



PRIFYSGOL
ABERYSTWYTH
UNIVERSITY

General Information and Code of Practice for

**RESEARCH
POSTGRADUATES**

September 2023

This document is available on line at:

<https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/grad-school/forms-handbooks/>

Please Note:

This document was accurate at the time of going to press. However, procedures and regulations are periodically updated. If in doubt, please contact the Graduate School.

Contents – General Information

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Part One

GENERAL INFORMATION FOR RESEARCH POSTGRADUATES

During the 2023-24 academic session, Aberystwyth University will be implementing an online Postgraduate research student management system. This will involve replacing manual processes with online workflows in areas such as progress monitoring, examination, changes of supervision and thesis titles, extensions of deadline and recording of meetings. This will make it much easier for staff and students to complete these actions and will improve the quality of records. The information below is based on the current systems and will change as new functions are brought online. Students and staff will be kept informed as these new developments take place.

1. Introduction

The first part of this booklet is designed to introduce you to the broad range of services which are available to support you during your time of study and to enhance your student experience. Your supervisor will normally be the first port of call for advice on academic matters, but Aberystwyth is renowned for its friendliness, and specialist staff are available to give you expert advice or to refer you to those parts of the university where relevant assistance may be obtained whatever your needs are.

2. Academic Registry

<https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/academic-registry/>

2.1 The Academic Registry is responsible for:

- Registration
- Maintaining the Student Record
- Taught module student transcripts
- Production of Final Degree Certificate
- Certification of student status
- Administering appeals process

2.2 Please contact the Academic Registry if you have any queries regarding:

- Registration
- Thesis or Dissertation submission deadlines
- Processing assessment results
- Rules and regulations
- Withdrawal

via pgsstaff@aber.ac.uk

Or if you need any of the following:

- Certificates of registration
- Letter of introduction to UK banking facilities

via aocstaff@aber.ac.uk or you can order directly from the website at:

<https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/academic-registry/certification/>

2.3 All postgraduate students must register at the start of their programme of study and in September at the start of the academic session until they reach their 'end of registration' date.

New students will receive information on how and when to register in the 'Welcome' information before commencing their programme. Further information and advice on registration and other issues is available from the Student Administration Office see

<https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/academic-registry/students/pg-issues/>

You should ensure that the information on your student record is kept up to date. You can access your student record at: <https://studentrecord.aber.ac.uk/en/>

3. Graduate School

<https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/grad-school/>

3.1 The Graduate School is responsible for postgraduate Researcher Development within the University as a whole. It also has a co-ordinating role in relation to the following: the development of policy on postgraduate matters; the provision of facilities for postgraduates; the provision of Welsh medium research training; the award of the University's AberDoc Studentships; oversight of the University's partnership in the UKRI Doctoral Training Partnerships/Centres, and the monitoring of academic progress of postgraduate students. Aberystwyth is committed to the provision of an excellent level of training for postgraduate students and has established a Researcher Development Programme which is available to all students according to specific training requirements

3.2 The Head and Deputy Heads of the Graduate School works in liaison with both academic and administrative staff across the University, and are supported by a team covering all aspects of postgraduate study at Aberystwyth. The University's Research Degrees Committee oversees the work of Departmental, Faculty and University Committees with responsibilities for research students. Policy is implemented through discussion with Faculties and Departments and in consultation with the University's Research Students' Consultative Group.

3.3 The Researcher Development Programme consists of three elements: the research training modules, the Graduate workshops, and the Professional and Transferable Skills Training workshops.

3.4 Within the Researcher Development Programme, the first year research modules that are currently offered include:

- Research Skills and Personal Development
- Sgiliau Ymchwil a Datblygiad Personol
- Principles of Research Design
- Ways of Reading
- Dulliau Darllen
- Statistics in Context: Collecting, Handling and Presenting Data
- Quantitative Data Collection and Analysis
- Qualitative Data Collection and Analysis
- Manuscript Skills: Post Medieval Palaeography and Diplomatic
- Using Manuscript Sources for Medieval Studies: Palaeography, Diplomatic and Context
- Research Skills and Personal Development for Scientists
- Public Engagement and Impact
- Ways of Working
- Leadership for Researchers.
- Statistics for Experimental Scientists
- Research Seminar Skills in the Life Sciences
- Grants Development Workshops
- The Research Writing Programme
- Entrepreneurship
- Reading and Writing Development Group
- Skills in Bioinformatics for Biologists
- Theoretical Foundations of Research in Law and Criminology

- Philosophy and Contemporary Culture
- Writing your first Journal Article
- Research Seminar Skills in Physical Sciences
- Specialist Research Skills for Scientists

Further details can be found on the Graduate School website [at https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/grad-school/researcher/](https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/grad-school/researcher/)

3.5 The annual Graduate schools cover the following:

- Year One Graduate Workshop – Professional Conduct: PGM9005 Ethics, Plagiarism and Academic Practice for Research Students
- Year Two Graduate Workshop – the Research Writing Programme
- Year Three Graduate Workshops – Beyond the PhD

3.6 The Aberystwyth Researcher Programme offers a wide range of workshops designed to help postgraduate students develop the skills required to successfully complete their degree, and also to improve their future employability. This is an opt-in programme of short courses, half-day and full-day sessions, which students can take the opportunity to engage with at any point during their studies.

3.7 The Graduate School is also responsible for the submission of research degree theses and despatch of theses to examiners. Academic Departments/Faculties arrange the student's viva examination.

3.8 For further information please contact Jan Davies in the Graduate School (see addresses below).

4. Health, Safety and the Environment

<https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/hse/>

4.1 Aberystwyth University recognises that the protection of the health and safety of our employees, students and others affected by our activities, and of the quality of the environment, is an integral part of the university's operation and a prime responsibility of management at every level.

4.2 Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellors and Heads of Professional Service Departments are responsible for the day to day management of health and safety within their Faculty or Department. In particular they are responsible for the planning, implementation, monitoring and review of measures to control risk arising from the activities of their Faculty or Department and ensuring the allocation of resources necessary for this. To assist them in this role, they may appoint Health and Safety Coordinator(s) and may arrange for duties to be further delegated, as appropriate, within their Faculty or Department.

4.3 Your Supervisor has a key role to play in ensuring that your work-related activities are safe. This is especially true for research postgraduates, where you may be working in environments of elevated risk such as laboratories or in the field. Your supervisor must ensure that all appropriate risk assessments and safe systems of work are in place and communicated to you and that you fully understand these; also that you receive all necessary training before you undertake any hazardous procedures. If you feel that you need more support and training, then make sure you ask for it!

4.4 Your supervisor or Health and Safety Coordinator will advise you of local emergency procedures and first-aid arrangements. If you are unsure of any aspect then, again, make sure you ask!

4.5 If you have an accident, an incident, or a near miss, then you must report it to your Supervisor or Health and Safety Coordinator (the details for whom will be available from your Faculty or Department, and complete the incident report form. If you accidentally break an item of equipment or identify a fault, then report this also – do not leave it for someone else to find or try to make the repair yourself.

Aberystwyth University Students:

4.6.1 Shall at all times, whilst they are on University premises or taking part in University activities, follow the Health, Safety and Environmental Policy with specific reference to Section 2.10 and comply with any health and safety rules and instructions given to them by the University, its departments or the Students' Union.

4.6.2 Shall not, without the consent of the member of staff in charge of the area or activity, introduce any equipment for use on University premises, alter any fixed installations or portable equipment, or otherwise take any action which may create hazards for members of the University or other persons using the premises.

4.6.3 Shall not, intentionally or recklessly, alter or remove HS&E notices, interfere with or misuse equipment or facilities provided by the University in the interests of health, safety or environmental protection.

4.6.4 Shall only work in the academic buildings after hours if there is a specific need to work at such times, the activity has been approved by your supervisor, and the appropriate risk assessments put into place for the work.

4.6.5 Shall not enter any unauthorized areas or use equipment where a hazard is posed to themselves, others or the environment, unless authorized to do so and all necessary training and paperwork has been suitably and sufficiently completed.

4.7 If you have any queries that cannot be handled locally, then please contact the Health, Safety and Environment Team, Email: hasstaff@aber.ac.uk. Tel: 01970 622073.

4.8 Security

The University's estate is patrolled by uniformed Security Operatives who operate from the Campus Reception located at the entrance to Penglais Campus. They are able to provide information and advice and respond to requests for assistance from staff, students and visitors.

All security related incidents should be reported to the Security Officers either in person or on the following contact telephone numbers: extension 2649 / mobile 07889 596220.

5. Department of Research, Business & Innovation (RBI)

<https://www.aber.ac.uk/rbi>

5.1 The Department of Research, Business and Innovation (RBI) is based on the Science Park. RBI proactively champions research and strengthens the culture of innovation and knowledge exchange at Aberystwyth University. The Department offers a range of services to support and monitor research and innovation activities across the University, with the aim of increasing research and knowledge exchange activities whilst reducing the related administrative burden on academic and research colleagues. The Department provides support across five key areas:

- **Research Development (including research ethics and integrity)**
 - Offering direct support to academics and researchers in preparing and submitting grant applications across all disciplines and funders
 - Supporting research ethics and integrity including ethical review processes.
- **International and Business Development**
 - Bringing academics, researchers and businesses together for knowledge exchange, innovation and research. Proactively engaging with external organisations, identifying and supporting translational funding opportunities, and facilitating the commercialisation of inventions from Aberystwyth University. Promoting and supporting grant applications to Horizon Europe and Regional/UK Shared Prosperity funding.
- **REF & Research Monitoring**
 - Research information management and reporting to promote the development of research excellence that delivers impact.
 - Working with Information Services to manage the Open Access publication and research data management agenda
 - REF & Research Monitoring staff also contribute to Postgraduate Research Training modules: Public Engagement and Impact ([PGM1610](#)) and Ethics, Plagiarism and Academic Practice for Research Students ([PGM9005](#)).
- **RBI Project Management & Quality Assurance**
 - Monitoring large research & enterprise projects' performance and sharing good project management practice and post-award accounting.
- **RBI Contracts & Policies**
 - Reviewing negotiating and processing contracts relating to research and knowledge exchange activities across the University and negotiating with partners.
- **Research Finance in the Finance Department:**
 - Support RBI with the costing of research, innovation and knowledge exchange proposals. Providing financial management of grants with regular expenditure statements and reports for Principal Investigators, Faculties and University management.

5.2 RBI has developed a Research Grant Applications Toolkit, to take researchers through Aberystwyth University's research grant application process. The toolkit provides useful information and links for e.g. finding funding, developing a research proposal, considering research ethics,

costing projects, managing projects, disseminating results/impact and post award reporting. <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/rbi/staff-students/toolkit/> .

5.3 RBI run a variety of events including 'Bitesize Briefings' on funding opportunities and schemes and 'Research Good Practice' training sessions, open to all academic staff. These are circulated regularly to all academic staff and postgraduate students and also posted on the RBI events webpage <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/rbi/staff-students/staff/#upcoming-events>

5.4 If at any time during your research you require advice on matters relating to Intellectual Property Rights (including patents, copyright, design, trademarks and confidential information), this is available from RBI. The Aberystwyth University Guide to Intellectual Property can be found online at: <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/rbi/staff-students/busdev-techtrans/intellectual-property/> together with contact details of RB&I staff who can support and advise you.

5.5 For more information on the services offered by RBI, please visit <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/rbi/>. Alternatively, to arrange to speak with a member of the RBI team, please contact drbi@aber.ac.uk / 01970 622385 (see addresses).

6. Study Skills

Language and Study Support for Students

6.1 We provide language and study support for both home and international students throughout the Institution. Staff have considerable experience working with students in a range of subject fields.

6.2 Postgraduate students who wish to improve their performance in academic writing can book writing consultations for individual advice from our Royal Literary Fund Writing Fellow. Contact by email indicated in the following web page to arrange an appointment: <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/student-learning-support/rif/>

6.3 Writing workshops operate on a regular basis as in-session classes. These sessions cover issues such as:

- Structuring and organising written information;
- Achieving fluency, grammatical accuracy and an appropriate style;
- Identifying and addressing the readership;
- Referencing and citation.

6.4 <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/student-learning-support/postgrad/> Students seeking support for English language development can arrange one to one tutorial sessions via the International English Centre. Contact the Centre via e-mail (tesol@aber.ac.uk) or through the website to arrange an appointment. <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/international-english/one-to-onelanguageconsultationsforinternationalstudents/>

6.5 Details of how to access the full range of current support are available on the web: <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/student-learning-support/>

Advice and guidance is also available for international students seeking assistance with language, cultural or study related problems. Please call, phone or email to make an appointment.

7. Supporting You

Our staff and teams in Student Services are friendly and approachable, and offer you a range of expert, professional and specialist support. Working with you, they can assist you to achieve solutions for most of the challenges of student life. The services are confidential and non-judgmental.

7.1 Student Services Centre

The Student Services Centre is your One Stop Shop for advice and information on the range of services available which include, Wellbeing, Accessibility and Inclusion, Advice and Money, Visa Advice and Anti-Harassment and Violence. You can telephone the team at 01970 621761 or 01970 622087

You can email the team at student-support@aber.ac.uk or visit our web pages: <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/student-support>

More about our services:

Advice and Money Service

The Advice and Money team provides information, advice, support and referral on a wide range of issues. If you are unsure about where to go for advice or assistance, please contact us. No issue is too big, too small. Our service is confidential, non-judgmental and free of charge. The Service also administers the University Hardship Funds

Contact us on: 01970 621761/622087
adviceandmoney@aber.ac.uk

Accessibility and Inclusion Services

The University welcomes applications from disabled students and those with specific learning differences. We advise you to consider, before applying, the requirements of your chosen course, identifying any elements that might present particular difficulties. We recommend that you visit the University campus and your department of choice to investigate the support that may be available, explore facilities and discuss specific needs.

Our Student Accessibility Advisers are happy to help before you apply. It is important that you contact your academic department and our Student Accessibility Advisers as early as possible, as it may take time to arrange adjustments and organise support. We also recommend that you contact our Student Accessibility Advisers to discuss a study needs assessment and to get advice on grants, such as the Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA).

Our advisers can arrange support workers for eligible disabled students, such as one-to-one study skills support and mentors. Reasonable adjustments and alternative assessments may be available for students with a range of impairments including specific learning differences such as dyslexia and dyspraxia.

Contact us on: 01970 621761/622087
accessibility@aber.ac.uk

Signpost Mentoring Scheme

Signpost offers friendly, confidential, one-to-one advice on any aspect of university life. Signpost is a peer-mentoring scheme primarily for all new undergraduates to help you achieve your potential, settle down in university life, plan for the future and make the most of your time at university. However, the Service can also provide support for postgraduates if needed.

Contact us on: 01970 621761
signpost@aber.ac.uk

7.2 Student Wellbeing

The Student Wellbeing team provides advice and guidance on a range of psychological and emotional issues. The Student Wellbeing team is a supplement to, but not a substitute for, statutory services, and works with students to find appropriate support pathways, which may involve referring to external agencies.

Contact us on: 01970 621761/622087
studentwellbeing@aber.ac.uk

General Practitioner (GP) Registration

Although we work closely with local GPs and hospital services to ensure that you get good care and attention when needed, it is important that you register with a local GP practice on arrival in Aberystwyth. This is vitally important to ensure continuity of care, especially if you are in receipt of any prescription medicine or other treatment. UK students should bring their National Health Medical Cards with them.

Information on how to register with a GP practice is available from the individual practices. Click here for contact details of local GP practices: <http://www.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/862/directory/gps>

Dental Services

The University does not offer a dental service. A range of dental practices is available locally.

Emergency Contact and Trusted Contacts

All students are required to provide details of someone who can be contacted in the event of an emergency. This information will only be used in an emergency. When you have activated your student account, please add your emergency contact details to your student record. Please ensure that the named person is aware and has agreed to give their details to the University in the event of an emergency. You will also be asked to provide details of a Trusted Contact. This may well be the same person as your emergency contact but it doesn't have to be. It will be someone that you would be happy for us to contact, with you or in exceptional circumstances without your consent where we have concerns about your safety and/or wellbeing.

Nightline

This is an independent and non-judgemental information and listening service run by students, for students. This confidential service runs from 10pm to 2am, Tuesday, Wednesday and Saturday during term time only on 01970 622166. Instant messaging and email listening services are also available via the Aberystwyth Nightline website <http://www.nightline.aber.ac.uk/en/index.php>

Advice and representation

The Students' Union runs the Advice Centre, providing independent support and representation, whether academic, welfare or financial, for students who may find themselves needing extra support

while at university.

8. International Students

8.1 Visa and Support

If you have any queries regarding your visa during the application process, or when you have registered as a student, please refer to our [Visa, Support and Advice](#) pages or contact the International Student Adviser (tel: 01970 621548, email immigrationadvice@aber.ac.uk). You are welcome to contact the International Student Adviser if you have any concerns during your time at Aberystwyth University. The International Student Adviser is on hand to offer support and advice.

8.2 Student visa Responsibilities

If you have a student visa, please note that you have responsibilities attached to this visa. Full details of your responsibilities can be found at: [Student Visa Holders – Responsibilities : Academic Registry, Aberystwyth University](#)

Please ensure that you inform your Department and the Compliance Office (compliance@aber.ac.uk) if there are any changes to your circumstances which will affect your visa status whilst in the UK. Information on what needs to be reported can be found at <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/academic-registry/compliance-information/>

If you have any queries regarding your Student visa responsibilities, please contact the Compliance Office by emailing compliance@aber.ac.uk

8.3 Attendance

Please note that it is a requirement of the Home Office that Aberystwyth University monitors your attendance and engagement during your studies. Student Engagement and Attendance requirements can be found at [.https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/academic-registry/compliance-information/engagement-and-attendance-monitoring/](https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/academic-registry/compliance-information/engagement-and-attendance-monitoring/) and your Department will also confirm their attendance expectations to you.

Postgraduate Research (PGR) students must be studying in Aberystwyth for 44 weeks per academic year.

PGR students are required to attend a monthly meeting with their supervisor to discuss their progress. We realise that some Postgraduate Research Students undertake fieldwork and therefore might not be available to meet their supervisor in person every month. If you are undertaking fieldwork and are unable to attend, please ensure that you inform your Department and the Compliance Office (compliance@aber.ac.uk) as fieldwork needs to be reported to the Home Office. If approved, your absence will be recorded as 'Fieldwork'. Please ensure that you maintain contact at least once a month with your supervisor during your fieldwork by email. It is expected that the email would discuss the work you are undertaking and, where possible, attach evidence of the work. If you are unable to attend your monthly meeting with your supervisor due to other reasons and this has been authorised, then your absence will be recorded as 'Authorised Absence'. More information on Authorised Absence for Postgraduate Research students can be found at:

<https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/academic-registry/compliance-information/authorised-absence/>

8.4 Withdrawal

Please ensure that you follow all University procedures if you decide to withdraw from university. Please consult with the International Student Adviser (immigrationadvice@aber.ac.uk), as there are implications on your visa if you withdraw from the University. You will also need to discuss withdrawal with your financial sponsor.

8.5 Registration

It is a Home Office requirement that all International Students present their valid passport and visa to Aberystwyth University before they are able to fully register.

8.6 If you are thinking of changing your course of study while at Aberystwyth University, please contact the International Student Advisor and/or the Compliance Office prior to making a decision, as any change of course may impact on your visa.

9. Information Services

Information Services (IS) provides IT and library services for Aberystwyth University. To make use of our facilities you will need an IT account and an Aber card.

9.1 IT Account

You will be able to activate your University IT account online shortly before your course begins. You will be emailed when your account is ready for you.

Your IT account gives you access to:

- Your Aberystwyth University Office 365 account providing you with email, OneDrive and Teams. Your Student Record
- Connect your own devices to the University network
- Computing facilities in libraries and computer rooms
- Eresources, ejournals and ebooks and information on your subject of study
- Blackboard, the University's virtual learning environment
- Your library account to manage your loans
- Software free to you under the University's license
- ApAber

9.2 Aber card

You can apply for your Aber card as soon as you have activated your IT account:

<https://myaccount.aber.ac.uk/protected/newabercard>

If you do this at least two days before you arrive on campus it should be ready for you to collect on arrival. Your Aber card is used:

- As your Student ID
- As the door key to your university accommodation
- To purchase food in University hospitality outlets; if you are in catered residences it will be credited before you arrive
- For library borrowing
- To access 24 hour computer rooms

- To access the library and other University buildings
- For printing, photocopying and scanning
- As your Student Union card
- As your Sports Centre card

9.3 IS Activities for new students

During the Big Welcome Weekend and Orientation Week we provide a range of activities to welcome new students and introduce our services, so you can make the best use of them during your time here. These include:

- Help with activating your IT account
- Collection of your Aber cards
- Library and IT inductions
- Library tours new students to the library facilities and services. Full details are at: <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/is/help/ug/welcome/>

9.4 Library facilities

There are two libraries providing a variety of flexible learning spaces catering for groups and individual study. The Hugh Owen Library is at the heart of the Penglais Campus and is open 24-hours each day during term-times. Collections for humanities, life sciences, social sciences, education, rural studies and Welsh subjects are held here.

The Physical Sciences Library, also on Penglais Campus, provides for physics, mathematics and computer science subjects.

The libraries also hold several rare and special collections plus a wealth of other learning materials. Our online materials are available anywhere and anytime through our library catalogue and discovery service: <https://primo.aber.ac.uk/> and offer an extensive breadth of coverage from Art to Zoology.

Dedicated library staff offering subject specific support can help you make the most of learning resources to best use your time. They are contactable via Teams, online chat, phone, email <https://libguides.aber.ac.uk/>

You can register for a free 3-year membership of the National Library of Wales in Aberystwyth which is home to an extensive collection of printed journals and other specialist collections, many available in digital format.

9.5 Enquiries

Further information can be found on our web pages:

<https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/is>

If you have any questions at all please do not hesitate to contact us: Tel: 01970 622400; Email: is@aber.ac.uk

10. National Library of Wales

<https://www.llgc.org.uk/>

10.1 Opportunities for postgraduate study at Aberystwyth are enriched by the proximity of the

National Library of Wales (NLW), adjacent to the University campus. As one of the six legal deposit libraries in Britain and Ireland, the Library acquires current books, periodicals, maps, music and other printed matter, and also collects electronic materials. In addition, it has extensive holdings of manuscripts and archives, pictures, photographs and drawings relating to Wales. The Library is the home of the National Screen and Sound Archive of Wales, which houses a large collection of film, TV footage and sound recordings of Welsh interest. The Library's collections as a whole represent a national resource for international scholarship.

10.2 The Reading Rooms are open from 9.30am to 5.00pm on weekdays and from 9.30am to 4.30pm on Saturdays. The Library is closed on Sundays and public holidays and some other days during the year, with limited services only available in the Reading Rooms on public holidays. Admission is by Reader's Ticket obtainable from the Library or online. <https://www.llgc.org.uk/en/visit/before-your-visit/readersticket/>.

All the Library building's services are open again now, but you must book a place before you visit.

10.3 For more information, please contact the National Library of Wales (see addresses).

11. Careers Service

<https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/sscs/careers>

11.1 The Careers Service recognises the edge in the market postgraduate research qualifications offer our students and in response provide a range of tailored services to meet the needs of our postgraduate cohort, including a dedicated Graduate School Careers Consultant, tailored career development workshops and webinars, specific pages on our website and easily self-bookable one to one career consultations, either in the dedicated postgraduate centre, or remotely.

In addition, all postgraduate students have full access to our wider careers services, even following graduation. These include self-bookable careers consultations, daily drop-in provision for career queries and CV/application checks, employer presentations, centrally run workshops on all aspects of effective career management, bespoke work experience opportunities via our tailored AberForward+ programme, a comprehensive online website packed with useful resources, and a vacancy and events portal allowing all students to access our range of services on-line - [ABERcareers](#)

11.2 The Careers Service liaises closely with all academic departments alongside delivering career development workshops and webinars that are fully embedded within the Aberystwyth Researcher Programme. Our one to one PGR career consultations provide an opportunity for students to explore their future goals and career direction, build insight on how to market postgraduate qualifications to a range of employers, understand and apply themselves effectively to specific recruitment processes and benefit from job interview coaching. This support is offered in-person and online and is easily self-bookable via this link <https://careers.aber.ac.uk/>

11.3 Postgraduate research students are encouraged to engage with the careers service early, to ensure they are fully equipped and ready to take on the next step in their journey throughout their time here at Aberystwyth University and come graduation.

11.4 For more information, please contact the Careers Service in the Student Welcome Centre on our Penglais Campus. You can visit the Team, email them at, careers@aber.ac.uk or telephone 01970 622378. You can find out more by visiting our website at <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/sscs/careers/>

12. The Music Centre

If you play an instrument, sing or just enjoy listening, check out the Music Centre's orchestral, band and choral programme. The Centre provides practice facilities, and individual tuition is available. Music Scholarships are available to those who sing and / or play an orchestral or band instrument to a high standard. Visit our website for further information www.aber.ac.uk/en/music or call in to speak to us in person.

13. Sport Aber

Sports Centre Membership for Postgraduates

<https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/sportscentre/membership>

13.1 The Sports Centre indoor facilities are on the main 'Penglais Campus' and are a core element of student life. The Sports Centre team work hard to provide all students with a safe environment to work, relax, enjoy sport and exercise. We have a relaxed and friendly environment that you are welcome to use. We aim to promote health and well-being through high quality, value-for-money sport and exercise provision.

13.2 We offer free and unlimited access to the gym, classes, spinning, swimming, sauna and climbing wall to any Postgraduate student who is staying in university residences, for all non-residential students, we offer a subsidized rate of £135, for the whole of the academic year. This deal also gives you access to the free play slots for sporting and recreational activities such as badminton and football

13.3 What is available?

The main sports hall areas separate into the new gym layout, a strength and conditioning area, and a dumbbell room. There is a swimming pool and saunarium with relaxation chairs, a quiet zone and therapy room and a new outdoor sun deck. The dance studio caters most of the dance, combat and group exercise classes. There is also a bouldering-climbing wall.

A separate full-size 3G pitch is located adjacent to the marquee area and a 400m 2-lane performance running track surrounds both facilities.

The Sports Cage provides a multi-purpose sports hall with provision to facilitate 6 badminton courts, indoor cricket, hockey, basketball, netball, 2 volleyball courts, archery and 2 squash courts.

The satellite 24-hour gym is open to all students living in residences. This is located at Y Sgubor adjacent to the student residences at [Fferm Penglais](#).

13.4 Student Clubs

With over fifty different clubs available to students and postgrads, there is chance to enjoy a new sport or to take part in your favourite game. For a full list of clubs, visit the sports and activities website: <https://www.abersu.co.uk/teamaber/sports/clublist/>

Come to Welcome Week, where you can meet the Athletics Union President, who co-ordinates student sports this year and learn about the clubs, when they meet, where they train and how to join. You can also meet up with the sports Centre team to hear what's on offer from joining the gym, where everything is, how to get there, what you need and any fitness advice. Check out on our web pages for more information.

We hope that you enjoy your time at Aberystwyth University and feel part of the community and camaraderie at the Sports Centre. If you have any queries, please feel free to contact us on 01970 621500 / 622280, Email: sports@aber.ac.uk or visit our website at www.aber.ac.uk/sportscentre/

14. Aberystwyth Students' Union

<https://www.abersu.co.uk> / [UMAberSU on socials](#)

14.1 Whether it's your first time in Aberystwyth or you've got caught in the Aber bubble...we're glad you've decided to study here at the University by the sea!

As soon as you register for your course, you will become a part the Students' Union here at Aberystwyth. At AberSU (as we're more commonly known) we are passionate about making sure you get the education and experience you deserve, and that your priorities are our priorities.

14.2 Who is AberSU?

AberSU is a student led independent charity where all Aberystwyth students are members. As a Students' Union we want Aber students to love student life. We believe Aber students should be happy, healthy and empowered, with lasting friendships and promising futures.

14.3 Where is the Union?

The Union building is located at the centre of Penglais campus, next to the Arts Centre. Here you can find our Officers and Staff Teams, as well as our helpful Reception who will help with any query you may have. We share our building with the University shop and bar, which is full of great offers and the perfect area to lounge between lectures (if you have them!).

14.4 What can the Union do for you?

Academic Representation:

Your voice matters most and we help to shape your academic experience. Our Academic representatives are there to represent your academic needs and concerns directly with the University. There are over 40 rep positions dedicated to Postgraduate Level Study.

Advice Centre:

We work to help students to be as happy and healthy as possible. We offer independent advice on a range of student issues, including finance, accommodation and academic concerns.

Opportunities:

We want to support students to make lasting friendships. You can join our #TeamAber community of over 130 sports clubs and societies as well as, a range of volunteering opportunities. We also have postgraduate network which provides opportunities to meet other like-minded postgrads. We want to help students to make lasting friendships. With around 50 sports clubs and 70 societies (including one for Postgraduates!) alongside regular volunteering opportunities, get involved with

something new or even start your own! By far the best way to make friends and build on your skills and experience to help you prepare for your next adventure.

Change Aber:

We are led by students, for students. Get involved in shaping AberSU by sharing ideas for improvement, voting in our election or even becoming student leaders. AberSU Elections offer a range of ways for students to directly influence what we do and to develop our work.

List of Contacts

(Note: To make a telephone call or send a fax from outside the UK, replace the code 01970 with +44 1970)

EMERGENCY SERVICES (24 hours)

For **Emergency Services** (Police, Ambulance, Fire, Coastguard) **dial 999 or 122 from a mobile.**

For emergency assistance from University Site Security dial 01970 622649

For emergency assistance in University Residences dial 01970 622900

University Main Switchboard (operator availability between 8.45 to 17.15 Monday to Friday) Tel: 01970 623111

Contact Addresses and Numbers

Postgraduate Admissions Office, Academic Registry
Cledwyn Building, Penglais Campus,
Aberystwyth, Ceredigion SY23 3DD
Tel: 01970 622270
Email: admissions@aber.ac.uk
Web Page: www.aber.ac.uk/en/postgrad/

Student Administration Office, Academic Registry
Cledwyn Building, Penglais Campus,
Aberystwyth, Ceredigion SY23 3DD
Tel: 01970 622272 / 622290
Email: pgsstaff@aber.ac.uk

Graduate School
Cledwyn Building, Penglais Campus,
Aberystwyth, Ceredigion SY23 3DD
Web Page: www.aber.ac.uk/en/grad-school
Email: graduate.school@aber.ac.uk
Tel: Graduate Office: 01970 622219
Tel: Skills Development Officer: 01970 621618

Health, Safety & Environment Team
Aberystwyth University, Governance
Department, Aberystwyth, Ceredigion SY23 3BY
Tel: 01970 622169 / 01970 621073
Email: hasstaff@aber.ac.uk
Web Page: www.aber.ac.uk/en/hse

Department of Research, Business and Innovation (RBI),
12 Cefn Llan Science Park,
Aberystwyth, Ceredigion SY23
3AH
Email: drbi@aber.ac.uk
Web Page: www.aber.ac.uk/en/rbi

Student Support Services
Student Welcome Centre, Penglais Campus,
Aberystwyth, Ceredigion SY23 3FB
Tel: 01970 621761 or 01970 622087
Email: support@aber.ac.uk
Web Page: www.aber.ac.uk/student-support/

International Student Advisor
Room 3.63 (Third Floor), Student Support and Careers
Services, Student Welcome Centre, Penglais Campus,
Aberystwyth SY23 3FB
Tel: 01970 621548
Email: immigrationadvice@aber.ac.uk

Student Visa Compliance: Academic Registry ,
Aberystwyth University
Cledwyn Building, Penglais Campus,
Aberystwyth, Ceredigion SY23 3DD
Tel : 01970 621769
Email : compliance@aber.ac.uk
Web page :
[https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/academic-
registry/compliance-information/](https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/academic-registry/compliance-information/)

Information Services
Hugh Owen Library, Penglais Campus,
Aberystwyth, Ceredigion SY23 3DZ
Tel: 01970 622400
Email: is@aber.ac.uk
Web Page: www.aber.ac.uk/en/is/

Students' Union
The Union, Penglais, Aberystwyth, Ceredigion SY23 3DX
Tel: 01970 621700
Email: union@aber.ac.uk
Web Page: www.abersu.co.uk

National Library of Wales
Aberystwyth, Ceredigion SY23 3BU
Tel: 01970 632800 Fax: 01970 615709
Email: gofyn@llgc.org.uk
Web Page: www.llgc.org.uk/

Careers Service
Llandinam Building, Penglais Campus,
Aberystwyth, Ceredigion SY23 3DB
Tel: 01970 622378
Email: careers@aber.ac.uk
Web Page: www.aber.ac.uk/en/sscs/careers

The Music Centre
Tel: 01970 622685
Email: music@aber.ac.uk
Web Page: www.aber.ac.uk/music

Sports Centre
Membership Office: 01970 621500
Sports Development Officer:
01970 622278 Email:
sports@aber.ac.uk
Reception: 01970 622280 AU Office: 01970 621754/55
Web Page: www.aber.ac.uk/en/sportscentre

Part Two

CODE OF PRACTICE FOR RESEARCH POSTGRADUATES

GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND POINTS TO NOTE

Some of the terms used in this Code of Practice may not be familiar to you. Others will have specific meanings within the rules and regulations of the University and those meanings may differ from other universities or may not be obvious. From time to time this leads to confusion between students and the University. This glossary defines some of the key terms you will encounter and highlights potential areas of confusion

Offer Letter – the offer letter issued by the Postgraduate Admissions Office makes a formal offer of a place on a programme of study. It gives details of the programme and any conditions which the student needs to meet. Only the Postgraduate Admissions Office may formally offer a place to study at the University.

Matriculation – where prospective students base their applications upon qualifications which they have obtained from or are studying for at universities other than Aberystwyth University, the University may, as part of the admissions process, ask to see original copies of certificates in order to verify and approve the qualification. A sample of 10% of each cohort will be required to present original documentation. This process is known as matriculation. Students who are not graduates of Aberystwyth University must matriculate (either provisionally or fully) before embarking on their programme of study.

Non graduates may matriculate for Master's programmes on the basis of their relevant work experience, the extent of which is verified by cross checking the application materials. Non graduates cannot matriculate for PhD programmes.

Deferral – students who have been offered a place to study at the University but who are unable for financial or other reasons to take it up at the designated time may ask to defer entry to a later date. The Postgraduate Admissions Office will advise them on whether and for how long the place will be held open for them.

Registration – all students must register with the University at the start of their programme of study and at the beginning of each session during their registration period (see below). Once registered, students have access to the facilities of the University. Students should note that, although they may have completed the admissions process and been offered a place to study, they are not students of the University until they formally register.

Registration Period – each programme of research study has a minimum registration period. This is the period during which the student must pay tuition fees and register formally at the start of each session. During this period students automatically have full access to University facilities. The University will certify during this period that the student is a registered, full-time or part-time student at the University. Certificates of this sort are often required, for example, by students who need visas or wish to seek reduction of council tax. Please note that departments may require students in some cases to register for longer than the minimum period (see extension of registration period, below). Note also that, except where students are exempted from probationary years (see probationary period, below) there can be no reduction to the minimum period, even where students complete their thesis during the period. The regulations allow students to submit their theses six months prior to the end of their registration period, but fees are still due for the whole period.

Extension of Registration Period – departments may require students to register and pay fees for an additional period after the minimum required by their programme of study where they believe that the student still has a considerable amount of research to complete. Note that extending the registration period does not imply an extension to the submission deadline.

Transfer-in – Students who have begun their candidature at another institution, but who wish to transfer to this institution to complete their studies may be permitted to do so except in the following circumstance: research students in the final year of their full-time registration period [or final two years of their part-time registration] cannot transfer to Aberystwyth University without paying additional fees for at least one year of full-time study or two years of part-time study. Transfer students who are accepted by departments must be provided with the expected start date, end date and latest submission date of their course in the offer letter before accepting their place.

Mode of Study – candidates may study either on a full-time or a part-time basis. The regulations for each differ in terms of time limits and registration periods. Changes between one mode and another need to be discussed with the academic department. The student must then complete a Postgraduate Change of Registration Form which can be obtained from the department or online at <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/academic-registry/students/pg-issues/research/change-reg/>

Probationary Period – both full-time and part-time PhD programmes have a probationary period of respectively one and two years. Students must demonstrate during this period their ability to conduct research to a satisfactory level if they are to be allowed to proceed with doctoral research beyond the probationary period. In addition, students should note that they will be expected to demonstrate at the end of each year of study their ability to proceed to the next year. Students may be exempted from the probationary period if their departments feel that their previous experience will enable them to complete their research in a shorter period. Students should also note that exemption from the probationary period also reduces the time limit for submission as detailed in the Code of Practice. Exemption from the probationary period does not in every case involve exemption from research training. Exemption must be approved during the admissions process and certainly not after registration.

Bar on Access – the University expects that research work accepted for a higher degree will be openly available and subject to no security classification or restriction to access. However, there are cases where there is an overriding need for a restriction of access, for example where

sponsored research has resulted in a thesis which contains commercially-sensitive information. In such cases the University may, on the special recommendation of a department, place a bar on access to a thesis for a specified period (maximum 5 years). Applications for a bar should be made by the supervisor as soon as possible and ideally at the outset of the candidature. Applications must be supported by the Head of Department and submitted to the Research Degrees Committee. It is also possible, separately and with the approval of Information Services, to request an embargo on the electronic thesis which is normally deposited in the University's online repository. This does not bar all access to the thesis but means it will not be available electronically for a set period.

Writing Up Period – the period between the end of the registration period and the submission deadline is often referred to as the 'writing up' period. Research students who do not complete their thesis by the end of the normal period of registration and supervision for the postgraduate degree for which they are enrolled will continue to have access to the University library and IT facilities but, although they might continue to work full-time on their theses, they are no longer full-time, registered students. The University will continue to deem full-time doctoral students to be exempt from Council Tax during their fourth year but not beyond that point. Full-time MPhil candidates will be treated as exempt for 6 months after the end of their registration period. However, we cannot produce certificates to say that students are full-time registered candidates at this point. This may have implications for accommodation, for example. The University is currently reviewing the status of writing up students.

1. Introduction

The University aims can be found in its Strategic Plan 2018-23. Specifically for postgraduate students, the aims of the Postgraduate Strategy are:

- To support postgraduate education and research,
- To build and grow the postgraduate community,
- To enhance the postgraduate student experience, and enhance the career opportunities/development of students (i.e. their employability),
- To improve/sustain completion rates,
- To ensure that PG provision at Aberystwyth is attractive, relevant and on a sound and sustainable financial footing.

This Code of Practice has been developed as part of the University's commitment to its research students. Its purpose is twofold. First, it sets out the responsibilities of the University and academic departments towards postgraduate students so that they will know what they can expect from the University during their course of study. Second, the Code states clearly the responsibilities of students for their own learning so that they will know what the University expects of them. It should be read alongside the formal regulations relating to the administration of degrees and other detailed documentation relating to postgraduate activity as referred to below.

This Code of Practice complies with the QAA Quality Code: Research Degrees, which is available on the web at the following address: <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/research-degrees>

2. Admissions

2.1 Application Procedure

Applications for all postgraduate study schemes must be submitted to and considered by Admissions. Admissions Staff will assess an applicant's eligibility for admission to a postgraduate programme and consider in particular previous qualifications, including non-UK qualifications, English language proficiency and any other circumstances outlined in the application, such as previous work experience. All postgraduate research (PGR) course applications are forwarded to the relevant academic department for consideration.

2.2 Decision Process

The academic department's decision should be based on the applicant's academic background, research potential and thus suitability for the course. A research proposal (except where an applicant is applying for a pre-advertised project).

Decisions may be delayed when associated with a scholarship competition or selection for a project studentship, or when insufficient information/documentation has been provided at the point of application.

If, upon receipt of the academic department's decision, an applicant is to be accepted for a programme of postgraduate study, Admissions will inform the applicant of this decision in the form of an offer letter for a place to study at Aberystwyth University. Applicants will also be informed in writing if their application has been unsuccessful. The programme of study may only commence when all the conditions or requirements outlined in the offer letter

have been met or agreed to by the applicant. Conditions may relate, for example, to the achievement or demonstration of a certain level of qualification from a current programme, evidence of sufficient English language proficiency, or agreement to undertake research-training courses organised by the Department or Faculty within which the postgraduate study will take place.

At this stage applicants may raise further queries about the specifics of their proposed postgraduate programme, which should be resolved before the applicant returns their Offer Reply Form to accept the terms of the offer, and before the place of study is confirmed (in the Final Confirmation of Place: see 2.6 below). While academic departments may contact applicants directly to informally suggest that they are prepared to accept them on to a course, only Admissions is authorised to issue formal offers for postgraduate study at the University.

- 2.3 Departments must interview research applicants as part of the admissions process wherever it is possible to do so. Where face-to-face interviews are not possible, departments should consider the use of telephone or online (MS Teams or Zoom) interviews. However, in all cases, the research proposal and academic references may play a major role in the decision-making process. Academic background should be considered in accordance with both University and Departmental entry requirements. Please note that some applicants who are able to matriculate may not necessarily be able to meet the specific entry requirements for the relevant course. Applicants for research study should have, or expect to obtain, at least an upper second class Bachelor's Honours (2i) degree or equivalent. Applicants with a high lower second class Bachelor's Honours (2ii) degree or equivalent which is enhanced by a Master's degree, or high lower second class MPhys or MEng degree, may also be considered. Some Departments require that applicants hold or expect to obtain a good Master's degree in addition to a good Bachelor's degree. Accredited prior experiential learning or certified learning should be considered as part of this process and before admission onto the programme. Any exemption from the probationary period of a PhD programme should be determined before admission onto the programme.

2.4 Financial Requirements

All applicants are required to complete a Financial Declaration Form to indicate how they intend to pay for their tuition fees. International applicants will also have to pay a non-refundable deposit (towards their tuition fees). In addition, the financial status of applicants seeking a UK Student Visa will be checked before they are issued a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) for visa purposes. The costs of the proposed study are specified in the formal offer letter from Admissions. Sponsored students are required to submit official notification that they will be in receipt of an award. All such documents must be original or certified copies (translated into English where necessary). Offers of any funding from the University, either central or departmental, must be made in writing and specify the exact level, duration and source of that funding. Offers of funding from external sources should also contain such specific information.

2.5 Conditions of Acceptance

Applicants who are unable to meet the conditions outlined in an offer letter, or who for other reasons do not wish to take up the offer of a place for the current session, may request that the offer be deferred until a later intake point. All deferral requests are subject to the approval of the relevant academic department. Places may be deferred for a

maximum period of two years. In exceptional cases, new conditions may be attached to the initial offer. This is in accordance with the Consumer Protection Act.

- 2.6 When all the conditions of an offer have been fulfilled, Admissions will write to confirm that the applicant has completed the admissions process. This will be in the form of the Final Confirmation of Place letter (commonly referred to as the “fully complete letter”).

The applicant will then be in a position to prepare to formally register and enrol for their postgraduate programme

- 2.7 Full-time campus-based international students will also be issued with a Confirmation of Acceptance of Studies (CAS) for visa purposes. Students need to be aware of both their own responsibilities under UK Student Visa regulations, and those of the University. See <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/academic-registry/compliance-information/> for further information.

- 2.8 It is University policy to offer a place solely on academic grounds. No postgraduate applicant should receive less favourable treatment on grounds such as age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, or parental status, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, or any comparable grounds.

If an applicant has disclosed a disability or medical condition during the admissions process, and has consented to Admissions sharing this information with university Student Support, then the University will take steps to work with the applicant to assess the need for, and where necessary put in place, appropriate reasonable adjustments in order that they are able to engage with their studies on an equal basis to their peers. Applicants should contact Student Support directly (accessibility@aber.ac.uk) to discuss any additional requirements they may have. Applicants who have UKRI Funding should also contact their relevant Research Council.

- 2.9 It is the responsibility of individual applicants to declare any legal restrictions which may impact their own studies and/or present a risk to the safeguarding of University staff and students. Students have responsibility to disclose any legal reasons that limit or prevent them entering university property, and/or working with individuals, and/or working with groups, and/or accessing the internet via the University’s systems and facilities. Failure to declare this information to the University may be deemed a breach of the University’s Disciplinary Procedures, and penalties may be imposed accordingly.

3. Attendance Requirements

- 3.1 It is expected that a full-time research postgraduate student will attend at the University for a minimum of 44 weeks in each academic year of their registration period (this is the period normally specified by grant-awarding bodies as being covered by a grant for one year). This means that a full-time research postgraduate is normally expected to live within daily travelling distance of Aberystwyth. The University recognises that students may need to undertake periods of fieldwork or data collection away from Aberystwyth. Absences of more than three weeks must

be approved by the relevant Head of Department. The Head of the Graduate School may also approve requests from individual students to reside elsewhere for part of their studies, where there is a valid reason and the student can meet all research training and course requirements.

3.2 Part-time students should agree a schedule of attendance and/or meetings with their supervisor. Part-time postgraduate research students are encouraged to attend the University in person to allow for meetings with their supervisory team and to attend other activities. Regular supervisory meetings may also be held online via Team or similar software.

3.3 Any unauthorised absence must be reported by the Department concerned to the Head of the Graduate School and to the Research Monitoring Committee (if appropriate) and will be reported to the student's sponsor. In such cases, the Head of the Graduate School or the Research Monitoring Committee may recommend that a student shall not be allowed to proceed to the next year of research and may recommend the exclusion of the student from the University.

3.4 Attendance on the Researcher Development Programme by full-time students, where relevant, is viewed as essential by the University. Registers are taken at each session and attendance is monitored by the Graduate School. Non-attendance by those students for whom the module is compulsory will be taken into account when annual reports are made on the progress of each research student to the Department/Faculty and subsequently to the Research Monitoring Committee. Cases of prolonged absence without cause on the part of any research postgraduate student will be pursued by the Head of the Graduate School and the Faculty and/or the student's supervisor and, if necessary, their Head of Department and the Faculty PVC, and may result in progression to the next year of study being denied, or in exclusion from the University.

4. Registration and Induction

4.1 Students must register at the beginning of their studies and again each September of their minimum registration period (see Table 1 below). All new research students must register during Big Welcome Weekend and Orientation Week. All returning full-time research postgraduates must register during Welcome Week each September, whilst returning part-time students may register online, remotely. Students are strongly advised to begin their research at the start of an academic year and should be aware that some awards (e.g. AberDoc) are conditional upon a September start. Information about registration and induction will be sent in advance to all incoming students.

Students who have been given approval to start later in the year must contact the Academic Registry on pgsstaff@aber.ac.uk to register.

TABLE :1 TIME LIMITS FOR REGISTRATION AND SUBMISSION DEADLINES			
degree and mode of study	minimum registration fee paying period	time limit deadline for submission of thesis	Maximum time permitted including any withdrawals or extensions
MPhil Full time Part time	1 year 2 years	2 years 4 years	4 years 6 years
PhD Full time Full time * *(exempt from probationary years)	3 years 2 years	4 years 3 years	6 years 5 years
Part time Part time * *(exempt from probationary years)	5/6 years 3/4 years	7/8 years 5/6 years	9/10 years 7/8 years

4.2 After formal registration, the University will grant students access to its facilities. It will supply certificates of registration on request to the Academic Registry by emailing aocstaff@aber.ac.uk or using the online request system: <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/academic-registry/certification/>

4.3 If the programme of postgraduate study extends into a following academic year, it is the student's responsibility to re-register at the beginning of that academic session. Returning students will be informed of the registration procedure during the summer.

A programme of registration and induction for all new full-time research postgraduates will be organised at the beginning of each academic year by the Graduate School. Details of the programme will be sent to new students in advance of their arrival in Aberystwyth.

Part-time students are encouraged to attend the induction programme. In addition, an introductory day is organized for International and visiting students prior to registration. Many departments also offer their own induction programmes and will also send out details in advance. Where this is the case, students must attend both University and departmental induction. The Graduate School and/or departments will make alternative induction arrangements for students who register at later points during the academic year.

4.4 The University programme of registration and induction will serve to introduce new research students to the following information about the organisation and facilities of the University:

- a brief outline of the proposed research programme(s), together with the normal length of study and the facilities that will be made available to the student;
- the University's research ethics and codes including consideration of issues concerning authorship and intellectual property;
- a summary of facilities including the learning support infrastructure;
- student support and welfare services;
- an opportunity for the student representative body to introduce themselves including specific postgraduate representation;
- opportunities for postgraduates to be represented by the student body (i.e. Research Students' Consultative Group);
- social activity including that specifically for postgraduates;
- the University's research environment;
- evaluation, monitoring and review arrangements;
- Researcher Development Programme (see Section 6, below);
- Continuing Professional Development;
- Postgraduate Professional and Transferable Skills Training;
- supervisory arrangements and roles and responsibilities of supervisors and research students;
- reference to the challenges that will typically face research students during the course of their studies and where guidance may be sought in the event of difficulties.

4.5 During the induction period, departments will provide supplementary information about postgraduate research in the relevant subject and the names and contact details of the student's supervisors and information about how supervisory arrangements work. Departments will also provide details about opportunities that exist for meeting other research students and staff at departmental level and beyond, and for developing scholarly competence and independent thought.

Student and supervisors meet during the induction period and agree on their plans for the programme including the following:

- the desired outcomes of the programme with planned objectives of the research, taking account of the sponsor's requirements where appropriate;
- the training and general educational needs of the student, measured against the Researcher Development Framework [see Appendix 2]. This will include consideration of the student's need for the development of transferable skills;
- the means by which the student will communicate progress to the supervisor(s) and how they will arrange regular meetings;
- monitoring of progress in the research and training aspects of the programme.

4.6 It is the student's responsibility to ensure that their student record is kept up to date. Students can access their student record over the web at <https://studentrecord.aber.ac.uk/en/login.php>. The link to your 'student record' is listed under 'Your Sites'.

4.7 Staff Candidates for degrees of MPhil or PhD:

PhD: a full time or part time member of staff registers for three years (the first year of which is probationary). The maximum time-limit for submission of the thesis is seven years from the start date of registration. Members of research staff working full-time on research leading to a PhD may, however, be registered as full-time candidates with four years to complete.

MPhil: a full time or part time member of staff registers for two years or one year if a full time research assistant. The maximum time limit for submission is four years from the start date. Research staff who register for one year should submit the thesis within two years.

5. The Research Environment and Facilities

5.1 Postgraduate research takes place in an academic environment, which fosters and actively supports an advanced level of creative and independent scholarship including appropriate training in the process of research. Postgraduate research is integrated into the research culture and activity of the University.

5.2 In accepting a research student, the University and the Department concerned are committing themselves to providing the facilities required to undertake the agreed research project. The nature and extent of support facilities will vary according to the field of research and the research project itself. If it is the policy to charge students for using any of the facilities or to limit access in any way, this will be clearly indicated at the outset of the research. Among the support facilities which will be made available, subject to the requirements of the project and the resources available, will be:

- (a) appropriate working space, preferably within the student's immediate work environment;
- (b) adequate and accessible library resources, including appropriate approved use of the Document Supply service <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/is/library-services/documentsupply/> and access to the National Library of Wales;
- (c) access to relevant resources, including a range of software, email, the Internet and, where appropriate, spreadsheet packages and statistical and graphics packages;
- (d) where appropriate to the research project, access to laboratory facilities, laboratory consumables, scientific instrumentation and photographic services, etc;
- (e) appropriate photocopying and printing facilities and, where directly relevant to the research project, appropriate access to internal and external telephone networks;
- (f) support to attend conferences and similar events;
- (g) appropriate research and skills training.

5.3 The University's Postgraduate Centre is located in the Llandinam Building on the Penglais Campus. This provides a variety of study spaces dedicated to postgraduate use.

5.4 Departments and supervisors will ensure the effective supervision of research students who are registered on a part-time basis and will take into account the particular problems and conditions which may arise from part-time research. In particular, regular contact must be maintained between supervisors and part-time research students who are not resident in Aberystwyth. Information Services will advise students how they can access computing and library facilities both remotely and when they are in Aberystwyth.

6. Researcher Development, Skills Development and the Continuing Professional Development Portfolio

6.1 The University, through its Graduate School, Faculties and Departments, will provide such researcher development as is appropriate and necessary in their field of research, and to enhance their employability. These skills improve the student's ability to complete their research successfully. Development and application of such skills are also understood to be key to the research graduate's success and capability for sustaining learning throughout his or her career whether in an academic role or in other employment. Research students are encouraged to recognise the value of transferable skills in enabling them to take ownership and responsibility for their own learning, during and after their programme of study.

6.2 The University is committed to the provision of an appropriate level of training for all its postgraduate students. As part of this commitment the University has established an institutional Researcher Development Programme. It begins with an induction event, followed by a set of centrally-provided research modules, and supported by a wide range of workshops, short training courses and other activities offered through the Aberystwyth Researcher Programme, which is aimed at both research students and research staff, organised by the Learning and Teaching Enhancement Unit and the Graduate School.

All students are required to complete part of the programme (currently a minimum of 45 credits within the first two years of (for full-time students and 25 credits for part-time students), but all postgraduates are also welcome to opt-in to any additional aspects of the programme, if they feel this will enhance their research skill set. Some students are required to follow specific elements of the programme. The AU Researcher Development Programme, run under the auspices of the Graduate School, is supplemented by subject-specific Researcher Development provision offered by individual departments, as well as by other organisations (for example, Vitae development opportunities <https://www.vitae.ac.uk/spotlight/developing-as-a-researcher>) intended to equip students with specific research skills unique to their particular research discipline and to the individual needs of the student.

6.3 In general, the aim of the University's Researcher Development Programme is to enable the research to be completed more efficiently, to give the student a range of transferable and marketable research skills and to help to provide a research environment in which students from different disciplines can meet regularly and explore common research issues. The Researcher Development Programme addresses the skills training requirements of the Researcher Development Statement as outlined in the Researcher Development Framework domains [see appendix 2]:

Knowledge and intellectual abilities
Personal Effectiveness
Research Governance and organisation
Engagement, influence and impact

6.4 Mandatory researcher development (for instance, following from research council requirements) will be clearly indicated to new research students during the induction process. Students may only be exempted from mandatory training with the approval of the Head of the Graduate School if they can show that they have completed an equivalent programme of training at postgraduate level, either in this University or elsewhere, or have acquired such skills in relevant areas of employment. The Researcher Development Board of Studies, of which the external

examiner is a member, is responsible for the development of Researcher Development Programme and is the examination board for the centrally-provided research modules. It is also responsible for quality assurance for centrally-provided research modules.

6.5 The content of researcher development in different fields of research activity will be determined by the Departments and Faculties in conjunction with the Head of the Graduate School and the Research Degrees Committee, paying attention to the differing needs of differing cohorts of postgraduates and of individual postgraduates, arising from their diversity. Each student's researcher development needs will be identified and agreed jointly by the student and the appropriate staff (usually the supervisors in consultation with the Head of Department or relevant Faculty staff) during the Induction period and regularly reviewed during the research programme and amended as appropriate. The Research Monitoring Committee is responsible for overseeing each student's researcher development needs and ensuring that they are being addressed.

6.6 When postgraduate students are provided with opportunities for teaching, appropriate guidance and support is provided at departmental and/or university level. Where this activity also extends to assessing students, training and support will reflect this. Within departments postgraduates will be part of a larger teaching team in order for them to benefit from the support and mentoring provided by experienced staff. The Teaching for Postgraduates at Aberystwyth University Programme (TPAU) is also available to PGRs who are engaged in teaching. To apply for this programme (with entry points in September each year), please see <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/lteu/tpau/>

6.7 The implementation and development of the Researcher Development Programme is the responsibility of the Researcher Development Board of Studies and is monitored by the Graduate School, which will seek regular feedback from students on the content and delivery of modules and training sessions and will review on a regular basis any training in research and generic skills provided.

6.8 Any problems arising for individual students within the framework of research development should be discussed with their supervisor(s) and, if necessary, Departmental or Faculty staff and the Head of the Graduate School.

6.9 If candidates are aware of any personal or medical circumstances that may affect their performance in an examination or assessed work, undertaken as part of the Researcher Development Programme or Departmental Research Training, they must bring these to the attention of the relevant Examining Board before it sits.

6.10 All research students are encouraged to take part in the Continuing Professional Development process, which will help them to identify their training needs, formulate an appropriate training programme for themselves and keep track of training undertaken. They will be supported in this by a Mentor (for PhD students, normally the second supervisor), with whom they will have regular review and planning meetings. It will give students the opportunity to reflect on their learning, achievement and skills both in their academic work and in their wider life, and plan for their future personal and professional development.

6.11 Beyond the PhD
Researchers work in a wide variety of employment sectors. To help you make informed decisions about your career direction . we have a programme of careers-led workshops on a broad range of

topics, for both careers in academia and beyond academia known as 'Beyond the PhD'.

Webinars/workshops include: 'Careers outside of Academia', 'Planning your Academic Career, Effective CVs for PhDs (academic and non-academic)', 'Networking and Raising your Online Profile', 'Successful Interviews', and 'Taking your PhD outside of Academia – Creative Industries'.

Alongside a structured programme of delivery, PhD students have the opportunity to suggest additional bespoke sessions via their departmental research student representative.

7. Supervisory Arrangements

7.1 The most important roles and responsibilities of research postgraduates and their supervisors within the supervisory framework are listed below. Each research student is located within both a department and a Faculty, but the primary point of contact within the University is the supervisor.

7.2 It is incumbent on the departments to ensure that supervision is carried out by staff with sufficient and relevant research and supervisory experience. Each research student will have a minimum of one main supervisor, who will normally be part of a supervisory team. The normal expectation is that at least two members of staff should be involved in the supervision of each research student. Departments will inform students at the outset of their studies where this is the case, and will also identify a main supervisor to act as a point of formal contact for the University. Students will be clearly informed by the department of the respective roles of each supervisor.

7.3 The supervisory relationship is crucial and a clear mutual understanding of roles and responsibilities should be established at the outset to enable both to understand the supervisor's contribution to supporting the student and where the supervisor's responsibilities end.

7.4 The responsibilities of the main supervisor(s) include:

- (a) possessing sufficient knowledge of the research area to provide accurate guidance and advice on the feasibility and progress of the student's programme of research, and to facilitate the production of high quality research work;
- (b) being accountable to the relevant department and Faculty for monitoring and reporting on the progress of the research;
- (c) establishing and maintaining regular contact with the student according to any agreed schedule, and being accessible at appropriate times for consultation by whatever means is most suitable given the student's location and mode of study (the normal expectation would be 1 hour per fortnight over 44 weeks or the equivalent, as appropriate, throughout 3 years of full-time study: one hour per month for part-time);
- (d) having input into the assessment of a student's development needs;
- (e) reading written drafts produced by the student and providing constructive and effective feedback within a specified time (as a guidance, feedback on a chapter should be provided within 3 working weeks);
- (f) alerting the student if either the progress or standard of the research work is unsatisfactory, and arranging any supportive action which may be necessary;

- (g) ensuring that the student is aware of the need to exercise probity and conduct his/her research according to ethical principles, and of the implications of research misconduct;
- (h) ensuring that students are advised at an early stage in their registration of the essential need to avoid conduct amounting to the fabrication of research results or plagiarism;
- (i) helping the student to interact with others working in the field of research, for example, encouraging the student to attend relevant conferences, supporting him/her in seeking funding for such events and, where appropriate, to submit conference papers and articles to refereed journals;
- (j) exercising any relevant formal duties in relation to health and safety regulations;
- (k) maintaining the necessary supervisory expertise, including the appropriate skills, to perform all of the role satisfactorily, supported by relevant continuing professional development opportunities;
- (l) ensuring that there is sufficient uninterrupted time available to dedicate to the needs of each individual research student that they are supervising;
- (m) ensuring that the student receives due credit for any contribution to a collaborative project and providing advice on academic publication and intellectual property rights;
- (n) providing effective pastoral support and/or referring the student to other sources of such support, including student advisers (or equivalent), Faculty staff and others within the student's academic community;
- (o) ensuring that the student is aware of university-level sources of advice, including careers guidance and equal opportunities policy;
- (p) nurturing a sense of personal responsibility in research students for the quality of their research;
- (q) reading and commenting upon the whole thesis before submission and giving feedback on its strengths and deficiencies.

7.5 The role of the second supervisor is normally to provide support to the main supervisor and advice to the student on more general issues or at times when the main supervisor is temporarily unavailable (this may include periods when the main supervisor is on study leave). Second supervisors should expect to attend at least one meeting with the student and the main supervisor each term and to read drafts of the student's work so that they can make a meaningful contribution to formal monitoring processes. The second supervisor may also act as a mentor for the student's Continuing Professional Development. The second supervisor need not be a subject specialist and is not normally expected to act as a permanent substitute for the main supervisor should the latter cease to be involved in the student's supervision.

Students are advised to discuss complaints or grievances concerning the main supervisor with the second supervisor or Departmental/Faculty staff in the first instance. If they cannot be resolved at this level, students should follow the complaints procedure outlined in this Code.

In cases of co- (or joint) supervision, both supervisors share the academic advisory role.

7.6 The responsibilities of research students include in particular:

- (a) taking responsibility for their own personal and professional development;
- (b) accepting ultimate responsibility for their own research activity and in particular for the direction of and innovation in the research project as it develops, and maintaining regular contact with their supervisor according to an agreed schedule;
- (c) ensuring that satisfactory progress is made in relation to the programme of work and the timetable agreed with the supervisor, including the submission of written drafts within agreed periods of time and preparing adequately for meetings with supervisors;

- (d) ensuring that any problems regarding the research are drawn to the attention of the supervisor, and providing adequate explanation for any failure to attend meetings or meet other commitments, so that appropriate guidance may be offered;
- (e) providing periodic progress reports on the research, as required by the supervisor or by Departmental or Faculty rules. In addition, preparing a brief formal progress report each year for the Research Student Monitoring Committee;
- (f) developing, in consultation with the supervisor, an agreed schedule for progressing and submitting the thesis in a timely manner;
- (g) deciding, in consultation with the supervisor, and in accordance with the agreed timetable, when to submit the thesis;
- (h) ensuring that they submit the thesis within the maximum time limit outlined in Table 1 (page 15), and that contact is maintained with the supervisor during the writing up period;
- (i) maintaining clear, accurate, detailed and accessible records of work undertaken, irrespective of the field of research, keeping a full record of supervisions (to be agreed by their supervisor) and a record of their progress;
- (j) identifying their own training and developmental needs, communicating these to the supervisor, and ensuring they meet the University's requirements for training and skill development and making appropriate use of teaching or learning facilities made available by the University, completing any programme of training required or arranged by, or through, the University or a third party;
- (k) communicating research findings as appropriate to others in the academic community, both orally and in writing;
- (l) accepting ultimate responsibility for their own candidacy and ensuring that any circumstances that might require the mode of study to be modified or the registration to be extended, suspended or withdrawn, are brought to the attention of the supervisor, the Department or Faculty and the Academic Registry at the earliest opportunity;
- (m) ensuring that they are familiar with university regulations and policies that affect them or those of any other interested party, including the regulations for their qualification, health and safety, intellectual property, unfair practice and ethical research guidelines;
- (n) acting generally as a responsible member of the University's academic community.

7.7 During prolonged periods of absence by a supervisor (i.e. for more than a month) or upon the departure of a supervisor the department will make appropriate provision to support the student's research, which shall be discussed with and specified to the student in advance of the absence or departure. Supervisors may continue to supervise whilst on study leave or sabbatical, but if this is not the case, the student should be advised of the alternative arrangements.

7.8 The university has a procedure under which students can raise any concerns about their supervision and request a change of supervisor. All students should feel assured that such concerns will be taken seriously and every effort made to put in place supervisory arrangements with which students are comfortable. Students do need to uphold their own responsibilities for making these arrangements work properly.

7.9 Each Faculty has at least one Director of Postgraduate Studies who assumes overall responsibility for the academic progress and welfare of the research postgraduates in that Faculty, and who can be contacted by individual research students.

7.10 Appendix 3 to this Code provides guidance for students who are considering a request to change their supervisory team, whether due to a change in the direction of research or because of any problems in the relationship with the supervisor.

8. Representation

8.1 All postgraduate students will be given opportunities to provide feedback on the academic provision and support facilities made available to them, and on more general welfare matters.

8.2 Students will be represented on departmental Student:Staff Consultative Committees and the Research Students' Consultative Group. The minutes of the meetings of the Research Students' Consultative Group go to the Research Degrees Committee, which oversees postgraduate research degrees at Aberystwyth University. Research students will be encouraged to participate in the work of representative bodies, including the Students' Union. There is student representation on the main committees of the University, e.g. Academic Board, Research Degrees Committee and Senate.

8.3 The University will respond to feedback given by postgraduate students, whether communicated through representative channels or made individually or confidentially.

9. Complaints

9.1 The University has a formal complaints procedure which is published on the web: <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/regulations/complaints/>

According to this procedure:

1. Disputes should be resolved informally if possible, and at the lowest level possible;
2. Where informal proceedings have been exhausted without successful resolution of the matter, the student may make a written complaint to the Head of Department;
3. If no resolution is achieved at this formal stage, a final review of the complaint may be requested.
4. Once all internal procedures have been exhausted a candidate may submit a complaint to the OIA (Office of the Independent Adjudicator). Any such complaint must be submitted by sending a completed Scheme Application Form together with all relevant information to the OIA within three months of the date on the Completion of Procedures Letter from the University on completion of the internal procedures. A form can be downloaded from the OIA website: www.oiahe.org.uk.

10. Monitoring of Progress

10.1 The University will ensure that the progress of every research student is monitored at appropriate stages and as a minimum requirement at the end of each year of a student's registration. The monitoring process will be based on a system of reports, by both the student and supervisors, to be considered by the relevant department and the Research Monitoring Committee. Monitoring includes assessment against an action plan agreed at the previous monitoring meeting. Students will be notified by Departments when such progress reports are due to be submitted and advised as to the contents of such reports. Please note that departments are also required to assess the ethical implications of student research projects at the beginning of the programme of study and to review them regularly as part of its monitoring procedures.

10.2 For students registered on a PhD programme, there is a probationary period of one academic year for full-time candidates or two academic years for part-time candidates, unless an exemption has been approved by the department and the Head of the Graduate School under the appropriate regulations. The decision to allow students to proceed from the probationary term will be made

upon recommendation to the Research Monitoring Committee, which reports to the Research Degrees Committee. In such cases the department's recommendation should be made on the basis of the submission of a substantial piece of written work (usually one or two chapters and a full research proposal and plan) that has been read by the candidate's main supervisor AND another member of staff (which may be the second supervisor). For any specific and additional departmental procedures, see departmental handbooks. It is considered good practice for an independent departmental committee to interview students as part of this process, both to assess progress and to offer advice and encouragement.

10.3 A student registered for a research Master's degree may apply to upgrade to a PhD. Such applications will be decided by the Research Monitoring Committee upon recommendation from the student's department. In such cases the department's recommendation should be made on the basis of the submission of a substantial piece of written work (usually one or two chapters and a full research proposal and plan) that has been read by the candidate's supervisor AND another member of staff. For any specific and additional departmental procedures, see the departmental handbook. Students must be able to finance the extended period of study.

10.4 Students whose progress is deemed to be a cause for concern will be notified by their Department or Faculty and will be given the opportunity to demonstrate satisfactory progress within a specified period. Failure to do so will normally result in a decision by the Research Monitoring Committee that the student's progress is unsatisfactory. Such a decision will be communicated to the student by the Graduate School or Academic Registry.

10.5 A postgraduate research student whose academic progress is deemed to be unsatisfactory may submit a written appeal against the decision of the Research Monitoring Committee. Such appeals are handled according to the Academic Regulation on Academic Progress: see <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/academic-registry/handbook/regulations/academic-progress/>

11. Withdrawal

Registered students who are unable to continue their research or do not wish to do so may withdraw from their studies either temporarily or permanently. Circumstances in which a student could consider temporary withdrawal include ill health, serious family problems, financial difficulties, taking up a post of employment or extra employment responsibilities. Students should discuss withdrawal with their department as part of the withdrawal process. They should consider carefully the financial and visa implications of withdrawal, especially where they have a financial sponsor, and take appropriate advice. Students may request a withdrawal online via their Student Record on the web <https://studentrecord.aber.ac.uk/en/> Students who are in their writing up period cannot withdraw. If they require additional time to complete their theses, they must apply for an extension of time limit via the Graduate School.

12. Writing Up

It is the expectation of the University that students will complete their theses before the end of their registration period or as soon after as possible. Research postgraduates who do not complete the research and writing of the thesis during the period of registration must complete within the maximum time limit for submission of theses as indicated in Table 1 (page 16). Supervisors will help to ensure that their students keep within this maximum period, and will provide guidance and support in relation to the writing-up process up to the time of submission.

Students who wish to continue to use laboratory facilities after their registration period has ended may be required to register and pay fees.

13. Extensions

Where students are unable to meet their submission deadlines due to exceptional circumstances, their departments may apply for an extension of time limit in which to submit the thesis. These applications are considered by the Head of the Graduate School who, in exceptional circumstances only, may allow extensions normally of no more than twelve months, on grounds of either inordinate professional commitments, medical problems, serious domestic difficulties, compassionate grounds, or unforeseen research difficulties. Supportive evidence and a timetable for completion must be presented. The criteria and procedures for higher degree extensions are available on the web at <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/academic-registry/handbook/res-degrees/>

14. Submission, Examination, Results and Appeal

14.1 When both student and supervisor are satisfied that the student will shortly be in a position to submit the thesis, the student should collect an 'Intention to Submit' form and the necessary Submission Documents. <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/academic-registry/students/pg-issues/research/submit/> and should be completed and sent to the Graduate School at least 3 months in advance of the actual submission (for practice-based PhDs this may need to be sooner). The Submission Documents include advice on the presentation of thesis, and the declarations and abstract which must accompany the thesis. The Graduate School will check that the student is within the time limit. The thesis cannot be assessed unless the submission is within the time limit. If there is any problem, the student will be advised on what must be done before the thesis can be examined. Please note that initial examination of the thesis may take approximately three months. Candidates are reminded that in accordance with University Regulations, they should declare whether their nominated external examiner(s) has ever advised them or commented specifically on the work that they are submitting for examination (this does not apply to resubmissions where the same external examiner is to be used). Students should also declare any personal relationship with the proposed external examiner.

Thesis will be submitted in electronic form. This enables checking for possible unacceptable academic practice.

The candidature of students who do not submit within the time limit will lapse and they may not qualify for the degree unless they have been granted an extension.

Students should remain in close contact with their supervisors as they approach the point of submission and should ensure that supervisors have the opportunity to comment on drafts.

14.2 The text of the thesis (excluding appendices and references) shall not exceed 100,000 words in the case of a PhD, and 60,000 words in the case of a DProf or an MPhil.

14.3 The written thesis will also be examined through a viva voce or oral examination. This examination will be conducted by an examining board consisting of a chair, one internal examiner and one external examiner. Where candidates have studied under staff regulations, or may become members of staff before examination of their thesis, a second external examiner will be appointed in place of the internal. If in doubt, Departments should consult the Head of the Graduate School. The chair is there to ensure that the examination is conducted properly according to the regulations. The internal examiner (who will not be the supervisor) and the external examiner will pose most of the questions. The external examiner will be an expert in the field of the student's research and will understand the requirements of a DProf, PhD or Research Master's degree. They are nominated by the academic department and approved by the approval panel. Research Degrees Committee and Academic Board will receive reports on approved examiners. At the invitation of the chair and with

the prior consent of the candidate, the supervisor may attend the viva, but may speak only when invited to do so by the chair. The University's guidance notes for viva procedures are set out in Appendix 1.

14.4 The viva examination is not a formality; it is an integral part of the examination for a research degree. The Graduate School provides a Skills Training Workshop – 'Preparing for your Viva' – focusing on the needs of students who anticipate being examined within the next 12 months. Before the viva the examiners will submit separate, independent written reports and will use the viva to satisfy themselves that the thesis is the candidate's own work and that the candidate possesses a good general knowledge in the field of the research. The examiners will identify what they see as the strengths of the thesis and will give the student the opportunity to clarify any obscurities and defend any weaknesses which they perceive. They will produce a joint report and will then determine whether the thesis meets the University's criteria for the award of research degrees.

14.5 The options open to PhD examiners may be summarised as follows:

- to award the PhD (usually requiring corrections which shall normally be completed within either 4 weeks or 6 months of the viva);
- not to award the PhD but to allow the candidate to re-submit the thesis for a PhD within one year of official notification of the result. Examiners must also indicate whether, in the case of a failure to resubmit, the thesis may be awarded an MPhil;
- not to approve the award of a PhD – no re-submission;
- not to award a PhD but to award an MPhil (possibly requiring minor or typographical corrections which shall normally be completed within 4 weeks of the viva);
- not to award a PhD but allow re-submission for an MPhil within one year of official notification of the result.

The options open to MPhil examiners may be summarised as follows:

- to award the MPhil usually requiring - corrections which shall normally be completed within 4 weeks or 12 weeks of the viva);
- not to award the MPhil but to allow the candidate to re-submit the thesis for an MPhil within one year ;
- not to approve the award of an MPhil – no re-submission.

14.6 The examiners will tell the candidate informally of their decision immediately after the viva and provide an interim results form. Where the result is a pass with corrections, the department will confirm when and to whom the corrections must be submitted. The Chair will forward the result forms to the Graduate School, who will notify the Academic Registry. Academic Registry will formally notify the student if they need to resubmit and of the final outcome. If the thesis is not passed or is required to be re-written, it is the responsibility of the Chair of the exam board to ensure that the candidate is provided with detailed comments explaining the reasons why the thesis has not been passed and indicating in general terms what further work may be required of the candidate. It is then incumbent on the student to ensure that the re-submitted thesis clearly addresses these points. Examiners can also offer advice to successful candidates on how the research might be prepared for publication.

14.7 If a thesis is not accepted by the examiners, the candidate may re-present it only once. This must be done within the time limit specified in the official result, otherwise the candidate will fail by non-submission. A second viva voce will be held for the examination of the resubmitted thesis. The

second viva can only be waived in cases of straightforward pass or in exceptional circumstances.

14.8 If the examiners fail to agree on what recommendation should be made, a second external examiner shall normally be appointed. The decision of the second external examiner shall be final.

14.9 All candidates shall have the right to appeal against the decision of the examiners as laid down in the Appeals Procedure (Postgraduate Research Degrees) available from the Academic Registry. The appeal must be made in writing, and may be based on one or more of the following grounds:

- defects or irregularities in the conduct of the examination which call the decision of the examiners into question;
- exceptional personal circumstances affecting the candidate's performance of which the candidate was unable, for good reasons, to inform the Examining Board prior to its meeting;
- evidence of prejudice, bias, or inadequate assessment on the part of one or more of the examiners;
- inadequate supervision, which had not been previously reported for exceptional reasons.

Appeals which question the academic judgement of examiners are not admissible.

Appeals panels are not examining boards and cannot decide whether or not to award a degree. An appeals panel may uphold the result of an examining board, may require the examination to be held again, possibly with new examiners or may permit the candidate to re-write and re-submit the thesis.

14.10 Students who have been approved for the degree will receive their certificate within a few weeks or be able to collect it at a graduation ceremony. Students may then attend a graduation as a celebration of their success.

14.11 Once the examination process is complete and if the candidate is successful, the fully corrected thesis, will be deposited in the University's online Research Repository. It is the student's responsibility to seek permission for the inclusion of third party copyright material (e.g. images, maps, etc.) before the thesis is submitted. Students should let Information Services know where this has not been possible, or if permission has been refused. Under exceptional circumstances, students may opt out from submitting to the electronic repository, normally for a short period. Students on the Creative Writing PhD have an automatic opt out, but if they so wish may opt in. Some financial sponsors require open access to the thesis as a condition of funding.

14.12 If unsuccessful, the thesis is returned to the candidate.

NB. Notes or marginal comments made by the examiners must be erased prior to the deposit in the libraries or return to the candidate.

15. Work and Study Balance

The University recognises that many students fund their own postgraduate study and can only do so by undertaking paid employment. It also encourages postgraduate students to undertake paid teaching or demonstrating duties, or voluntary work, in order to gain experience and develop skills which will prepare them for employment once they graduate, as well as contributing to their departments or the wider community. However, students must ensure that they strike the correct balance between paid and unpaid work and study, to enable them to complete their degrees on time and to the required level. Students must also respect the terms of any studentship or sponsorship or

of visas.

Students (and staff advising them) should note the following when considering employment while studying:

- AberDoc holders may undertake a limited amount of teaching or demonstrating duties but may not undertake any other paid work without permission from the Pro Vice-Chancellor.
- UKRI has its own rules regarding paid employment which studentship holders must check and respect.
- Other sponsors may also set limits on the amount or nature of work to be undertaken; students are responsible for honouring these limits.
- International postgraduate students holding a visa must not work more than 20 hours per week during term time or they will breach the visa conditions. Such students should check their visa conditions carefully regarding vacation work and work during the writing up period.
- The National Union of Students and other bodies representing student interests recognise both the importance of part-time work for many students and the potential negative impact it can have on their performance. The impact of part-time employment will obviously depend upon the nature of the individual, the nature of the employment and the working hours as well as the total number of hours worked, e.g. evening work, weekend work, vacation work. As a rough rule of thumb, full-time students working more than 15 hours per week are much more likely to encounter problems in managing their studies. The bottom line is that students working part-time must ensure that they are able to attend any and all required classes, that they are able to remain in close contact with their supervisor, and that they are able to meet deadlines for assessments and submission of work.
- Part-time students may already be in employment and will be able to continue in that employment provided that they are able to meet the course requirements.
- Students who have completed their registration periods and have entered the 'writing up' period of a PhD may take up full-time employment but should note they need to allow enough time to complete their thesis. UKRI will never allow extensions based on employment pressures. This emphasizes the need to ensure that students are able to devote sufficient time to their research while registered to have completed, or almost completed, their thesis within three years. International students must respect the terms of their study visa during the writing up phase.

16. Teaching and Other Academic Activities

16.1 Research postgraduates may carry out undergraduate teaching or other academic duties (e.g. editorial assistant, conference organisation, research assistant) to an extent which does not interfere with the effective fulfilment of the students' programmes of research. Such experience is of value to postgraduates in their longer term career development and may complement other aspects of research training.

16.2 The University and Departments will provide appropriate support for students making a teaching or other academic contribution. This involves both formal training and the appointment of a member of academic staff (e.g. Module Convenor) to work with the student and offer advice and guidance.

Postgraduates who teach are not responsible for the design or overall administration of a module. Marking and assessment carried out by postgraduates should be appropriately monitored

and moderated, especially in relation to undergraduate work which counts towards a degree classification.

16.3 The University will provide insurance cover to indemnify postgraduate teachers against legal liability.

16.4 The University adheres to the principles of the NUS/UCU Postgraduate Charter on the selection, payment and support of postgraduates who teach and, in Partnership with the Students' Union, has developed its own PGR Employment Charter.

17. Intellectual Property, Publishing, Unacceptable Academic Practice and Plagiarism

17.1 Departments should ensure that research postgraduates are aware of the legal rules relating to intellectual property rights and the confidentiality of information which may arise from their research activities. If intellectual property is generated by the research undertaken, the position of either the University or third parties should be considered in so far as either may have provided financial sponsorship or equipment and other facilities. Intellectual property and confidentiality questions should be worked out by clear agreement so far as possible at the outset of the research. Advice on intellectual property matters can be sought from the Department of Research, Business and Innovation.

17.2 It is a condition of admission to all postgraduate research degree programmes that the University's policy on Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) will apply. To view the full policy, please see: <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/hr/policy-and-procedure/au-and-bu/intellectual-property/>

17.3 Where appropriate, the University will agree to undertake responsibility for protecting, developing and/or exploiting intellectual property rights generated by postgraduate research, including the patenting, licensing and marketing of the results of research. In such cases the University will share the net financial benefits which arise from such exploitation with the student and any other party involved in originating the work covered by such rights in accordance with the University's policy on IPR.

17.4 The University is a data controller under current data protection legislation and students are required to comply with both the UK General Data Protection Regulation and the UK Data Protection Act 2018. Further information can be found at: <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/infocompliance/dp/> and specific advice can be sought from the AU Data Protection Officer who can be contacted via this page.

Unacceptable Academic Practice: <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/regulations/uap/> . The University recognises several categories of UAP, including plagiarism. Plagiarism is defined as using another person's work and presenting it as one's own, whether intentionally or unintentionally. No intellectual endeavour is entirely original. Even the most original minds depend on the thoughts and discoveries of their predecessors. Indeed one of the criteria for meeting the required standards for the award of a research degree is the ability to relate the results of your own study to the general body of knowledge in the subject. What you must not do is seek to pass off the knowledge and data of others as your own. Proper referencing, note taking and bibliographic and citation procedures should ensure that examiners will accept the work as wholly your own. Supervisors will always be able to give advice on this, and the research training programme contains dedicated sections on referencing, writing and bibliographic procedures. Draft work submitted to supervisors that does not meet standards of proper academic practice will be handled in the first instance by the supervisor giving feedback on draft work. Where a student is attempting systematically to represent the work of others as

his/her own, the student will be referred to the Research Monitoring Committee and possibly be prevented from progressing further in his/her degree programme. In all cases, the action to be taken by the student and supervisor, will be clearly communicated to the student in writing along with the potential consequences of non-compliance. A full set of documentation on the problem and the outcome will be retained by the department.

The University's procedure for investigating formal allegations of Unacceptable Academic Practice in work submitted for assessment is outlined in the Regulation and in Section 3.6 of the Academic Quality Handbook <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/academic-registry/handbook/taught-schemes/>

For the University's procedure for dealing with research misconduct, including unfair academic practice and plagiarism please see <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/academic-registry/handbook/regulations/uap>

- 17.5 A candidate is at liberty to publish the whole or part of the work produced during the candidate's period of registration, prior to its submission as a whole, or as part of a thesis, provided that in the published work it is nowhere stated that it is in consideration for a higher degree. Such published work may later be incorporated in the thesis submitted for examination.

18. Research Ethics and Integrity

18.1 So that the University can maintain and build upon its successful research portfolio, it is important that we are all committed to maintaining the highest standards in our research, from design through to dissemination, and by demonstrating openness, rigour and integrity in all of our research activities.

To ensure that we remain innovative and ambitious yet responsible and professional within the research community, the University underpins its research with the following guiding ethical principles governing all research within Aberystwyth University:

- Respect for the rights, safety and well-being of all human participants and animals;
- Respect for other cultures, values, traditions and the environment around us;
- Honesty, integrity and professionalism at all times in all that we do.

Ethical conduct is relevant to all disciplines and involves appropriate and proactive recognition, reflection, and preparation. It also involves continuous management of relevant ethical considerations and associated risks. Ethical conduct does not associate itself with the avoidance of high-risk research and should therefore not be considered as a barrier to the desired outcome, but rather as a facilitative and enriching process.

Research students should note that the University attaches considerable importance to the raising of awareness in new researchers of the need to develop sound methodologies in the conduct of their research, and to develop an understanding of good practice. At the beginning of each

academic session Introductory Training on Research Ethics will be provided to all new research postgraduates. Attendance is compulsory to ensure all research students are familiar with the generic issues involved.

18.2 Departments will assess the ethical implications of student research projects at the beginning of the programme of study and review them regularly as part of their monitoring procedures.

However, it is an obligation on research students that they obtain appropriate ethical approval prior to the commencement of data collection.

18.3 All researchers, at the minimum, must complete an online assessment to register their project and to identify the most appropriate ethical approval route. Further information can be found at www.aber.ac.uk/ethics

The online assessment route may identify certain low risk projects as being appropriate to receive departmental approval. All other projects must receive approval from one of the following:

Research Ethics Panel (REP)

Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Board (AWERB)

Sponsorship Group (before an external submission is made to the Health Research Authority)

Acceptance on to a research degree programme does not imply ethical approval of the research methodology, which will have to be sought before data collection or other relevant activity can be started. Approval will also be required for any subsequent changes to the methodology. The university supports all students in obtaining approval but this may involve making changes to the project, and students should be aware of that. Data or other evidence that is not collected ethically may be deleted and may not be included in the thesis. Ethical conduct is expected of all staff and students. Students should be aware of their responsibilities and ensure they act properly and with the necessary approval throughout the conduct of their research.

18.4 Research students should work closely and in good time with their supervisor and department when assessing the ethical implications of their research and the likely required approval route.

18.5 A failure to undertake appropriate ethical review can have serious implications and may constitute research misconduct under the University research misconduct procedure.

Please refer to the Research Ethics and Integrity Policy and Framework (www.aber.ac.uk/ethics) for further details on the ethical approval processes.

Students are welcome to obtain support and advice from the Department of Research, Business & Innovation by contacting ethics@aber.ac.uk

19. Health, Safety and the Environment

The Health Safety and Environment website provides information about University policy on health, safety and the environment, training, emergency actions, and a list of contacts. Your local Health and Safety Coordinator can provide you with further information about departmental safety committees and local arrangements. See www.aber.ac.uk/en/hse/ and Part One, Section Four of this document.

20. Disabled Students and those with complex health and neurodiverse conditions

20.1 Aberystwyth University has a commitment to maintain and develop a first class standard of teaching and research. We aim to make our academic facilities available to all who meet our entrance requirements and to ensure that disabled students and those with complex health and neurodiverse conditions have reasonable access to all aspects of curricular provision including lectures, field trips, placement and assessments.

20.2 For information about the range of support available please contact one of our Accessibility Advisers. Contact details and further information about the support available is on the following web pages: <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/sscs/accessibility/>

21. Part-Time and External Research Students

21.1 The University regards full-time and part-time students as equally valuable members of its postgraduate community. This Code of Practice applies equally to each (and indicates those areas in which the regulations differ). However, there are necessarily some respects in which arrangements for external students, whether full-time or part-time, must differ. There are also some points worthy of emphasis:

- while their participation in the Researcher Development Programme is not compulsory, the University encourages the attendance of part-time students and full-time external students within reach of Aberystwyth;
- new part-time and full-time external students must attend registration in person. Returning part-time and external students may register by post or online;
- both full-time and part-time students must come to arrangements with their supervisors, overseen by departments, which enable them to receive regular supervision. In the case of part-time students not resident in Aberystwyth, and full-time external students, it is of particular importance that effective arrangements are made in this regard;
- access to library and computing facilities is the same for both full-time and part-time students. Students who are not based on campus should familiarise themselves with how to access resources remotely - see our [FAQ on accessing e-resources off campus](#). Also, students may be eligible for limited access to the facilities of other Welsh and UK libraries – see our [webpages](#) for details on different schemes.
- the facilities available to part-time students within Departments will vary according to what resources Departments decide to allocate and may differ from those on offer to full-time students.

Appendix 1

Procedures at Viva Voce Examinations for Research Students

The Examination Board

1. The examination board will consist of a Chair, an Internal Examiner and an External Examiner. A second external examiner will replace the internal where the candidate is sitting the exam under staff regulations. The Chair will normally be the head of the candidate's Department, although they may delegate this responsibility to a senior member of their staff.
2. At the invitation of the Chair and with the prior consent of the candidate, the supervisor may attend the viva in an advisory capacity but may only speak if invited to do so by the Chair.
3. The purpose of the viva is fully explained in the notes of guidance which are sent to examiners. It is also set out in the Aberystwyth University Code of Practice for Research Postgraduates which is given to all students at their time of registration. The University expects both candidate and supervisor to be familiar with this purpose. The viva is an integral part of the examination for a research degree, and the candidate's performance at the viva will be considered together with the written thesis in coming to a final decision over the award of the degree.

The Arrangements

4. Normally the viva will take place in the candidate's Department within the University. Only in exceptional circumstances, and with the approval of the Head of the Graduate School, may the viva be held outside the University. The Graduate School should be informed in such cases. All participants will be present unless, it is agreed by the Head of the Graduate School that electronic means may be used.
5. All arrangements for the viva are made through the Department concerned. It is a matter for the Department whether these are managed primarily through the supervisor, the postgraduate co-ordinator, or the internal examiner.
6. The viva will normally be held within 12 weeks of the thesis being sent to the examiners by the University. This time scale is to enable the examiners to consider the thesis in detail and also to ensure that the candidate is not disadvantaged by an extended period between the submission and the defence of the thesis.

The Procedures

7. It is the responsibility of the Chair to ensure that University regulations are adhered to during the course of the viva.
8. The examiners should meet before the viva to discuss their initial reports on the thesis, and drawing on this discussion, they should identify areas of the thesis which each examiner would like to discuss with the candidate.
9. The Chair should open the examination by introducing the examiners to the candidate and should then put the candidate at ease and explain the format of the viva.
10. The examiners will ask a series of questions in order to promote a discussion relating to the thesis, its structure, those areas where they require clarification and those issues they wish to explore with the candidate.

11. At the end of the viva the Chair should ask the candidate to leave the room so that the examiners can discuss their decision. At this point they can raise issues relating to the thesis and/or the viva with the supervisor. They can request that the supervisor leave the room so that they can reach their final decision, or they may reach this decision with the supervisor present.

The Decision

12. The examiners will make a decision in accordance with the examination regulations as set out on the Result and Report Form. Once the examiners have reached a decision, this shall be final and may not be amended after the Result and Report Form is signed by both examiners and the Chair.

13. When the examiners have agreed on a decision, the Chair shall arrange for the candidate to be brought back into the room. The decision shall be clearly communicated to the candidate by the Chair orally and through an interim report form which the student and chair must sign.

14. If the examiners are satisfied that the candidate has in general reached the standard required for the award, but are of the opinion that the thesis requires minor modifications not so substantial as to call for the resubmission of a revised thesis, they should indicate to the candidate what amendments and corrections are required. It is the role of the Chair to ensure that this advice is passed to the candidate in a satisfactory form, and to communicate whether the internal and/or external examiner needs to see such modifications, and the timescale within which they must be completed. This must be included on the Interim Report Form.

15. Where the examiners recommend a resubmission, they are required to give the candidate guidance on the deficiencies of the thesis and/or the performance in the viva. It is the responsibility of the Chair to ensure that this advice is passed to the candidate in a satisfactory form, that the candidate fully understands the decision reached by the board and is aware of the timescale within which the resubmission must be made. It is then incumbent on the student to ensure that the re-submitted thesis clearly addresses these points.

16. If the candidate is being examined for the degree of PhD, but is awarded an MPhil, the Chair will ensure that the candidate fully understands this decision.

17. The Chair will ensure that all necessary paperwork is completed, and that all forms are signed and returned to the Graduate School in the manner required.

18. If any amendments or modifications are required, the candidate must submit a corrected electronic copy of the thesis to their Department within the timescale stipulated by the Examination Board.

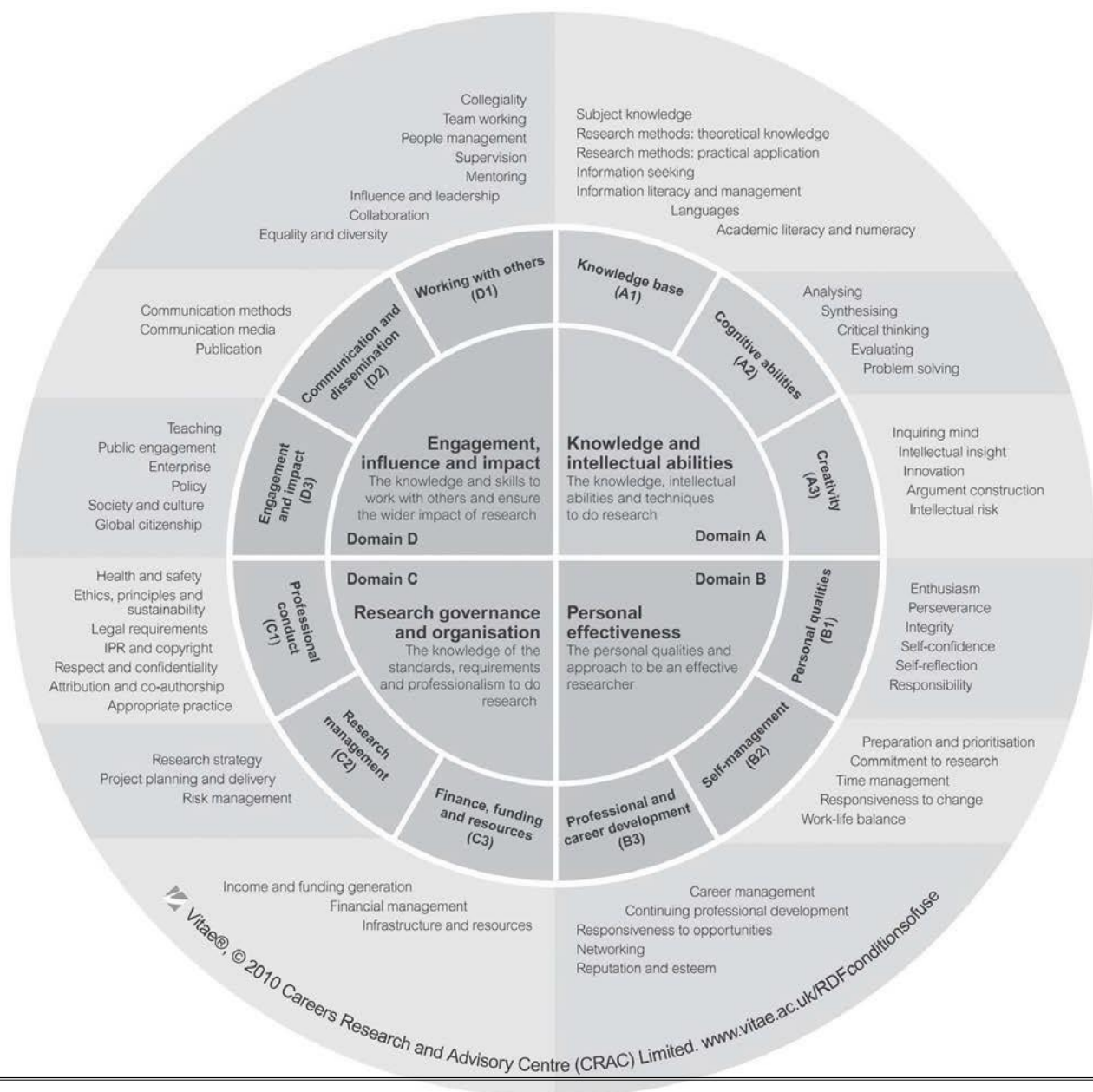
Appendix 2

Researcher Development Framework

In 2001 the Research Councils issued a Joint Skills Statement which described the skills that research students are expected to have or to develop. These include a range of transferable skills in addition to the research skills related to completing a thesis. Development of such skills is considered as an integral part of the experience of being a postgraduate research student. The Researcher Development Statement and its associated Framework of 2010 is an evolution of the JSS and highlights the range of knowledge, skills, behaviours and personal qualities which the Research Councils see as being required to be an effective researcher and employee in a world driven by knowledge production and innovation. These skills may be present on commencement of a research degree, explicitly taught, or developed during the course of the research.

The Researcher Development Framework articulates the skills and attributes of successful researchers and encourages them to aspire to excellence through achieving higher levels of development. The framework is a comprehensive approach to enhancing the careers of researchers. It was developed by and for researchers, in consultation with academic and non-academic employers.

The Aberystwyth Researcher Programme is underpinned by the Researcher Development Framework and courses on offer are grouped according to skills identified in the Researcher Development Framework Domains.



Appendix 3

PGR Student / Supervisor Relationship and Change Mechanisms

The relationship between a postgraduate researcher and their supervisory team, particularly the main supervisor, is of crucial importance to the development of the project and the researcher. The Code of Practice for Research Students sets out the responsibilities of all parties which forms the basis of this relationship: <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/grad-school/forms-handbooks/>

In most cases, the relationship is strong and valued by supervisor as well as supervisee, and bonds are maintained long after completion of the degree. Ongoing collaboration and publication, as well as friendship, is common. At the least, we expect professional and effective supervisory arrangements to support the researcher throughout their studies.

In emphasising the value of a successful relationship, we must acknowledge the potential seriousness of problems with supervision. Postgraduate researchers need to know that these problems can be raised with the University, which will seek remedies that support the student and the supervisor. Some principles that apply here:

1. It is the responsibility of the university to assign appropriate supervisory teams, providing continuous supervisory support through to completion. It may be necessary for the university to change supervisors due to staff turnover, workload, sick leave, or a range of other circumstances. Students cannot decide who will be their supervisors. Where a student is funded by a sponsor such as a UKRI doctoral training partnership involving joint supervision across two universities, the DTP will also be involved in selection of supervisors. However, the university will take full account of student views and seek to provide supervision to the satisfaction of the student.
2. Bullying, harassing and any sexually inappropriate behaviour cannot be tolerated and the University will act immediately if these behaviours are raised. Intimidation also cannot be tolerated and threats from supervisors to remove funding or negatively impact a researcher's career should be reported. The University's Student Dignity and Respect policy describes how to raise concerns and the action that may be taken against those in breach of the policy: <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/sscs/student-dignity-respect/#read-the-code-on-student-dignity-and-respect>
3. Some issues can be raised directly with a supervisor, discussed and resolved. Postgraduate researchers are encouraged to do this where they feel comfortable.
4. Postgraduate researchers as well as supervisors have responsibilities for making these relationships work. While supervisors bear the greater responsibility, students do need to conduct themselves in line with the responsibilities set out in the University's PGR Code of Practice and policies on dignity and respect (<https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/sscs/student-dignity-respect/>). Supervisors should not have to put up with unreasonable conduct and may bring a complaint or request to be released from supervision if that is the case.
5. Postgraduate researchers should never feel that they cannot raise supervision issues because they do not think an alternative supervisor would be available. If necessary we can arrange external supervision.
6. However friendly the relationship between supervisor and student becomes, appropriate professional distance must always be maintained.

Where a student has concern that difficulties in their relationship to their supervisors are affecting their progress or well-being, they should feel able to:

1. **Discuss** the situation confidentially and informally with staff in their department, where possible. Normally the PGR coordinator from the department would be the first port of call. If that person is the supervisor with whom the student is experiencing difficulties, or the student perceives a

conflict of interest, or would prefer to speak to someone else, perhaps outside of the department, the following could be approached: another member of the supervisory team; the head of department; the Associate Dean for Research; the Head, or other senior staff, of the Graduate School; or Student Support Services. It may be that, following this discussion, the student may feel able to carry on without further action or may be able to take forward some suggestions for coping with the situation. Some mediation could take place to address issues to everyone's satisfaction.

2. **Request a change of supervisor:** there are many reasons why the student might seek a change, including evolution of the project in a direction better suited to another member of staff. Students should put requests for a change of supervisory team in writing (email is sufficient) and should receive a written response. The departmental PGR coordinator will consider the request, putting the student's progress and wellbeing at the centre of decision-making, and will seek to meet the request. If approved, the change should be formalised via the 'MyPGR' record. If not approved, a written explanation should be provided. Changes will not always be possible, but if it is clear that the relationship with the current supervisor cannot continue due to the conduct of the supervisor, a replacement must be found. If either the student or staff member's conduct has been inappropriate, further action may need to be taken.
3. **Escalation:** if the student is not satisfied with a decision they may take this to the head of department for further consideration. If the PGR coordinator is their supervisor they should go to the head of department in the first instance; escalation should be to the Associate Dean for Research in their Faculty. Students can also speak to the Head of the Graduate School for advice. The Student Complaints procedure allows students to raise a formal complaint if they feel the matter has not been satisfactorily been addressed:

<https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/academic-registry/handbook/complaints/>