code is available in the Code of Conduct available on the Research policies website.

Also part of RES, the Research and Enterprise team at the OU supports academic staff, research staff and students with their endeavours in seeking external funding for research, and advice on intellectual property assignment and knowledge transfer.

1.6 Student opportunities

Teaching

The Open University is a unique institution which has successfully developed its own style of teaching and module design; teaching opportunities at the OU are not conventional but will equip you with a distinct set of skills for the academic job market. Each Faculty offers the opportunity to get teaching experience and the schemes are outlined here: Teaching opportunities.

There is also the opportunity to join The Brilliant Club for paid opportunities to deliver academically rigorous programmes to small groups of high potential pupils from low HE-participation backgrounds.

Poster events and Create Your Research

The Graduate School runs an annual Poster event which offers a unique way to engage the wider University community with your research. Researchers need to be able to convey their research ideas to a broad audience. This competition, judged by academic and academic-related staff from across the OU, provides students with the opportunity to practise these skills.

It also gives students the opportunity to meet other students from across the University and make useful contacts whilst raising their own profile. When the competition is finished the posters can be used at further networking events, conferences and displayed within schools.

The Graduate School also run an online gallery alongside the in-person Poster event so students who can't make it onto campus can display their posters.

The PD Programme also runs a separate poster competition. Submission of a poster is a requirement of the summative assessment process during year 2 of the PD programme.

Each November sees the Graduate School's very exciting Create Your Research event, where PGRs display research-inspired creations.

Entrepreneurship

The Open University organise an annual entrepreneurship competition seeking the top ideas from within the university's student population. Postgraduate research students are encouraged to enter an idea, especially if there is the possibility of commercialising an element of their research. The OU can provide feedback on business models and expert advice on intellectual property. Postgraduate research students are also encouraged to take advantage of unique entrepreneurial skills training at various points throughout the year.

Part 2 Essential Information

This section contains essential information for research degree registration with The Open University.

Regulations

The Research Degree Regulations form part of a student's contract with the OU and any questions about them should be addressed to the Graduate School.

The Regulations should not be read in isolation. It is important they are read in conjunction with other documentation including the University's general regulations, the Conditions of Registration for PGR Students, the Code of Practice for Student Discipline, this handbook, and other relevant documents referred to therein. Below is a non-exhaustive list of the documents that students should refer to:

- Academic Engagement and Attendance Policy 2024
- Code of Practice of Research on Research policies site
- Fee rules on Forms and Guidance (Graduate School Network)
- Student Privacy Notice
- Complaints and Appeals Procedure
- Plagiarism and research misconduct policy (for PGRs) on Research policies site
- Code of Practice for Student Discipline
- Student Computing Policy
- Open University Student Charter
- Academic Conduct Policy
- Research Ethics

- Fitness to Study Policy.

Policies are inclusive of all OU Students, Learners, Enquirers and Alumni, regardless of age, civil status, dependency or caring status, care experience, disability, family status, gender, gender identity, gender reassignment, marital status, marriage and civil partnerships, membership of the Traveller community, political opinion, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, socio-economic background, sex, sexual orientation or trades union membership status.

Safe Space Reporting

The OU is committed to creating a diverse and inclusive environment in which everyone feels safe and is treated with dignity and respect. Unlawful discrimination of any kind across The Open University will not be tolerated. Safe Space Reporting is available through an online tool Report + Support through which staff, students, learners and visitors are encouraged to report incidents of assault, bullying, harassment, hate crime, or sexual harassment. It also provides information about what you can do if these incidents happen to you, or to someone you know, and where you can find support.

2.1 Your record and personal data

2.1.1 Personal identifier

Each student is provided with a 'personal identifier' (PI number) upon registration. Students will be asked to provide this unique PI number whenever they contact the University or complete any forms. Students can access information about their research degree registration on StudentHome.

2.1.2 Changing your personal details

If a student changes their name, address, phone number or email address they must tell the Research Degrees Team in writing. Any change of name must be supported by appropriate documentary evidence such as:

- a marriage certificate
- a birth certificate, or
- a deed poll.

Updates to University records for transgender student transitioning to a different gender may be made upon receipt of a letter explaining that the student intends to undergo gender reassignment. However, the University requires evidence of legal name change before a degree certificate in the preferred name can be issued. Evidence may be in the form of:

- a statutory declaration of name change
- a birth certificate in the new name, or
- a deed poll.

2.1.3 The data held by The Open University

The Open University is committed to the principles of data protection and best practice in handling information. All personal information is held in secure files and will be processed only for the purposes identified at registration.

Within the University, information is transferred only to those who need it for the purposes of academic, administrative and support services. Some information will be sent to the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA). Information will also be provided to other statutory bodies on request.

Students have the right under the Data Protection Act 1998 to a copy of the personal data the University holds about them and to information about how it is processed. Requests can be made in writing to the Data Protection Coordinator (contact details are in Part 6). There is a small fee payable to The Open University for this service.

Further information about the use of data can be found in The Open University Student Privacy Notice but note that the policy covers taught students as well as research students so not all of it is relevant to research students.

Access to data

Students can access information about their research degree registration on StudentHome.

2.1.4 Freedom of information

The University has a Freedom of Information Publication scheme that provides a general right of public access to many types of information. The scheme can be accessed through the Freedom of Information website.

Information on the Freedom of Information Act 2000 can be obtained from the Information Commissioner.

FAQ: How do I contact IT for help?
You can submit tickets about IT problems/questions via the AskIT ticketing service.

You can also contact the IT Service Desk on 01908 654321 (see IT Service Desk and Opening Hours).

If you cannot easily call the IT Service Desk and an issue is stopping you working (e.g., you work in a different time zone) then please email IT-Service-Desk@open.ac.uk with your username, any screenshots of errors being received or how far you are able to get.

2.2 How the OU will communicate

The University keeps electronic records and will usually communicate with students and supervisors by email. This will be to their Open University email address (ending 'open.ac.uk') and students are expected to check this regularly. During their studies students will be required to complete and submit forms electronically and use the PGR Manager system for endorsement and approval.

The Graduate School will send you a fortnightly newsletter listing news, training calendar, opportunities and celebrations and more occasionally Graduate School Director Briefings outlining larger changes.
You will also receive communications from the PD Team via email or on the WELS 'PGR Community' Microsoft Teams site . It is therefore important that you use/check your OU email address regularly in order to receive programme alerts.

Please contact the Research Degrees Team if you are having difficulty in finding the correct change request on the PGR Manager system (contact details are in Part 6). Upon registration you will be issued with a @open.ac.uk email address only and it is the only email address that you can use for the PGR Manager system. All email communications from the University will be sent to this OU email address or directly from the PGR Manager system and you will need to

check it on a regular basis. If you are a member of staff and a student you must use the guidance on the Student user guide for PGR Manager found on the GSN for access guidance.

External members are given separate access according to their access needs (further information is given as appropriate).

2.3 Giving feedback

The OU reviews the regulations, codes of practice and policies periodically and would welcome any comments. It also welcomes feedback from students regarding any aspect of their time as an Open University research student, including any suggestions and ideas for improvements.

The Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) is carried out by universities across the UK and administered by Advance HE. The OU participates in PRES every two years. PRES feedback helps us to understand what is working well and what is not, so we can make improvements where they will be most relevant and useful.

The postgraduate research student-Graduate School liaison group exists to facilitate communication between students and the Graduate School on institution-wide issues affecting research students. We encourage you to let your representative know if you have some feedback on an issue that is affecting all or some students (specific problems are best directed to your supervisor or Faculty postgraduate tutor).

You can also email Graduate-School@open.ac.uk with any direct feedback. See more on Giving feedback | Graduate School Network.

2.4 Appeals

Students can appeal against administrative and academic decisions of the University. Please see Part 5 of this handbook.

2.5 Complaints

For information on the complaints process and the University's Complaints procedure please refer to Part 5 of this handbook.

2.6 Public interest disclosure

The University has a statement setting out its policy on 'whistleblowing' (public interest disclosure). It offers guidance for students and staff who want to raise reasonable suspicions they may have about irregularities in the running of the University or about the activities of colleagues within the University. This statement is not intended to replace the University's other policies and procedures in relation to grievances, harassment, disciplinary matters or students' complaints.

The policy statement is intended to incorporate the requirements of the Public Interest Disclosure Act, January 1998, but is broader in two respects – it applies to students as well as to staff and its scope goes beyond that of protected disclosure as defined in the Act. A copy of the statement can be downloaded from the Graduate School Network.

2.7 University regulations and codes of practice

The Research Degree Regulations should not be read in isolation. It is important that they are read in conjunction with the University's general regulations, such as the Code of Practice for Student Discipline, this handbook, and other relevant documents referred to both in the regulations and the handbook.

These documents are available through the Graduate School Network.

The Research Degree Regulations form part of a student's contract with the University. Any questions about the Research Degree Regulations should be addressed to the Graduate School.

2.8 Supervision

The University's Research Degree Regulations (regulations specifically for PDs, section 4), and Appendix 2 of the regulations 'The code of practice for supervisors and research students' set out guidelines for the conduct of the relationship between supervisors and students and serve as a standard for external audits of research degree provision and research degree appeals.

The Open University Research Degrees Committee reviews the regulations, codes of practice and policies periodically and would welcome any comments. Please send them to the Research Degrees Team (contact details in Part 6).

2.9 Student registration

The forms and guidance notes for recording and managing registration are on the Graduate School Network.

2.9.1 PG registration arrangements

On admission to the PD programme, a student will be registered for a specific PD, such as the Doctorate in Education or Doctorate in Health and Social Care.

Registration will continue until the submission deadline, provided the student maintains satisfactory academic progress and meets all fee liabilities.

2.9.2 Residence requirements

Registered PD students may reside anywhere in the world. However, they must be available to attend any residential courses in person. There are a number of compulsory residential weekends which will take place in Milton Keynes. The residential weekends form part of the requirement for your research degree and permission not to attend is granted only in exceptional circumstances. For those unable to attend, each weekend will have an Alternative Learning Event.

Students can choose to attend the final examination in person, online or via a hybrid format.

Please be sure to notify the Research Degrees Team if your address, email address or phone number change at any time during your studies. This includes temporary residence elsewhere in the UK or overseas for the purpose of field trips. Failure to provide your current address and phone numbers is a breach of the terms and conditions of your registration.

2.9.3 Other study

The University supports research students undertaking supplementary study related to their research degree. A student would require approval of the

Graduate School Director on the recommendation of the Faculty before registering for any additional study.

A student may not study for any other degree or qualification at The Open University or any other institution at the same time as undertaking research degree study.

2.9.4 Study hours

Part-time students are required to spend a *minimum* of 18.5 hours per week on their studies throughout their registration period.

2.9.5 Study periods

Students start on 1 October.

The minimum period of study before submission of the thesis is four years. The maximum period of registration is eight years.

In order to study for a degree, submit a thesis for examination and be awarded the degree, a student must be a registered research student of the University. Should registration lapse prior to submission, the student will be deemed to have withdrawn from the research degree programme. Any research or other work undertaken before registration as a research student cannot count as part of the minimum period of study required before the submission of a thesis for the award of a research degree and may not be included in the thesis.

2.9.6 Absences and other disruptions

A student must inform their supervisors and the Research Degrees Team in the Graduate School if they are absent, or if their studies are disrupted for any

reason including illness or injury for a week or more and a study break request should be submitted as soon as possible thereafter. A student who knows in advance that they are going to be absent for a month or more should request a study break ahead of time on the PGR Manager system. Overly late requests for study break are not assured.

Supervisors and Associate Deans (Research)/Deputy Associate Deans/Directors of Postgraduate Studies/Programme Leaders are required to notify the Research Degrees Team in the Graduate School of any unauthorised absences or if they have concerns about disruptions to a student's attendance or progress.

All information disclosed will be treated confidentially and sensitively.

2.9.7 Study break

A student may submit a request for a study break to the Graduate School for consideration. This can be done using a study break change request form available on the PGR Manager system. A study break is not an automatic right. Any request must be submitted together with the supporting evidence.
Where possible, such requests should be made in advance. Where this is not possible they should, as soon as they become aware of an incident that is likely to lead to the submission of a request for a study break, inform the Associate Dean Research (or delegate) and the Research Degrees Team. The completed online application should be submitted as soon as possible thereafter. Overly late requests will not be considered.

Part-time students may request a maximum of 24 months study break. Study breaks will normally only be approved in periods of one or more months. Where the consequence of a study break is that the student will miss a substantive section of the programme it may be necessary for study breaks to be approved in 12 month blocks.

A student may request a study break on the following grounds:

- certified serious ill health of the student or a family member or dependent for whom the student is acting as a carer
- work-related difficulties
- domestic commitments
- internship or placement.

Students requesting a study break after the submission of their thesis may only do so in exceptional circumstances.

Students wishing to have a break in study on the grounds of ill health, must provide a medical certificate.

Students requiring longer than the maximum permitted period of study break will have to withdraw from their programme of study.

Periods of study break do not count towards the maximum permitted periods of study. If a study break is approved the submission deadline will be extended accordingly and the University will confirm the revised deadline in writing.

2.9.8 Maternity, paternity and adoption leave

Self-funded students are not entitled to maternity pay but may take maternity, paternity or adoption leave. A study break change request can be uploaded onto the PGR Manager system for approval. Full details of maternity, paternity and adoption leave are available on the Graduate School Network (Forms and Guidance).

2.9.9 Extension of registration

In exceptional circumstances a student may extend their registration in accordance with section 9 (for PDs) of the Research Degree Regulations though extensions to registration are not an automatic right. Where study has been disrupted students are expected to have requested a study break at the point of need. Students and supervisors are responsible for managing the research within the registration time frames and for flagging any issues to the Graduate School in a timely fashion.

2.9.10 Withdrawal

Students who are considering withdrawing from their research degree should contact their supervisors in the first instance to discuss options.

Where a student decides to withdraw, the supervisor or student will need to submit a withdrawal request and input it onto the PGR Manager system under change requests/withdrawals where they are reviewed by the Graduate School for approval.

Students who allow their registration to lapse without having submitted their thesis, or fail to return from a period of study break, will be deemed to have withdrawn from their research degree registration.

New students who accept a place on the programme but withdraw before their start date, will receive a full refund of any fees paid. For students in receipt of a grant, further payments will be stopped once appropriate notification has been received from the Faculty.

2.9.11 Assignment of intellectual property rights (IPRs)

Intellectual property law aims to safeguard intellectual property creators by warranting them certain time-limited rights to control and use their creations. IPRs can be registered, in the form of designs (registered and unregistered), patents and trademarks.

The distinction between the categories is defined below:

- Copyright: protects material such as literature, art, music, sound recordings, films and broadcasts and computer programmes; it is an automatic right which does not need registration at the Patent Office.
- Designs: protect the visual appearance or eye appeal of products.
- Patents: protect the technical and functional aspects of products and processes.
- Trademarks: protect signs that can distinguish the goods and services of one trader from those of another.

Whilst Copyright is protected on creation, designs, patents and trademarks need to be registered at a national Intellectual Property Office.

Registered and un-registered IPRs are an important tool in using and exploiting research activities, as they can be transferred, sold, assigned or waived, allowing others to use the work but at the same time protecting the creators.

2.9.12 Postgraduate research student IP policy

Research students are required to assign any IPRs arising from their research to The Open University. This includes:

- original inventions, design rights and copyright in all materials (written, broadcast, recorded, computer programs, research information on Open University websites, iTunes, videos and any other form of storage device) produced during the course of an Open University studentship or in work specifically assigned to a student.

Research IP that is excluded is as follows:

- copyright in books that are not part of a University course
- copyright in journal articles, and thesis work
- copyright in conference papers
- copyright in presentations
- students' personal notes (excluding laboratory notebooks)
- copyright in software, databases and questionnaires is owned by The Open University and should not be included in research papers/books, where the intention is to assign IP rights to a third party (i.e. publisher). Contact the Enterprise team (contact details in Part 6) before any action is taken.

If the research is sponsored by a third party at the start of any collaboration, contractual arrangements must be in place to define The Open University's position on research IPRs before work commences. Such arrangement might involve third party ownership of IP arising from the research, and therefore students must assign the IP to The Open University so that it can comply with such terms.

For more information about IP with (regards to research only), contact the Enterprise team. Contact details can be found in Part 6.

2.9.13 Copyrighted material owned by a third party

It is the responsibility of the student to ensure any copyrighted material owned by a third party has been cleared (i.e. permission to make it available on open access websites secured) prior to depositing the thesis in Open Research Online. More information on third party copyright can be found at Copyright and your thesis | Library Research Support (open.ac.uk).

2.10 Fees

2.10.1 Fees

The Fee Rules which includes information on sources of financial support can be found at in the Forms and Guidance on the GSN. All students should read the policy prior to registration.

The University will provide reasonable notice of any changes to the policy and the date that they will take effect.

From 2018, the UK government has introduced Doctoral Loans for study of doctoral programmes. The loans will provide a contribution towards the cost of study but they will not cover the full fees and living costs. Links to the product and the eligibility criteria are available on the Graduate School Network.

2.11 Failure to pay fees and charges

2.11.1 Refusal of registration

A student who fails to pay fees or provide an approved payment method at the time of registration, will not be registered.

2.11.2 Cancellation of registration for non-payment of fees

Please refer to the Fee Rules (Postgraduate Research) which includes information on failure to pay and can be found at in the Forms and Guidance on the GSN.

2.12 Financial support

2.12.1 Support for study related costs

For more information, please take a look at the information on this page: Funding for computers, internet and childcare etc: UK | Help Centre | The Open University.

2.12.2 Crowther Fund (Open University graduates only)

The Crowther Fund was set up as a tribute to the late Lord Crowther, the first Chancellor of The Open University. It is intended to help Open University graduates build upon their Open University degrees, either by formal study or research or by generally broadening their experience through a period of voluntary work.

The closing date for award applications is 28 February each year.

For further details on eligibility criteria students can download an application form and guidance notes on the Fees and Funding website.

2.12.3 Beevers Fund

Additional funds were also donated by the late Dr Robert Beevers, one of The Open University's "founding fathers". Open University honours graduates can apply for funding to undertake research towards an Open University research degree from the Robert Beevers Memorial Fund. An award from this fund can be used for payment towards fees or study related costs such as books or travel.

The fund is administered via The Crowther Fund. For further information see the Fees and Funding website. The closing date for award applications is 26 February each year.

2.12.4 Disabled Students' Allowances

Disabled Students' Allowances are government grants for students in higher education who are obliged to incur additional study-related costs because of a disability, mental health condition or specific learning difficulty.

DSAs are not means tested and are not dependent upon income or any savings that the student may have. If a student is eligible for a DSA it will not affect any state benefits the student may be receiving. A student may still be eligible for a DSA if they are studying part time.

For more information on how to apply for a DSA, please contact the Graduate School in the first instance (contact details in Part 6).

Part 3 Facilities and services

Research facilities

Arrangements for access to research facilities should have been agreed prior to offer and acceptance. If requirements change upon registration the student should contact the Faculty to discuss possible alternative arrangements.

Graduate School Network (GSN)

The Graduate School Network is the gateway to advice, opportunities, and online training and development resources, as well as relevant University policies, statements and regulations.

PGR Manager

PGR Manager is a bespoke system for managing your PGR student journey – bringing all information into one safe, secure and easily accessible system, streamlining administration processes, and simplifying progression monitoring and reporting. It also contains a Calendar that advertises training and development events, and a skills audit tool.

PD Programme Website

The Prof Doc programme website is where key information about the PD programme is located.

3.1 Library facilities and services

OU research students will need to make use of library resources as part of the research project. Library Services at the OU provides students with access to

high quality and trusted resources that will support the research by enabling the student to explore and keep up-to-date with the subject and undertake a structured literature review.

They include primary and secondary resources such as:

- academic journals
- newspapers
- academic books.

The Library also provides access to specialist resources, e.g. statistical databases, legislation, conference proceedings and datasets.

The OU Library's collection of resources is available from the online library.

The document delivery service and inter-lending library service provides access to items that are not available in the Library's online and print collections.

Bibliographic management tools enable you to store and organise your references and automatically generate in-text citations and bibliographies in a variety of styles.

Library Services offers a programme of online training sessions which is open to all students. This includes an introduction to Library Services and Smarter searching with Library databases.

There is also a programme of face-to-face training and online training for research students. Details can be found via Training on the Graduate School Network and Events on PGR Manager.

The Open University's open-access database of peer-reviewed research publications, Open Research Online (ORO), shows the range and depth of recently published OU research. Research students are required to upload an electronic copy of their thesis to ORO and are encouraged to deposit their publications. The Library Services Research Support team can give advice and guidance on where to publish, and dissemination of publications, email library-research-support@open.ac.uk.

Doctorate projects can create large amounts of research data, and this may be the student's first experience of working with data on a large scale. The OU Research Data Management Policy lays out the requirements around effective management of research data, and writing a Data Management Plan (DMP) prior to data collection is mandatory. The Library Research Support team provide advice, guidance and support in the management of research data and can offer feedback on DMPs. Open Research Data Online (ORDO) is the OU's research data repository.

EThOS, a service from the British Library, provides free online access to a large selection of UK PhD theses from participating universities. ORO provides access to a growing collection of Open University-awarded theses. These will give an insight into the structure of theses, different approaches to research, and how to develop a thesis. More information about the library services and resources available for research students can be found on the Library pages of the Graduate School Network.

3.1.1 Using the Library at Walton Hall

The OU Library provides a modern, spacious environment for study, research and collaboration.

3.1.2 Access to other libraries

Library Services is a member of SCONUL Access which enables access to, and borrowing of, books at other libraries which belong to the scheme. The scheme covers most of the university libraries in the UK and some in Ireland. The Libraries near you webpage also give details of access to other libraries.

3.1.3 Getting help

The Library Helpdesk, which provides specialist information advice, is available to support students with all library needs, seven days a week. The helpdesk contact details can be found on every page of the Library website. An out-of-hours webchat service is also provided to support students when the main helpdesk is closed.

For enquiries about Open Research Online and Research Data Management please contact the library research support team: library-research-support@open.ac.uk.

3.1.5 Conditions for use of Library facilities

Access to the University's Library Services described above requires students to be bound by a copyright declaration.

3.2 Computers

3.2.1 Computer networking

An essential feature of the PD programme is the extensive use of a dedicated virtual learning environment that will provide:

- electronic communication with supervisors, other students, and members of the PD Team
- online learning materials specific to the programme
- online seminars through a seminar forum and via MS Teams (or other online networking tool)
- online access to The Open University Library bibliographic databases, eBooks and electronic journals (see section 3.1).

A student will need to purchase, or have regular access to, a suitable computer and must be familiar with the computer before they start. More information about computing can be found in the Help Centre.

Students will also need to register with an internet service provider (ISP) to gain access to the internet and to the University's virtual learning environment.

Once a student has been registered, they will be given Open University computer usernames (OUCUs) and pre-set passwords that allow them to access some OU systems, including the PGR Manager system (see more about PGR Manager in section 3). When a student first signs in to the systems they will be asked to change the pre-set password. It is their responsibility to keep the password secure and confidential. In particular the student must:

- never tell anyone else the password, even University staff

- use the password in line with accepted best practice. Advice on safe and secure computing is given in the Help Centre.

If a student thinks that someone else knows the password, they should tell the IT Helpdesk by phoning +44 (0)1908 654321 during weekday working hours.

Students are expected to comply with the University's Computing Code of Conduct.

3.3 Statistics Advisory Services

Advice about statistical aspects of research is available to all registered OU research students from the Statistics Advisory Service. A major aim of the service is to encourage students to learn to deal with the statistical aspects of their research effectively and efficiently, by providing statistical advice both at the planning and at the data analysis stages of research. At the planning stage statistical advice can help to:

- ensure that the research study is efficient from the point of data collection through to completion and beyond, and that the design enables the student to address the research objectives
- identify best practices for data management.

At the data analysis stage the service can help to:

- identify suitable statistical methods to properly address the research objectives
- understand outputs from statistical computing software
- ensure that evidence-based conclusions can be drawn from the analysis.

Students are advised to seek statistical advice as early as possible, preferably while planning the study and before collecting the data.

The Statistical Advisory Service is operated by email and commonly agreed appointment only.

Email stats-advisory@open.ac.uk to find out more.

3.4 Health and safety

The Open University is committed to ensuring the health, safety and welfare of all those involved in the discharge of its undertakings, both within its designated premises and at external locations. Risk assessment is one of the main tools used in order to ensure adequate control measures are in place to manage the safety of individuals, and is of particular importance when considering higher risk activities/environments such as laboratories or fieldwork.

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 requires risk assessments to be completed to identify significant risks. The assessment must:

- identify significant hazards
- decide who might be harmed, e.g. students, and how they might be harmed
- evaluate the risks arising from hazards and decide if existing precautions are adequate or if more are needed
- record the significant findings if five or more people are employed
- review the assessment from time to time especially after a significant change or if there is reason to believe it is no longer valid and revise as necessary.

Risk assessments must be completed with supervisors prior to work/travel commencing. Any significant risks identified must be documented and the

associated control measures identified. This may then require follow up with a documented Safe system of Work/Method statement. All of this information must be formally communicated to the students in order to provide them with the relevant information and instruction to allow them to work safely in their particular environment ensuring the safety of both themselves and those around them.

The OU laboratories are covered by a Safety Code of Practice which applies to all users, including students and their internal supervisors. Those responsible for the laboratories are responsible for ensuring that all users have been informed of the Code of Practice and the requirement to follow it.

The University has a specific duty under The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH) to prevent exposure to substances hazardous to health or, if prevention is not reasonably practicable, to undertake an assessment to adequately control exposure. No work shall be commenced involving any activity likely to be hazardous to health until a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks has been carried out. This process will identify the measures required to control any activity involving the potential to pose a hazard to health.

Students and supervisors are formally responsible for ensuring that a written COSHH assessment is prepared for all experiments involving the use of substances conducted within The Open University, at a host institution or in an external environment. They are expected to be familiar with, and ensure compliance with safety regulations applying to any laboratory and/or equipment used as well as the COSHH 2002 Regulations.

More information is available at Health and Safety Executive and also at the Open University Health and Safety website.

The OU also requires risk assessment to be produced where fieldwork and international travel are involved. Guidance is available on both the Health and Safety intranet above and on the People Services website. It is standard practice within the Open University to consult the Foreign Office website where international travel is involved as part of the travel Risk Assessment.

3.5 Studying with a disability or additional need

The University is an inclusive community and welcomes research students with disabilities or other requirements.

Whether a student is studying full time on campus or as a part-time student using their own research facilities, the University responds positively to the different needs and circumstances of the students. Where possible, the University will, for example, make reasonable adjustments:

1. for students who are disabled, experience mental health challenges, live with long-term health conditions or are neurodivergent
2. for students with other requirements such as:
   - pregnant or breastfeeding students
   - students with specific needs related to their religion or belief
   - students transitioning to a different gender
   - students with caring dependency responsibilities.

The student should inform the University Disability Support Team (for point 1) or the Graduate School Team (for point 2) as early as possible if support is needed for study as some services may take several months to arrange. The information the student provides will be used only to help the University to assist them in their studies.

Referral process

If a student is disabled or requires additional support, they should contact the Disability Support team and discuss with their supervisor how their circumstances might impact on their studies and inform the Graduate School. Any information that they disclose will be confidential.

Some adjustments can be made immediately, such as making changes to the student's working environment on campus, arranging meetings in particular rooms to take account of sensitivity to sound or light levels, or producing printed information in different formats.

If the student is likely to need equipment, personnel or services to support them, the Disability Support Team will ask them to apply for a Disabled Students' Allowance (please see Fee rules in Forms and Guidance on the Graduate School Network) to help with any costs arising from meeting their needs. Assuming they are eligible, the student will undergo an assessment and the Disability Support Team will discuss the recommendations with the student. The Disability Support Team will coordinate with the relevant teams responsible for making any reasonable adjustments (e.g., external support, supervisors, Graduate School team) to enable the student to study. The Disability Support Team will

communicate to these groups in consultation with the student and the School/Faculty.

If the student is not eligible for a DSA, the University may still be able to provide equipment, personnel and support – the Disability Support Team will liaise with the student, the student's supervisor and Academic Services to discuss how best to provide support.

3.6 Mental health and wellbeing

It is not uncommon for research students to experience difficulties during their studies, e.g. disruptive life events, uncertainty or feeling that you can't go on. If you have a problem please let us know at an early stage. You can talk to your supervisor(s), your third party monitor, postgraduate tutor or convenor, Programme Leader, Associate Dean (Research), the Graduate School or Student Services.

There are a range of services available to support directly registered PGRs with their mental health:

- Employee Assistance Programme (online and phone support)
- OU Wellbeing app (online tools and resources)
- Peer support group (online; facilitated by a Mental Health Advisor and an Academic)
- Mental Health Casework and Advice Team (specialist one-to-obe support service; available via referral).

To find out more about these support services and links to additional resources, please visit Student wellbeing on the Graduate School Network.

3.7 Participating in Open University life

3.7.1 Graduate School

- There are regular social events at our campus in Milton Keynes and online: see Connecting with the research student community for further information about these and other community options.
- The Graduate School is active on:
  - LinkedIn
  - Bluesky
  - Facebook.
- There is also a non-OU-moderated Facebook group for postgraduate research students: PGRs at the OU.

3.7.2 Open SU

Open SU (formerly Open University Students Association is here to provide a voice for all OU students (undergraduate, taught postgraduate and postgraduate research) and provide a vibrant community to support students during their studies. All students are automatically a member of Open SU and there are plenty of ways to get involved.

Open SU exists to represent students and to ensure The Open University is more than just a place of learning – it's a student community. Open SU has vibrant communities on:

- Threads @oustudentslive
- Facebook @OUstudents
- Bluesky @OpenSU.

Societies

Over 20 student-led societies are currently affiliated to Open SU. From psychology to bell ringing – there's something for everyone and staff are welcome too! There are also more informal, common interest groups: Clubs.

Student voice

Open SU enables students to influence how the University is run by representing the collective needs of OU students. It provides many different routes for research students to be involved in student voice activity and have their voice heard: : Get involved (oustudents.com).

There are many other ways to shape the work of both Open SU and The Open University and every two years, students have the opportunity to stand for election to become part of the Student leadership team.

For other volunteer roles check out the volunteering pages of Open SU.

Student support

Studying can be hard, and we know that OU students have a lot of commitments to juggle as well as study. Sometimes you need an extra bit of support to help you along your academic journey. Open SU offers a variety of support services and works with external support providers to help you. To complement the University's support services, we offer Support Groups, including:

- Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic Students Group
- Disabled Students Group
- OU Pride.

Shop and Discounts

Our OU Students Shop sells a wide range of OU-branded clothing and merchandise.

OU students are eligible for a TOTUM card which gives you access to a wide range of discounts in the UK and abroad.

3.7.3 The Open University Alumni Association

Joining The OU is the beginning of a lifelong relationship. Even when not studying, an OU qualification holder remains part of a vibrant learning community through The OU Alumni Association, set up by the University and staffed by a professional team. All graduates (and everyone who has successfully completed an OU qualification) have automatic free membership of the Association.

The Association offers a regular email newsletter OpenMinds eNews which contains the latest OU developments.

Members will also have access to the Alumni Association's website with opportunities to share their OU story, receive free career tips and advice and keep in touch by email. All that's needed is the student's Personal Identifier (PI) number (if this has been lost or forgotten, please contact the alumni team).

Part 4 Exams, Awards, Ceremonies and Support

4.1 Examination

4.1.1 Eligibility

To be eligible to submit an EdD/DHSC thesis a student must:

- be registered for the EdD/DHSC (the student must not have passed their maximum registration date) and passed their minimum registration period
- have satisfactorily completed the study requirements
- have satisfied their supervisors and the PD Team that the thesis is of an adequate standard for submission to examiners – please refer to section 15 (for PDs) of the Research Degree Regulations for details
- have paid all fees due.

The following apply:

- Years 1 and 2 – summative assignments are assessed by two independent assessors. Recommended result and feedback on each summative assignment is given to the WELS PGR team, scrutinised by an external examiner, assessment approved at the Prof Doc Assessment Board and the results ratified by OU Progress Board. . Results and feedback are then sent to the student and their supervisors.

- Year 4+ – two examiners will examine the thesis and provide a report for the Research Degrees Examination Results Approval Committee on the basis of their assessment of the thesis and the defence of the thesis at the viva.

4.1.2 Thesis submission

Section 17 (for PDs) of the Research Degree Regulations provides detailed information as to what is required for thesis submission. Additional information is provided in The Open University Thesis Submission Guidelines which are available on the Graduate School Network.

Theses can be submitted at any time during the year, although those submitted during the summer may be subject to some delay if examiners are not available for oral examinations.

When the notice to submit is received, normally in advance of submission by three months, the supervisors will nominate an exam panel which is assessed by the Associate Dean (Research) (or delegate) and if it meets the criteria will be submitted to the Research Degrees Committee for approval. A minimum of two examiners is required.

An Independent Examination Panel Chair will also be appointed. It is their role to make the examination arrangements and to ensure that the examination is run in accordance with the University's regulations, policies and procedures. Once the examination arrangements are finalised, confirmation of the date, time and place of the viva will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders.

FAQ: What structure should my thesis take?
We don't have thesis templates, as it is impossible to suggest these across all fields and disciplines. Structures emerge with the work and in discussion with

supervisors. Ask your supervisor to suggest a completed thesis to look at if you want a better idea of what is expected.

The Thesis Submission Guidelines (under 'T' in Forms and Guidance) give the typical basic elements of what a thesis should contain.

4.1.3 Examination

Section 17 (for PDs) of the Research Degree Regulations provides detailed information as to what is required during the examination process. Additional information is provided in the Examination guidelines for research degrees, which are available on the Graduate School Network.

Students and supervisors should read the Regulations and the guidelines carefully. These include information on publication of papers, originality and joint work and the length and format of the thesis and any non-book components. The thesis must take the form of a coherent and cohesive monograph. Any additional material, e.g. non-book component, or appendices including publications, data etc. must be clearly presented in relation to the argument of the written thesis and the creative work should be set in its relevant theoretical, historical, and critical or design context.

Students can choose to attend the final examination in person, online or via a hybrid format to defend the thesis to the examiners. A supervisor may be present as an observer at the oral examination. Invitation to attend is at the student's discretion and should form part of the Examination Panel Nomination process.

4.1.4 Plagiarism

Plagiarism is using the work (including text, images and ideas) of other people to gain some form of benefit without formally acknowledging that the work came from someone else. The Open University takes allegations of plagiarism very seriously and is making increasing use of plagiarism detection software.

It is expected that a student develops and maintains best practice in their writing throughout the research and undertakes plagiarism training. In cases of suspected plagiarism, the University will follow the 'Plagiarism and research misconduct policy (for PGRs)' (see Research policies). The plagiarism policy and the disciplinary procedures can be found in the forms and guidance section (A-Z) on the Graduate School Network.

The student will be asked to acknowledge a statement to confirm that all the work submitted is their own before submitting the thesis for examination. Doctoral researchers, supervisors, and examiners are jointly responsible for upholding the academic integrity of the doctorate through open discussions about the uses and abuses of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) and the University's stance with regards to GenAI in Doctoral Research is laid out in the Position Statement and Guidance on Generative AI and Doctoral Education | Graduate School Network.

4.1.5 Results Approval

The examiners will normally advise the student of the recommendation at the end of the examination. At this stage the outcome is only a recommendation. The recommendation must be approved by the Research Degrees Examination

Results Approval Committee (RDRAC). At this point the Committee will confirm the outcome of the examination in writing.

Where further amendments are needed in order to meet the academic requirements of the award, the student will be informed in writing as to what is required. Students will continue to receive advice from supervisors whilst undertaking any corrections and amendments. Details are outlined in section 17 (for PDs) of the Research Degree Regulations.

4.2 Award of degrees

If no corrections are required, the degree is awarded with effect from the date the examiners recommendations are approved by RDRAC. Where post-examination corrections are required, the date of the degree awarded will correspond to the date that the examiners approve the corrected thesis.

When RDRAC confirms that the thesis meets the requirements for the award of a degree, the student must submit an electronic copy (see the Open University Thesis Submission Guidelines) before the degree can be conferred. The degree and title of Doctor or Master of Philosophy, or Doctor of Education/Doctor of Health and Social Care are conferred in absentia by Congregation. The student will receive confirmation in writing of completion of the degree. At this point the student may use the title 'Dr' if awarded a Doctor of Philosophy, Doctor of Education or Doctor of Health and Social Care.

4.3 Degree ceremonies

The University holds an annual series of degree ceremonies for the presentation of graduates.

These are held in March to June and September to November in towns and cities across the UK. Graduates are presented to the Chancellor, the Pro-Chancellor, the Vice-Chancellor or one of the Pro-Vice-Chancellors or Executive Deans. The student may, if they wish, be presented at one of these degree ceremonies. They are always memorable and inspiring occasions. Details will be sent to the student when they become eligible.

More information about degree ceremonies can be obtained from the Ceremonies website or by contacting the Ceremonies Centre. Contact details are in Part 6. Information about the accessibility of each venue and hiring academic dress at the ceremony is also available on the Ceremonies website or by contacting the Ceremonies Centre.

4.4 Directory of graduates

The names of graduates attending each degree ceremony are produced and handed out as souvenir publications on the day of the ceremony. A full listing of all of the year's graduates is also compiled by the University but is not available in printed format. These lists are all public documents. The University may also release names of graduates to be printed in national or regional newspapers and other publications.

A student who does not wish their name to appear in any of these publications must tell the University by writing to the Manager in the Ceremonies Centre.

Unless such notification is received the University will consider that it has consent to include a student's name.

4.5 What a student should do if they need help

Throughout a student's studies, the University strives to give the best support and guidance, to help them towards successful completion of the degree.

The University understands that sometimes a student may fall behind or have unexpected disruptions to their studies. Illness, bereavement, changes in domestic circumstances and financial difficulties can all impact on ability to study. A student may also find that the project is not progressing as well as hoped, or something has gone wrong with the data collection. Whatever the reason, a student should talk to their supervisor or third party monitor about the difficulties. The supervisor(s)/third party monitor will help the student to find a way through the immediate problem and can sometimes renegotiate deadlines or ask for a period of suspended registration. The student may also address concerns to the PGR Convenors/Programme Leaders/Faculty Director Research Degrees or Associate Dean (Research) depending on the structure of the Faculty.

If a student needs help because they feel a process has gone wrong, they may want to appeal against an academic or administrative decision or complain about a service, please see Part 5 of this handbook covering appeals and complaints.

The University is committed to providing a high-quality service and will seek to resolve any problems as quickly as possible. The University considers all feedback to be an important source of information for improving services.

Students who wish to may contact the Graduate School directly. Contact details can be found in Part 6.

Part 5 Research degree complaints and appeals

The Open University aims to provide all students with an excellent learning experience that enables them to achieve their academic goals. We recognise that sometimes things go wrong and, when they do, we welcome the opportunity to put them right as soon as possible.

The Student Complaints and Appeals Procedures apply to all enquirers, applicants and research students. Students can obtain this procedure in alternative formats and seek help, advice and guidance on making a formal complaint or appeal from the Complaints and Appeals area of the Help Centre, and from either the Student Casework Office or the Graduate School.

5.1 Administrative Appeals

The University defines an administrative appeal as 'a request for a review of a decision taken by an individual or body charged with making decisions about any aspect of a student's access to learning or learning experience with the University which is not an academic decision'.

Decisions about registration processes, fee liability, financial support, exceptional arrangements and reasonable adjustment which are not academic in nature are covered by the Administrative Appeals Procedure.

More information on administrative appeals can be found in the Help Centre.

5.2 Academic Appeals

The University defines an academic appeal as 'a request for a review of a decision of an academic body charged with making decisions on admission, assessment, student progression and awards'.

Decisions about entry requirements, reasonable adjustments for assessment for students with disabilities, progression rules, academic misconduct, thesis submission and the award of qualifications would be covered by the Academic Appeals Procedure.

More information on academic appeals can be found in the Help Centre.

5.3 Complaints

The University defines a complaint as 'an oral or written expression of dissatisfaction concerning the provision of a programme of study or related academic or administrative service, which is not an appeal against a decision'.

Concerns about the provision of a service or facility or the failure to provide a service or facility, where the standard of the service or facility has fallen below the standard that might reasonably be expected or where there is a reasonable expectation that the service or facility would be provided would be covered by the Complaints Procedure.

More information on the complaints procedure can be found in the Help Centre.

5.4 Sources of advice

Advice is available from:

The Research Degrees Team

The Open University
Milton Keynes
MK7 6AA
Phone +44(0)1908 653806
Email graduate-school@open.ac.uk

The Student Casework Office

The Open University
PO Box 5155
Milton Keynes
MK7 6YJ

Phone +44(0)1908 659535
Fax +44 (0)1908 659536
Email studentcaseworkoffice@open.ac.uk

Open SU

Central office at Walton Hall, Milton Keynes
Email su@open.ac.uk

The Office of the Independent Adjudicator

Second Floor
Abbey Gate
57–75 Kings Road
Reading
RG1 3AB
www.oiahe.org.uk

Casework Support Team

Phone +44 (0)118 959 9813 (Calls to and from this office may be monitored for quality control and training reasons.)

5.5 Other policies and statements

A student can access the University's other regulations, policies and statements on the Student Policies and Regulations website.

All policies and statements relevant to research students can be found on the

Graduate School Network.

Part 6 Contact details

OU postal address

The Open University
Walton Hall
Milton Keynes
MK7 6AA

Research Enterprise and Scholarship Unit

Graduate School

Phone +44 (0)1908 653806
Email graduate-school@open.ac.uk

For more information and opening hours Contact us | Graduate School Network

Enterprise Team

Email RES-Research-Enterprise@open.ac.uk
Website https://www.open.ac.uk/research/engagement

Research Ethics

Email research-ethics@open.ac.uk
https://research.open.ac.uk/environment/ethics

Faculty offices

Contact details for all research areas can be found

https://research.open.ac.uk/faculties-institutes.

Other areas of the University

Ceremonies Centre

The Open University
PO Box 123
Milton Keynes
MK7 6DQ

Phone +44 (0)1908 653003
Email ceremonies@open.ac.uk

Student Casework Office

The Open University
PO Box 5155
Milton Keynes
MK7 6YJ
Phone 01908 659535
Email studentcaseworkoffice@open.ac.uk

Data Protection Coordinator

Email data-protection@open.ac.uk

The Open University Library

Walton Hall
Milton Keynes
MK7 6AA
Phone +44 (0)1908 659001
Email form https://www.open.ac.uk/library/help-and-support/contacting-the-helpdesk

IT Helpdesk

Phone +44 (0)1908 654321
Website https://openuniv.sharepoint.com/sites/intranet-it/Pages/it-helpdesk-opening-hours.aspx

Open SU

Email su@open.ac.uk
Website https://www.oustudents.com/contact-us/

Statistics Advisory Service

Website
https://www.open.ac.uk/students/research/OU/content/services/statistics-advisory-service

OU Alumni Association

Email alumni@open.ac.uk
Website www.open.ac.uk/alumni

Appendix 1 Abbreviation list

The following terms may help you navigate the University:

Abbreviation	Stands for…
ADR	Associate Dean Research (Faculty)
ARC	Affiliated Research Centre
DHSC	Doctorate of Health and Social Care
DRD	Director of Research Degrees (Faculty)
EdD	Doctorate in Education
ETHOS	E-Theses Online Service (British Library)
FASS	Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
FBL	Faculty of Business and Law
GSN	Graduate School Network (website)
HREC	Human Research Ethics Committee
MPhil	Master of Philosophy
ORDO	Open Research Data Online (Library)
ORO	Open Research Online (Library)
OU	Open University

OUCU	Open University Computer Username (IT)
PD	Professional Doctorate
PGR	Postgraduate Research/Postgraduate Researcher/Postgraduate Research Student
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
PRES	Postgraduate Research Experience Survey
RDC	Research Degrees Committee
RDF	Researcher Development Framework (Vitae Skills Framework)
RDO	Research Degrees Office (now the Research Degrees Team within the Graduate School)
RDRAC	Research Degrees Examination Results Approval Committee
SCONUL	Society of College, National and University Libraries
STEM	Faculty of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
UKVI	UK Visas and Immigration (Government department)
WELS	Faculty of Wellbeing, Education and Language Studies

The Open University