Edge Hill University

Research Student Handbook

January 2011

Introduction

The Process of Research Degree Study at Edge Hill University

There are four levels of registration available to Postgraduate Research Degree students at Edge Hill University:

i) Postgraduate Certificate (PgC) in Research
ii) MPhil
iii) MPhil with the possibility of transfer to PhD (MPhil/PhD) and
iv) PhD.

Students seeking the award of MPhil will either initially be registered on the PgC in Research, or they will be registered for MPhil without the possibility of transfer to PhD registration. Students seeking the award of PhD may be offered initial registration on the PgC in Research, MPhil/PhD registration, or direct PhD registration. Registration at all levels is available on either a part-time or full-time basis.

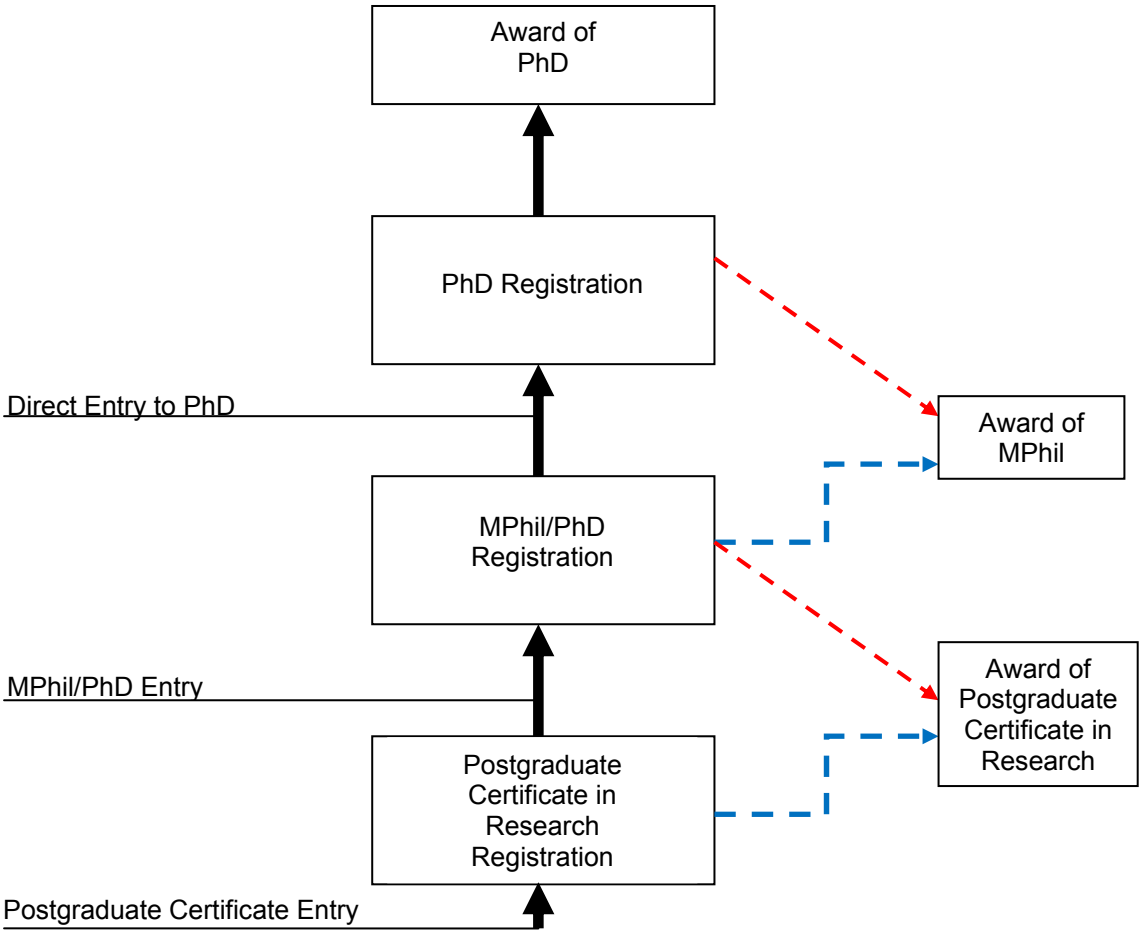
All appropriately qualified applicants for research degrees at Edge Hill are interviewed and decisions regarding registration are made following interview.

Students whose registration is initially on the PgC in Research complete, as the assessment for the PgC, a 10-15,000-word research proposal and have a *viva voce* examination to determine whether a recommendation should be made to the Graduate School Board of Studies that their registration progress to MPhil or MPhil/PhD registration. The PgC is an exit award only, so students who progress to at least MPhil registration, and are ultimately successful in gaining a higher award will not be awarded the PgC in Research. Only students who elect not to progress, or who are unsuccessful in their attempts to gain a higher award, will be awarded a PgC in Research.

Students seeking to progress from MPhil/PhD to PhD registration must submit a 6,000-word document and a sample of their work (normally a draft chapter). They will also normally have a *viva voce* examination. While the examination panel for students progressing from PgC registration to MPhil/PhD registration consists of three members of academic staff of the University, the panel for students seeking progression from MPhil/PhD to PhD registration will contain an external examiner, an internal examiner and an independent Chair (ie the Chair is not an examiner).

Edge Hill University

Routes to a PhD



Chapter One

The Postgraduate Certificate in Research

The Context of the Development of the Programme

Since the Harris report[1] was published in 1996, there has been a dramatic transformation in doctoral education in the United Kingdom (with parallel change internationally). A central feature of this transformation has been a focus on generic skills training as an important part of postgraduate research student education (see the *Joint Statement of the Research Councils'/AHRB's Skills Requirement*[2] and the section of the QAA Code of Practice on the development of research and other skills in postgraduate research programmes).

The increasing emphasis on skills training has not escaped criticism. Green and Powell (2005: 28)[3] point out that the formulation of the *Joint Statement of the Research Councils'/AHRB's Skills Requirement* 'did not involve HEIs nor is it based on any serious research about needs'. They also stress that 'the Councils and the AHRB emphasized that the statement should not be regarded as definitive, and they make it clear that it has less significance than the research work itself and should not be seen as a checklist for assessment.' The National Postgraduate Committee has expressed the concern that 'increased emphasis on structured training as part of a research degree will significantly change the nature of the degree. Many students are concerned that they will have less time to carry out research; this means that either completion times for research theses will increase, or expectations of the content of theses will have to be lowered' (NPC 2001).[4] The United Kingdom Council for Graduate Education (UKCGE 2001: 15) claim that 'while there is widespread agreement – particularly among university managers – about the need for, and generic purposes of doctoral research training … [there] is also wide spread unease and scepticism – particularly among students and their supervisors – about the value of what is being provided'.[5] Mullins (2004: 1), writing about the same issues in the context of doctoral education in Australia, put the matter more bluntly:

> We are in danger of devoting time, effort and valuable resources to skill development programs that students don't believe they need. Proponents of these programs will need to convince students that the programs add

[1] Harris, M. (1996) *Review of Postgraduate Education*, Higher Education Funding Council for England, Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals Standing Conference of Principles HEFCE, ref: M14/96.
[2] See Appendix A.
[3] Green, H. and Powell, S. (2005) *Doctoral Study in Contemporary Higher Education*, Maidenhead: Open University Press.
[4] NPC (2001) *EPSRC Flexible Doctoral Training Accounts*, NPC/00/02, National Postgraduate Committee.
[5] UKCGE (2001) *Research Training for Humanities Postgraduate Students*, UK Council for Graduate Education.

genuine value to students' existing research programs and that the extra time and effort is worthwhile.[6]

The Postgraduate Certificate (PgC) in Research is the principal means by which Edge Hill University addresses the need for skills training for postgraduate research students during the first twelve months of their studies. Designing this provision required the University to adopt a particular position in relation to the debate on skills training and to interpret the various statements and guidelines in a particular way. The interpretation that informs the PgC in Research is one that is mindful of Green and Powell's emphasis on the significance of the research work itself and the need to avoid using guidance as a checklist for assessment.

The key documents that have informed the development of the Programme are:

- Code of Practice for the Assurance of Academic Quality and Standards in Higher Education: Section 1: Postgraduate Research Programmes. (2004) QAA.

- Report on the Review of Research Degree Programmes: England and Northern Ireland (Quality Assurance Agency for High Education, 2007)

- Joint Statement of the Research Councils'/AHRB's Skills Training Requirements for Research Students (United Kingdom Research Councils/AHRB, 2001)

- The Economic and Social Research Council's Postgraduate Training Guidelines (4th Ed 2005)

The Programme conforms to these referents and aims to offer Postgraduate Research (PGR) students the opportunity to develop the most appropriate research skills in their chosen discipline in a learning environment that facilitates 'opportunities and encouragement to exchange and develop ideas with people at appropriate levels who are also engaged in doing and learning about research and pursuing established research programmes'[7]

The following documents have also informed curriculum development in terms of the standards expected of postgraduate research students:

- The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (QAA , 2008)

[6] Mullins, G. (2004) Student perspectives on generic skills: are we trying to sell pogo sticks to kangaroos? Poster presentation, *Quality in Postgraduate Research Conference*, Adelaide, Australia. Cited in Green, H. and Powell, S. (2005) *Doctoral Study in Contemporary Higher Education*, Maidenhead: Open University Press, p. 30.

[7] Section 5, p. 7. of the QAA Code of Practice for the Assurance of Academic Quality and Standards in Higher Education: Section 1: Postgraduate Research Programmes (2004).

- Improving Standards in Postgraduate Research Degree Programmes (UK Council for Graduate Education, 2002)

- The Edge Hill Definitive Course Document (DCD) for the Taught Postgraduate Degree Framework (2005)

- Credit and Qualifications: Credit guidelines for HE qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (Nov 2001)

As indicated by the QAA (2008) we consider it reasonable to expect that students successfully completing the PgC should demonstrate many, but not necessarily all of the characteristics of Masters graduates. We have, therefore, drawn on a multi-disciplinary Programme Team, all PhD Supervisors, to facilitate the level of collaboration necessary to ensure the programme meets QAA standards required across disciplines.

The Programme Team contains representatives of each Faculty and academic department within the University. The Programme Leader has also consulted widely with supervisors, research co-ordinators, the Deans of Faculty, the Dean of Teaching and Learning Development, the Dean of Quality Enhancement and the Pro Vice Chancellor (Academic) in development and preparation of the Programme.

Aims of the Programme

The PgC in Research aims to provide students with high quality training to develop knowledge, skills and the capacity for critical reflection appropriate to enable them to engage in doctoral level study, or to gain employment as an academic researcher or in a profession requiring research-related knowledge and skills.

The programme also aims to equip students with the necessary skills to enable them to produce a research proposal within their chosen field of study that is sufficiently robust and rigorous to withstand external scrutiny.

The Programme

The programme consists of a single, 60-credit, module (CPD 4800 Postgraduate Research Studies). This has one, two-part, assessment – a 10,000-15,000-word research proposal and *viva voce* examination (approximately 90 minutes). The 5,000-word range in the length of the proposal is designed to accommodate disciplinary differences. Many students working on projects in science subjects will produce a final PhD thesis of 40,000 words, whereas students working in social sciences and humanities will produce an 80,000-word thesis. The research proposal would show evidence of research design, methodological reflection, a literature review, conceptual and theoretical considerations, and where appropriate, ethical considerations or other axiological considerations (political, aesthetic etc.). The learning outcomes reflect the need to show evidence of these elements, but the supervisory team will agree the specific balance and detailed formulation of the proposal in each particular case.

Neither the proposal, nor the viva, will be awarded a numerical mark. Instead, students will be given a classification of 'Pass', 'Merit', 'Distinction' or 'Fail'. As the assessment is a single, two-part, assessment, only one classification will be given for the whole assessment (proposal and viva).

An unusual feature of this programme is the fact that while the Award is distinct from the programme, the programme and the module are one and the same.
The aim here is to avoid being overly prescriptive and to allow supervisory teams to act as guides in each case.

Table of Module Assessment						
Module Code and Title	**Credit Rating**	**Programme**	**Assessment Tasks**	**Indicative Timing**	**Formative/ Summative**	**Weighting**
CPD 4800 Postgraduate Research Studies	60	PG Cert. in Research	Completion of a research proposal outlining a project suitable for MPhil/PhD study (10-15,000 words) and a *viva voce* examination (90 mins)	During the tenth month of a twelve-month programme	Summative	100%

Learning Outcomes

Level 7 Programme Learning Outcomes ***Knowledge and Understanding***	***Link to Modules:***
At the conclusion of this programme, students will be able to:	
Substantiate their knowledge and understanding of the research methodology/methodologies appropriate to the design of their postgraduate research.	CPD 4800
Formulate critically and/or theoretically informed evidence that they have developed their critical awareness, subject knowledge and capacity for reflection in their role as self-directed learners.	CPD 4800
Assemble evidence that verifies their acquisition of the skills necessary for research practice and project development.	CPD 4800
Demonstrate sensitivity to, and understanding of, axiological factors apposite to their research in the design of their project.	CPD 4800

Intellectual Skills	***Link to Modules:***
Construct and support an articulate and scholarly argument at postgraduate level using a broad range of relevant material(s).	CPD 4800
Critically reflect on the choices and project development skills necessary to develop a research project within their discipline or field of study.	CPD 4800
Demonstrate sound intellectual abilities of appraisal, reflection and evaluation in skills acquisition and knowledge development.	CPD 4800
Express cogently their capacity for advanced critical, theoretical and/or conceptual reflection upon subject matter related to their area of study.	CPD 4800
Practical Skills	***Link to Modules:***
Demonstrate their capacity to plan autonomous research into pertinent subject matter, deploying critical or theoretical approaches appropriate to their research project.	CPD 4800
Produce a research project that establishes clearly their ability to apply their knowledge and skills to research methodology and to the design of their research activity.	CPD 4800
Provide rigorous and convincing evidence that they have a feasible project for a postgraduate degree by research.	CPD 4800
Transferable Skills	***Link to Modules:***
Write cogently in an academic context at a level appropriate to postgraduate study.	CPD 4800
Communicate an advanced ability to defend their proposed research design rigorously.	CPD 4800

Academic Support

An extensive programme of support sessions and material available through the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) is organised and co-ordinated by the Programme Leader - although it is delivered by the most appropriate people in each case, and this usually includes staff from the various academic departments. The design of the provision recognises an important distinction between properly generic matters in research student training – the nature of the doctorate, the viva, time management, writing skills etc. and pseudo-generic matters such as ethics, epistemology, critical, theoretical and conceptual analysis. The latter group aren't really generic matters at all because teaching them in the abstract simply does not work; they have to be taught in context if students are to benefit from the sessions.

On many topics where teaching in context is necessary, the Programme Leader works with staff in the different subject areas to develop sessions for students in each academic discipline or broad academic area (social science, humanities, natural science, education, health etc.). This allows a blend of knowledge of ethics, epistemology, critical, theoretical and conceptual analysis, and in some subject areas other additional topics, with knowledge of the subject area and the research practices of the discipline. The aim is to develop sessions for students that are tailored to their

discipline and avoid the pitfalls of abstract generality, while providing high quality training in important areas.

Skill Training Units Provided for Students During the First Year of their Postgraduate Research Degree Studies

During the first year of their studies at Edge Hill, postgraduate research students are offered a programme of skills training that consists of six units. The programme of support material is delivered in four-day events staged over a long weekend (to allow part-time students maximum opportunity to attend). These events take place once per term. This approach is the most appropriate approach as a result of a) the need to allow students a period of time to devote attention solely to their research; b) the need to allow time for completion of the research proposal and c) the submission deadline. Students will also be provided with an opportunity to present a summary of their work to an audience of peers and supervisors, and to gain experience of answering questions addressing issues raised by their work. The topics covered are as follows:

Unit One: The PhD and Academic Writing

These sessions consider the nature of the doctorate in contemporary higher education, while also providing practical assistance in relation to matters of academic writing that are particularly important as a consequence of the nature of the doctoral thesis. Students are introduced to the idea of doctoral study as training of researchers, the historical, political and educational context of the development of the skills agenda in relation to doctoral education, and central features of doctoral research, such as the concept of originality.

Unit Two: Information Management for Postgraduate Research Students

The Information Management sessions aim to provide researchers with the skills needed to allow them to effectively find, evaluate and manage information. They consist of a number of workshops to enable participants to identify their information needs, build effective search strategies, find relevant information and critically evaluate information found. Included in the programme is training in bibliographic management software (RefWorks), using electronic and web-based technologies for research, and managing long documents (Microsoft Word).

Unit Three: Critical, Conceptual and Theoretical Analysis

These sessions introduce students to basic matters in logic. For example, consideration is given to what is, and what is not, an argument, the role of premises, different forms of validity and the relationship between the nature of a premise and means of determining the truth of that premise. The sessions also look closely at the nature of concepts and a range of different ways of treating concepts, such as the identification of necessary and sufficient conditions for their application and the notion of meaning as use. Having considered matters of basic logic and the nature of concepts, the sessions then look closely at the nature of theory. Different conceptions of the role of theory are explored and an initial exploration is undertaken of the connection between the view that one might adopt of arguments, concepts and

theories and the claims to knowledge that one might be entitled to make and the justifications one could appropriately give for those claims to knowledge. This prepares students for more detailed engagement with matters of epistemology in the next unit.

Unit Four: Methodology I – Epistemology and Philosophy of Science

These sessions introduce students to issues arising from claims to knowledge and the justification of such claims. Sources of justification, knowledge and truth are considered (perception, memory, introspection, reason and testimony). Different forms of knowledge are considered and contrasted with scientific knowledge. Some central issues in the philosophy of science are outlined (such as induction, falsification, causation) and used to highlight the contrasts between different forms of knowledge. These sessions are designed to prepare students for the unit on methodological choices.

Unit Five: Methodology II – Methodological Choices

In these sessions students consider the implications of the epistemological issues covered in the last unit for the methodological choices that researchers have to make when designing research projects. The sessions aim to assist students in developing a clear understanding of the relationships between claims to knowledge, justification of those claims, methods of data collection, methods of data analysis, and overall research design. In addition, the sessions begin to explore the relationship between epistemology and ethics in research design. As with some of the other sessions, different methodological approaches from a range of disciplines are considered, not in an attempt to offer something for everyone, but because of the pedagogic value of exploring the contrasts between different methodologies and different academic disciplines. In that way students can learn more about their own research by understanding something of other kinds of research.

Unit Six: Research Ethics and Axiology

These sessions address the issue of values in research. The topic of research ethics is explored in some detail through consideration of some metaethical issues (such as moral realism and challenges to it, moral particularism, moral generalism and moral scepticism), normative ethical theories and specific issues in research ethics, particularly voluntary informed consent. However, these sessions also explore other types of value that may be of relevance in relation to research, such as aesthetics, political and religious values. The pedagogic strategy employed in these sessions is similar to that found in other units, a range of types of value are considered and contrasted to enable the contrasts to clarify the issues of greatest relevance to the research of each individual. In this way students gain a more thorough training and education in matters relating to research without being in a situation where much of the material they have to cover is of little benefit to them and has no impact on the research that they do in the future. These sessions also contain information about the University's Research Ethics Framework, the University Research Ethics Committee, and the processes of ethical governance and approval at Edge Hill.

While the sessions contained in these units are designed for postgraduate research students in their first year of study towards a postgraduate research degree, the sessions are open to all research degree students and members of staff within the University.

Teaching and Learning Strategy

The programme of training units outlined above *is not* a programme of teaching for the module CPD 4800. In other words, the units do not provide teaching specifically directed towards the learning outcomes of the module; no such classroom-based teaching is provided on this programme. In addition to the training units, students will work with their respective supervisory teams to develop a research proposal that demonstrates their ability to meet the requirements of the learning outcomes on the module/programme. While the training units will certainly assist students in meeting these requirements, they are designed to help develop some of the skills outlined by the *Joint Statement on Skills*, rather than to directly help students meet the learning outcomes of the module; such *direct* assistance will be provided by supervisory teams.

Assessment Strategy

Formative assessment components are integral to the learning and teaching strategies outlined above, and the managed sequence of events from entry to the point of submission of the proposal and its 'defence' in a *viva voce* event. As indicated above the trajectory to summative assessment is a function of formative feedback and development activities as preparation for the summative submission document and viva. The draft submission will be formatively evaluated against assessment criteria related to level 7 descriptors (NICATS)[8] and the FHEQ[9] descriptors for level 7 Masters awards. This will be part of the formative assessment components of teaching and learning and scaffolding/preparation for a high quality submission and defence.

The research proposal will be due for submission after ten months of the twelve-month programme. This will allow time for the organisation and completion of *viva voce* examinations and the preparation of written feedback within the twelve-month period designated for completion of the programme. Students will be required to submit coursework on or before the published time and date with a completed assignment cover sheet. In exceptional circumstances students may make a request for an extension to the submission deadline to allow extra time to complete the assignment, or may apply for deferral of assessment. The Programme Leader will consider all extension requests. All non-submissions will be awarded a 'Fail' classification, and unauthorised late work will be dealt with in accordance with Edge Hill University regulations for research students.

The three members of the panel that conduct the viva will assess the research proposal and performance in the viva. Samples of this work containing all material awarded a classification of 'Fail' or of 'Distinction' and representative samples of work awarded 'Pass' and 'Merit' classifications will be considered by the External Examiner.

[8] Northern Ireland Credit Accumulation and Transfer System.
[9] Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications.

Module Leadership

As the programme only contains one module, the Programme Leader is also the module leader. The module leader contributes to delivery of the module and is responsible for programme administration (assisted by administrative staff in the Graduate School and Academic Registry). The module leader collates relevant information, such as student attendance and performance, and will give students the opportunity to evaluate the module. This information is presented for comment, in appropriate form and style, to a meeting of the Graduate School Board of Studies. The module leader is also responsible for the production and distribution of the Research Student Handbook.

Support from Personal Tutors and Programme Leader

Students are normally assigned a full supervisory team prior to registration. One member of this team will undertake the combined role of personal tutor and research supervisor. It is expected that students and supervisors will (as a minimum) have contact (not necessarily a meeting) once per month. All supervisory meetings will be jointly recorded by the student and each member of the supervisory team.

The Programme Leader (also the module leader) will be available to students by appointment to discuss any problems that students may be experiencing with the course or problems of a personal nature to the degree that they have an impact on students' studies.

Programme Management

The programme is monitored by the Graduate School Board of Studies. The Board receives Annual Monitoring and Review reports (AMR), student feedback and Programme Evaluations; it also confirms grades.

The programme is organised by the Graduate School (where leadership of the programme resides) and it oversees the running of the programme. The Graduate School Board of Studies carries institutional responsibility for the progression of postgraduate research students and the quality assurance of their experience.

The Graduate School Board of Studies

The Graduate School Board of Studies reports to Academic Board and is the principal body for the monitoring of the quality of provision on the programme. It meets four times per year and operates the institutional mechanisms for the assessment of the PgC and for assurance and evaluation of the quality of provision. In particular it is responsible for:

- Receiving and responding to reports from the programme leader based on student-completed end of module evaluation questionnaires and their achievements.
- Receiving Programme Board agendas and minutes, and considering issues of note raised therein.
- Receiving and responding to the reports of external examiners.

- Determining immediate action to address issues of concern raised by the outcomes of Assessment.
- Considering and approving any minor amendments to programmes or modules.
- Receiving and commenting on the Programme Annual Monitoring and Review document. The comments of both Staff Meetings and the Programme Board are considered in the production of the final version of this document.

In addition, the programme has an external examiner who provides external benchmarking of the programme and plays a role in quality assurance, both in working with the programme team and reporting through the Programme Board.

The Graduate School

The Graduate School is principally concerned with the progression of postgraduate research students through their course of studies. It augments both feedback and development aspects of the programme for postgraduate research students through:

- Facilitating the Research Students Network, which is the principal forum for liaison between postgraduate research students and the University
- Providing training and development for Research Supervisors
- Managing the procedures for progression of postgraduate research students according to institutional regulations

In addition to the formal mechanisms of quality assurance provided by the Graduate School Board of Studies, there are a number of informal mechanisms of quality assurance and evaluation, which include:

- Meetings between the Programme Leader and the External Examiner
- Discussion in staff meetings, or informal meetings, with students.
- Meetings between the Programme Leader and members of the Research Student Network at least three times per academic year
- Regular meetings between students and their supervisory team

Mid-module evaluation in the form that it might take on undergraduate or taught Masters-level modules is not appropriate in the case of this programme. However, the mechanisms outlined above will collectively serve the function of allowing ongoing evaluation in a manner appropriate to the nature of doctoral study.

Learning Resources

Postgraduate research students have access to a range of facilities whilst on the PgC, such as the postgraduate research room, which has work space, computers, printers, copiers and storage space for work. Postgraduate research students also have access to IT facilities in the LINC building and the library. The library holds a significant collection of relevant academic books to support the programme, including multiple copies of many core texts. Journal provision includes paper-based forms and an excellent range of electronic journals, CD-ROMs, on-line databases and other reference materials provided by Learning Services.

Virtual Learning Environment

The programme makes extensive use of the VLE not only as a facilitator of teaching, but to allow staff and students to post communications and make available relevant documents. This approach has largely replaced the use of notice boards, although notice boards on the John Dalton corridor are still used as a further means of disseminating information already available on the VLE. Notice boards will not be used as the exclusive method of disseminating any information because many postgraduate research students do not attend the University frequently enough to allow this to be an appropriate means of communication.

Equal Opportunities

The Programme recognises and embraces the ethos of equal opportunities in line with Edge Hill University's Equal Opportunity Policy and Guidelines. This particularly applies to access to the programme, its content, mode of delivery and the assessment of student performance.

Student participation in all learning activity is required to be non-sexist, non-racist and non-discriminatory and behaviour is expected to show appropriate respect for others and sensitivity to social and cultural differences.

A context-sensitive approach is taken to arrangements for reasonable adjustments (in line with the Disability Discrimination Act) to the format of assessment for students with hidden disabilities.

Chapter Two

Roles and Responsibilities

The transition from studying for an undergraduate or taught postgraduate degree to working towards a doctorate or other research degree is a major one. This is partly because the nature of the work that is undertaken and the assessment of that work is very different in postgraduate research degree programmes, and partly because the relevant agents and institutional bodies are different at postgraduate research degree level. Undergraduate and taught postgraduate study involves cohorts of students, and teaching directed at a curriculum and learning outcomes, on the basis of which assessment is conducted. The relevant committees and boards are situated within departments and faculties and all, or nearly all, students progress at the same rate through the programme. Postgraduate research degrees are quite different. While there are similarities between taught postgraduate study and the student experience on the PgC in Research, there are also many differences and those differences are even more marked when students are registered at MPhil/PhD or PhD level. At postgraduate research degree level, each student is working on a unique project. This means that there are no cohorts beyond the PgC in Research and that there is no teaching directed at a curriculum and learning outcomes. Equally, the relevant committees and boards are largely institution-wide, rather than department and faculty based.

Along with these significant differences between postgraduate research degree study and undergraduate and taught postgraduate programmes, comes a major shift in roles and responsibilities. This chapter outlines roles and responsibilities as they apply at postgraduate research degree level. While the PgC in Research is in a somewhat curious position, somewhere between postgraduate taught programmes and research degree programmes when it comes to its nature and function, with regard to roles and responsibilities it is best viewed as the same as postgraduate research degree study.

The relevant roles and responsibilities with regard to postgraduate research degree study are those of the student, the supervisors, departments, faculties, the Graduate School, the Graduate School Board of Studies and the University Research Ethics Committee. Details of roles and responsibilities for each are outlined below.

Postgraduate Research Students

Phillips and Pugh (2000: 2)[10] argue that the key to understanding the nature of postgraduate education (particularly doctoral education) is recognition of the fact that in such education learning should take place 'under your own management'. This significantly alters the nature of responsibilities postgraduate research students have compared with taught postgraduate students or undergraduates. Students have sole responsibility for the production of their own work, and, therefore, for ensuring that the work *is their own work*; correctly referenced and presented. While supervisors

[10] Phillips, E. M. and Pugh, D. S. (2000) *How to Get a PhD: A Handbook for Students and Their Supervisors*, third edition, Buckingham: Open University Press.

will give advice to their students, it is the responsibility of the student to make decisions about whether to take that advice and precisely how to follow any supervisory advice that they are given. In some academic disciplines, notably those in the natural sciences, postgraduate research is often directed by a supervisor, whereas in the humanities and social sciences the role of the supervisor is more that of an advisor. However, it is important to recognise that regardless of discipline, the *production of the thesis itself*, and the defence of that thesis, is the sole responsibility of the student. It is one thing to direct *the research*, and quite another thing to direct *the production of the thesis*. The former takes place in some disciplines, the latter should never take place regardless of the discipline. Phillips and Pugh (2000: 2) make the same point in the following way:

> 'In doctoral education, *you* have to take responsibility for managing your learning and for getting yourself a PhD. Of course, there will be people around to help you …. Some of them will even tell you what, in their opinion, you have to do to obtain the degree; but the responsibility for *determining what is required*, as well as for carrying it out, remains firmly with you. And if it turns out that you needed a particular topic or theory for your work, then it is no excuse to say: "But nobody told me it was relevant".'

Supervisors cannot advise students unless students produce work on which supervisors can give advice. So it is the student who is responsible for driving the work forward, not the supervisor. The student is also responsible for the submission of work, the completion of relevant paperwork, including an annual appraisal report and the form indicating an intention to submit a thesis for examination. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that such tasks are completed in accordance with any deadlines.

It is also the student's responsibility to:

- Solely determine when a thesis is ready for submission whether or not this has the approval of the student's supervisors. Students are strongly advised not to submit without the support of their supervisory team but retain the right to do so.

- Ensure the thesis is submitted within the registration period and complies with the required format.

- Submit a declaration form confirming that the content of the thesis has not been submitted for a comparable academic award (although reference to work already submitted may be made in a thesis covering a wider field).

- Ensure that work that is sent to supervisors is sufficiently well developed. Do not send every piece of written work that you produce to your supervisory team.

- Ensure that there is monthly written or telephone contact with the supervisory team. The student is also jointly responsible with the Director of Studies for ensuring that there is regular face-to-face contact. Some supervisors will

remind students of the need for regular written or telephone contact and this could be misunderstood as the supervisor taking responsibility for ensuring appropriate contact. This is not, however, the case. Responsibility continues to rest with the student even in cases where one or more of the supervisors are proactive in arranging contact. Joint responsibility only applies in relation to supervisory meetings.

- Ensure that appropriate records are kept of supervisory meetings. Although the Director of Studies is responsible for ensuring that supervisory record forms are completed on behalf of the supervisory team when requested by the student, the supervisors are not responsible for ensuring that students complete their section of the supervisory record form; that responsibility rests with students. Overall responsibility for keeping such records of supervisory meetings also rests with the student.

- Ensure that they have sufficient time available to them to complete their research within the appropriate timescale outlined in the Research Degree Regulations. It is not the responsibility of the University to alter workloads for students who are employed by the University in any capacity.

- Ensure that they have suitable facilities and an appropriate room in which to work. While the University provides certain facilities, including those found in JD 11, students should not rely on access to these facilities. While JD 11 is exclusively used for research degree business, that can include vivas, research student training, research supervisor training, meetings of the Research Student Network and other meetings and events concerned with research degrees.

- The student is responsible for completion of the Personal Development Plan (PDP), while the supervisory team is responsible for the completion of the training needs assessment.

- It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that appropriate ethical approval is sought. No primary research should be conducted until all necessary ethical approval has been given.

Key Tasks for MPhil/PhD Students Each Year

1. Conduct your research.
2. Engage with your supervisory team (meetings, e-mail, telephone).
3. Record supervisory contact.
4. Maintain a PDP and conduct an annual Learning Needs Analysis.
5. Complete an Annual Appraisal report and sent it, along with your record of supervision and a record of the training you have engaged in, to the Graduate School.

Research Degree Supervisors

One member of the team, who will be a permanent member of staff of the University, will be designated as Director of Studies. The Director of Studies has responsibility to ensure supervision of the candidate on a regular and frequent basis, manage the supervisory team and ensure the quality of the research project.

The Director of Studies is responsible for submitting proposals for the examination team to the Graduate School Board of Studies at least six months prior to the proposed date of the examination.

All supervisors are responsible for reading and commenting on students' work in a timely manner. However, students must recognise that supervisors have many other responsibilities as part of their role as academic staff. As a consequence, there will be occasions when staff are unable to provide feedback quickly. Students and supervisors should plan accordingly.

Supervisors are also responsible for making themselves available for regular supervisory meetings. Again, there will be times of the academic year, or periods when staff are on annual leave or attending conferences, when it will not be possible for meetings to take place. Students should discuss this with their supervisory team and plan accordingly.

The supervisory team is responsible for the completion of the training needs assessment, while the student is responsible for completion of the PDP.

Departmental and Faculty Responsibilities

Faculties and departments are responsible for the following areas in relation to research degrees:

- Recruitment
- Research environment
- Supervision
- Student academic support
- Student pastoral support
- Supervisory capacity and its development
- Faculties and departments should work with supervisors to ensure that students are given an annual opportunity to present work to an academic audience and answer questions on that work.

The Graduate School[11]

The Graduate School is responsible for the administrative support of research students throughout their studies, including all aspects of PGR registration, monitoring of research student performance and progression, generic training for PGR students and supervisor training. The aim of Edge Hill's Graduate School is to *assist* departments in providing a positive environment where students are supported in completing their research studies. The Graduate School:

- Provides support and guidance for the University's PGR community
- Provides the academic lead for the oversight of research degree regulations
- Provides administrative support for all aspects of the students' recruitment and registration from PgC to PhD viva
- Organises all generic training for PGR students across all the years of registration
- Provides the academic base for the PgC Research
- Is responsible for the induction training of all new supervisors
- Provides annual training for all supervisors via thematic training workshops
- Administers PGR bursaries

The Graduate School Board of Studies

The Graduate School Board of Studies is responsible to Academic Board for the following:

- Registration and admission of students to both PgC Research and to Research Degrees, including the appointment of an appropriate supervisory team.
- To act as the Module and Progression and Award Board for the PgC Research
- The successful progression of research degree students including transfer from MPhil to PhD and the recommendation of awards.
- Regular monitoring of the progress of research degree students and approving extensions to periods of study where appropriate.
- Approving arrangements for the examination of research degrees and for the transfer from MPhil to PhD.
- The development and modification, where appropriate, of regulations and procedures pertaining to any of the above areas. In other cases, making recommendations to Academic Board, through the Regulations Review Group where appropriate, for modification.
- For providing a summary report of business conducted to the Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC) and Academic Board

[11] Contact details for Graduate School staff are as follows:
Professor Ian Robinson (Director of the Graduate School) ian.robinson@edgehill.ac.uk
Dr Leon Culbertson (Assistant Director, Graduate Training) culbertl@edgehill.ac.uk 01695 584843 ex 4843
Julie Proud (Graduate School Administrative Manager) proudj@edgehill.ac.uk 01695 584752 ex 4752
Paul Davies (Graduate School Administrator) daviespw@edgehill.ac.uk 01695 657068 ex 7068.

- For students still registered on Lancaster research degrees, making recommendations to the Graduate Studies Committee of Lancaster University on behalf of the Academic Board, on the following;

a) The registration of research students
b) The appointment of supervisors for research students
c) The transfer of research students from MPhil to PhD
d) The extension of periods of study
e) The regular monitoring of the progress of research students
f) The modification, where appropriate, to regulations and procedures relating to any of the above areas.

- Other matters relating to the provision of research degrees within Edge Hill University

The University Research Ethics Committee

The Research Ethics Committee (REC) reports to the Research Committee, and is responsible for advising and making recommendations to both the Research Committee and the Graduate School Board of Studies on issues relating to ethical scrutiny, procedures and conduct in research and knowledge transfer activities in the University. In particular, the Committee will consider and make recommendations to appropriate bodies including:

1 The effectiveness of the Research Ethics Framework and the maintenance of best practice in ethical guidance, advice, support and scrutiny

2 University policy, procedures and practices that impact upon research and knowledge creation, development and transfer activities giving rise to ethical concern

3 Ethical scrutiny and deliberations through structures within Faculties and, Departments (through receiving relevant minutes and papers)

4 Staff development and other means to encourage the development of an ethically informed research culture

5 Such matters that are referred to it by the Research Committee, Graduate School Board of Studies or any member of the University community

6 Individual cases where proportionality of risk requires University level review

7 The management and hearing of appeals where individual research and knowledge transfer activities have had ethical approval withheld by Faculty/Departmental RECs

Chapter Three

Research Skills Development

Criticisms of the skills agenda outlined in the *Joint Statement* draw attention to part of the problem faced by any university designing a programme of skills training for postgraduate research students – it is clearly necessary to make sure that skills training is viewed as relevant by both students and supervisors, and that the training does not hinder progress towards a doctorate. However, there are two other issues that should be considered in the design of skills training for postgraduate research students. First, there is a distinct difference between properly generic matters, such as the nature of the doctorate, the viva, time management, writing skills etc. and pseudo-generic matters such as ethics, epistemology, critical, theoretical and conceptual analysis. The latter group aren't really generic matters at all because teaching them in the abstract simply does not work well; they have to be taught in context if students are to benefit significantly from the sessions. Recognition of this is one of the main pedagogic advancements in the Postgraduate Certificate in Research, and this is a distinction that informs the design of skills training beyond the first year of postgraduate research degree study.

Secondly, the development of *skills* is distinctly different from learning propositional knowledge.[12] In other words, 'knowing how' and 'knowing that' are different uses of 'know'. This is not a purely semantic issue because the appropriateness of methods of education depend on whether the aim is to develop propositional knowledge (knowing that) or skills (knowing how).[13] It is for this reason that the document refers to skills *training* rather than the *teaching* of skills. The fact that 'training' implies little room for autonomous action means that it is not a wholly satisfactory term in this context, but its use marks a distinction between the facilitation of skills development and teaching of propositional knowledge. As a consequence of the nature of skills and the appropriate educational methods for the development of skills, it would be unwise to tackle the issue of skills training for postgraduate research students by employing the methods used in undergraduate education – a prescribed curriculum, lectures, assessment, marking etc.

An appropriate alternative is to allow supervisory teams to tailor the skills training to the needs of the student (informed by regular learning needs analyses for reflection on progress). To achieve this, supervisory teams must have a range of possible opportunities for skills development available to them to recommend to their students. Annual learning needs analyses should provide information to students and supervisory teams regarding the skills requirements of each student. Completion of a Personal Development Portfolio (PDP) will allow monitoring, reflection, evaluation and planning in relation to skill development for each student.

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[12] Such as knowing *that* Paris is the capital of France or 2 + 2 = 4.

[13] It would be a mistake to interpret this distinction as one implying mutual exclusivity. The development of skills certainly (frequently) involves the learning of propositional knowledge, and to that extent the pedagogic methods appropriate to such learning are useful. However, while the relevant propositional knowledge is often (although not always) a necessary condition for the development of skills, it is not a sufficient condition.

Skills Training During the First Year of Postgraduate Research Degree Studies

The six units of research skills training provided for students in the initial stages of postgraduate research degree study (whether on the PgC in Research or not) are outlined in the chapter containing information on the PgC in Research. This programme provides foundational training that is supplementary to any work students may have done on those topics during previous study at level 7. The programme aims to be of benefit to students without being onerous or interfering with the progress of students' research.

While the sessions contained in these units are designed for postgraduate research students in their first year of study towards a postgraduate research degree, the sessions are open to all research degree students and members of staff within the University. As a consequence, any students who are more advanced in their doctoral studies but feel that they would benefit from some or all of the sessions are welcome to attend, as are staff who are not studying for a research degree but feel the sessions would provide useful professional development.

Skills Training Beyond the First Year of Postgraduate Research Degree Studies

It is very important that skills training is not limited to the first year of study for a research degree. The programme available during the first year concentrates on key academic skills and knowledge to enable students to make good methodological choices and propose well-designed projects. However, that programme is far from exhaustive of the range of skills that postgraduate research students should have on completion of a doctorate. It would be counter-productive, and probably impossible, to provide all the skills training that students should have during the earliest part of their studies. Any attempt to do so would be tokenism that would simply lead to students finding it impossible to make appropriate progress in their research because of the extensive programme of related studies that they were expected to complete. It would also lead to students being provided with training in certain areas long before it could be of any use to them. A student is unlikely to appreciate the value of information on the final viva (or even the transfer viva), or on writing for publication, during the first few months of their studies; students need such training later in their period of registration if they are to gain maximum benefit from it.

As a consequence, it has been necessary to develop a programme of skills training for postgraduate research students that extends to the full period of registration rather than simply the first year. It seemed most sensible and efficient to design such a programme by first considering the provision that is already available across the University. Supervisors are provided with information regarding existing level 7 modules that are already part of the University's provision, and a range of courses and workshops provided by the Staff Development Unit and the Teaching and Learning

Development Unit.[14] These modules, courses and workshops fall into two categories; those that deal with research methods and methodology, and those that deal with other skills that research students require, such as writing for publication, writing grant bids etc. This division also suggests an order in which students might *normally* be expected to consider these modules. Research methods education would seem to be something that is required relatively early in postgraduate research student training, yet it is sensible for students to first consider matters of epistemology and factors which may have an impact on methodological choices before learning the skills necessary to employ specific research methods. The order in which these topics feature in research student training is particularly important if we are to take seriously the danger of over-burdening students with skills training to the detriment of their research.

It is also sensible to suggest that students should generally address matters pertaining to their future careers and academic practice in general, such as writing for publication and writing grant bids, after they have considered matters of epistemology, methodology, research methods and research ethics. As a result, the modules that it is suggested supervisors should consider recommending to their students are categorised as either second year or beyond, or third year or beyond; research methods modules fall into the former category and modules dealing with other academic skills fall into the latter category. As the majority of research students at Edge Hill are currently registered on a part-time basis it is necessary to add 'or beyond' to any indication of the point at which any given module might be appropriate, but the most important considerations are that the training designed for the first year of study comes before any module recommended for second year and beyond, and that those come before any modules recommended for third year and beyond,[15] and in all of this it is essential that students do not become over-burdened by skills training to the detriment of their research. It should be noted that the training designed for the first year of study is available to *all* postgraduate research students; it should not be regarded as only available to, or only required by, students registered on the PgC in Research. The six units designed for the first year of study towards a doctorate are generally recommended for all postgraduate research students.

It is important to stress that it is not proposed that research degree students enrol on the modules listed below, or that they should complete any assessments on these modules. Rather, it is proposed that they attend the sessions that they and their supervisory team judge to be of benefit to them and have access to support material for those modules via the VLE. Once modules have been identified it is the responsibility of the supervisory team to arrange details with the module leader. Research students may also contribute to discussion within sessions and take advantage of tutorial assistance from staff delivering the modules. This assistance

[14] This information is not included here because it is subject to change. A document containing details of current modules, courses and workshops will be available on the VLE and updated as necessary.

[15] This is a rough indication of what would *generally* be the case, but students will have different levels of knowledge and skills and there will be a degree of diversity in their previous education and experience. Regular learning needs analyses should identify what is required by each student and enable supervisory teams to make appropriate recommendations regarding skills training. The categorisation of modules as either second year and beyond or third year and beyond should not therefore be treated too rigidly; the specific requirements of each student should determine *what* training is appropriate and *when* it should be undertaken.

should be limited to the topics under consideration and should not extend to the research project itself.

Learning Needs Analysis and PDP

The *Joint Statement* referred to above offers an overall framework within which research students can articulate goals, and work with their supervisors in a way tailored to their particular needs, an approach recommended by the QAA Code of Practice. Research students at the beginning of doctoral programmes will have different starting points in terms of skills and knowledge. Irrespective of where a student starts, they will have objectives for their research degree. Some of these may be set or influenced by external bodies, for example, a professional institute or by actual or anticipated prospective employers. Others may arise from a student's personal motivation. By working together, the student and the supervisors can identify the end-point standard appropriate to the student's circumstances, and also how best to achieve that standard.

The Personal Development Portfolio (PDP) has been introduced to help research students keep a record of their personal and professional development activities and also to assist both student and supervisor to better identify training needs. This identification is structured around the *Joint Statement*, which is now incorporated into the QAA *Code of Practice*.

The documentation has also been designed to help the institution ensure that its responsibilities are being met by requiring that a record of supervision sessions be kept.

A very important consideration in the design of the various documents that together constitute the portfolio was the need to ensure that completion of those documents does not become an onerous task that significantly reduces the time available to students to complete their research. The completion of the documents certainly should not be a time consuming task.

The basic portfolio consists of three documents (see Appendix D):

1. Personal and Generic Skills Audit (PGRPDP 1)
2. Record of Supervisory Contact (PGRPDP 2)
3. Record of Training and Development Activities (PGRPDP 3)

The portfolio has a number of functions:

1. During the course of a research degree each student will collect a variety of documents and records that relate to their experience as a researcher. By adding those documents and records to the basic PDP documents, the portfolio can function as a structured setting in which they can be organised in a meaningful way.

2. As part of our development as researchers, we also develop a wide range of skills and attributes. Over the last few years this has been increasingly recognised as an important part of the research student experience. This portfolio offers a way of:

    a. Identifying those skills and attributes which one brings to one's studies;

b. Identifying those skills and attributes that must be developed in order to successfully complete one's research degree;
c. Identifying how those skills and attributes will be acquired;
d. Identifying other skills developed as one's studies progress, and (as importantly);
e. Recording achievements and general development.

3. Assisting the University to ensure that its responsibilities are being met.

The PDP documents for research students also offer a structured way in which students can approach Learning Needs Analysis (LNA), but they remain flexible as a place in which a student can develop a portfolio of evidence supporting their LNA.

Learning Needs Analysis is simply a structured way of identifying one's current skills, comparing those to one's skills needs, and reflecting on, and planning, how one might address those needs. The Personal and Generic Skills Audit (PGRPDP 1) provides a method of doing that which is structured around the skills identified in the *Joint Statement*. While the skills identified in the *Joint Statement* are regarded as of primary importance for postgraduate research students, supervisors and students may wish to include other skills in their audit and planning as necessary.

Personal Development Plan

At the commencement of postgraduate research degree studies and at the beginning of each year of study, as part of the normal supervisory process, each student and their supervisors should conduct a formal audit of the research and transferable skills necessary for the research degree and for any future career development that is anticipated. In addition to any skills training needs identified, students and supervisors should also explore ways in which these needs can be met. This could be through one-to-one training with a member of the supervisory team or the wider institution. Alternatively, it could be through a formal module or training course mounted either through Edge Hill or another institution. Equally, it could be through completion of an online training course or package, or attendance or paper presentation at a conference or a seminar.

Students are likely to have acquired many of the skills necessary to complete their studies as part of their previous experience and some will only become relevant or necessary as students progress. In essence, it should be a 'needs-based' assessment, and there is no pre-designed package that students should follow. The needs of each student will change over time, so a record of what those needs were and attempts made to meet them is invaluable for progress and review. The record may also prove useful during final examination as examiners sometimes wish to explore with students how their skills have been identified and have developed.

Recording Supervision

A record should be kept of all your supervisions. Exactly how this is done is a matter for the student and their supervisors, but it is good practice for both student and supervisors to keep such a record. The Faculty of Education and the Faculty of Health each have their own form for recording supervisory meetings. Some supervisors will want to keep their own records and leave students to keep theirs. Others may ask their students to produce written accounts of each supervisory meeting very soon after the

event and request a copy to comment on or for their records. Whatever system is adopted, it is necessary for both student and supervisor to have reached agreement on what that system will be by the end of the first supervisory meeting. It is a requirement of the University that a record of supervisory contact (not only meetings) should be kept up to date and a copy sent to the Graduate School (proudj@edgehill.ac.uk) with the Annual Appraisal Report.

Training and Development Record

Postgraduate research students should keep a record of all the formal training they undertake, and all attendance at relevant events. This will include courses, skills workshops, research seminars, conferences attended, indeed, anything that is organized and which is relevant to the student's research programme. This record should be kept up to date and a copy sent to the Graduate School (proudj@edgehill.ac.uk) with the Annual Appraisal Report. (The Annual Appraisal Report is the student's account and assessment of their progress during the previous year and is considered, along with a report written by the Director of Studies, by the Graduate School Board of Studies.)

As well as this formal use of the Training and Development Record, it can also be used as a Curriculum Vitae *aide-mémoire*. This information is important, but is also very easy to forget!

Chapter Four

Research Ethics

Research Ethics Procedures

There are three reasons why every member of the Edge Hill University Community should have an interest in the ethics of research, whether they are researchers or they are teaching modules where students engage in forms of research practice, and whether the research practice of staff or students involves human (or animal) participants or not:

1. It is generally held as axiomatic that good research is ethical research. Research that considers the ethical challenges raised by its practice will have a care, methodological rigor and thoughtfulness from conception to dissemination that marks it out as following best practice. This is why ethics review and approval is a feature of most external (and internal) funding bids criteria and an increasingly common feature of the practice of journals and publishers in managing research submissions. Ethical practice is good practice, and Edge Hill's Research Ethics Framework (REF, provided as an appendix to the Research Student Handbook) is designed to support best practice and become part of critical reflection and peer review rather than an onerous bureaucratic process.

2. The quality of research and research practice is partly assessed by its integrity, and there is an international agenda, closely followed by the UK research councils and research authorities, around discouraging research malpractice and minimizing poor and maleficent research practice. Ethics is one of the key areas of concern in considering research integrity. From the point of view of both the University and the researcher, research that is either a product of malpractice or of poor and malfeasant quality both destroys reputation and can have serious financial and other detrimental consequences. Ethical reflection, review and approval are a key part of avoiding poor and malfeasant practice or accidental malpractice.

3. Ethics focuses on care – and ethical reflection on research practice extends beyond any research participants to colleagues and to the researcher. Ethical review and approval is part of a process of supporting and caring as well as a means of scrutinizing and ensuring good practice.

The Research Ethics pages are designed to provide a 'one-stop' space where you can access key documents for information and use, have an awareness of how ethical scrutiny and approval works at the University, and gain advice and support for your research practice or your teaching of research practice. They can be found at:

https://go.edgehill.ac.uk/wiki/display/research/Research+Ethics+and+Procedures

Click on 'Ethics Procedures' under the heading 'Research Proposals'.

Specific queries and informal requests for advice not addressed by the resources on these pages can be addressed to the Chair of the Research Ethics Committee, Paul Reynolds reynoldp@edgehill.ac.uk

Monitoring of Ethical Approval for Postgraduate Research Students

It is the responsibility of the student, assisted by the supervisory team, to identify ethical issues raised by their proposed research as a feature of developing and designing their research project, and to seek ethical approval from the University Research Ethics Committee (UREC) where it is appropriate. In addition, it may also be necessary in some cases for ethical approval to be sought from external committees. In such cases it is the student's responsibility to do so and for making UREC aware of the appropriate approval and providing full documentation of approval. The supervisory team has a special responsibility to both ensure the student engages in a thorough review of ethical issues in their research, and to ensure that the Graduate School is made aware of any ethical concerns that should require an approval process. Supervisors are responsible for both identifying whether a project is likely to require ethical approval, and for advising students in the preparation of any application for ethical approval.

The registration viva panel will make two recommendations to the Graduate School Board of Studies. First, they will recommend a mark for the PGC in Research (fail, pass, merit, distinction). Secondly, they will make a recommendation regarding ethical approval. This recommendation will in no way grant ethical approval; it will merely give an initial indication as to whether ethical approval may need to be sought from UREC or another ethics committee.

The supervisory team will also make a recommendation to the Graduate School Board of Studies regarding ethical approval.

The Chair of UREC is a co-opted member of the Graduate School Board of Studies and will therefore have the opportunity to express an opinion on each recommendation. The Graduate School Board of Studies will consider each proposal, including those regarded by the relevant registration panel as not requiring ethical approval. The secretary of the Graduate School Board of Studies will notify students of the decision of the Board regarding both ethical approval and registration. It will be the responsibility of the student to seek whatever approval is deemed necessary. If the proposal is to be considered by UREC, ethical approval should be sought by the method outlined in the Research Ethics Framework. Advice on submission to external committees can be sought from the Chair of UREC either directly by the student or through the supervisory team.

The Graduate School Board of Studies will confirm marks for the PGC in Research prior to, and irrespective of, successful ethical approval. However, (continuing) registration at MPhil/PhD will be subject to ethical approval being granted by the appropriate committee, and no primary research may be undertaken prior to gaining ethical approval. Ethical approval must normally have been gained within two subsequent meetings of the Graduate School Board of Studies. Registration will be confirmed following the granting of ethical approval by the Graduate School Board of Studies' Chair's action. The Chair of UREC will pass information regarding those projects that have received ethical approval to the Graduate School for confirmation of registration by the Chair of the Graduate School Board of Studies.

Chapter Five

Administrative Matters[16]

During a research student's time at Edge Hill University, there are a number of administrative issues that need to be addressed by either the student or the supervisor (or by both working together). In most cases there is an appropriate proforma to be completed, details can be obtained by contacting the Graduate School administrators (proudj@edgehill.ac.uk or daviespw@edgehill.ac.uk).

Admission

Upon admission, a student will be formally allocated at least two supervisors who will work with the student to develop an application to register for a higher degree as part of the PgC in Research.

Admission to Edge Hill University does not imply that the student is, or will necessarily be, registered for a higher degree by research. The first task of the newly admitted student is to seek that registration as part of the PgC.

Enrolment on the Postgraduate Certificate in Research

When a research student is admitted to Edge Hill University, s/he will enrol on the PgC in Research using the appropriate form which will be issued by the Graduate School. This form should be completed and returned immediately as access to the library and ICT facilities is dependent upon formal enrolment. Students should check the information on the form, make amendments as necessary, and return it to the Graduate School as soon as is possible.

Registration

All research students have to seek registration. This involves the development of a detailed plan of work giving information about the proposed research programme, supervisory team, and other relevant details. This is undertaken as part of the PgC in Research. The application to register must be submitted using the research proposal form, which, once completed, should be delivered to the Graduate School.

Although the registration viva will normally be convened within three months of the submission of the research proposal form, the panel members may decide in advance of any planned meeting with the student that the proposal requires further work. In this event, the student's enrolment as a research student will be extended and the research student will be invited to revise and resubmit their application to register. During this period the research student will retain their rights to use the library, IT and other facilities.

[16] While this chapter outlines administrative procedures and requirements, the Research Degree Regulations are the definitive statement with regard to such matters.

Annual Appraisal of Progress

The University requires supervisors to submit annual reports providing information on the progress made by research students. Supervisors are asked to comment on whether the student has been in regular contact with the supervisor, whether a formal report on the year's work has been submitted by the student, whether acceptable progress has been made during the year, and whether the supervisor is confident that an acceptable thesis can be produced within the appropriate timescale. The supervisors are also invited to make any other relevant comments on the progress of their students. Research Students are also asked to complete and return a similar pro-forma reporting on their progress.

Suspension of Registration

If illness or personal difficulties prevent a student from continuing with their studies, they may apply for suspension of registration (or a period of intercalation). Normally only a total of one year's intercalation is allowed during the period of the research degree. This application should be made by the supervisor to the Graduate School using the appropriate form, which is available from the Graduate School.

Extension of Registration

In certain circumstances it may be possible to extend the normal period of registration to allow extra time in which to complete the requirements of the award. Again, in the first instance, this application should be made by the supervisor to the Graduate School using the appropriate form, which is available from the Graduate School.

It should be emphasised, however, that students should aim to complete their studies *including* writing their thesis within the appropriate maximum period of registration outlined in the Research Degree Regulations.

In accordance with the Research Degree Regulations, the period of registration excludes any additional time for intercalation.

Transfer from MPhil/PhD to PhD Registration

Full time students wishing to transfer from MPhil to PhD are expected to do so no later than eighteen months after the date of their initial registration. Part time students should do so no later than 36 months after their date of registration (taking account, in both cases, of any periods of intercalation).

The recommendation to transfer may be prompted by the Graduate School Board of Studies as a result of the annual appraisal exercise or may be initiated by the student and supervisors. The process involves both student and supervisors.

The student should complete an Application for Transfer form and attach to it a paper of no more than 6,000 words addressing the following:

• progress to date in the areas of literature review, methodological development and data collection;
• the original contribution to knowledge that will be made by the research;
• the written work which has been undertaken to date, its form, and whether it has been seen and commented on by supervisors;
• the timetable by which the thesis will be submitted; and,
• a detailed plan of the final thesis structure (e.g. chapter and subheadings etc).

Once completed, both forms should be sent *with all the required signatures* to the Graduate School. Documentation will *not* be accepted unless fully signed. The Graduate School will convene a Panel consisting of three research active members of academic or academic-related staff, no more than one of whom shall be drawn from the student's supervisory team. At least one of the members of the Panel will be drawn from the staff of an institution other than Edge Hill University. The Panel will be provided with a copy of the student's research proposal and will meet with the student to conduct a viva. Following the viva, the Panel will make one of the following recommendations to RDC:

1. The student's registration should be transferred to PhD with immediate effect;

2. The student's registration should not be transferred to PhD, and the student should be permitted to make one further application to transfer their registration to PhD within, in the case of a full-time student, a period of 9 months from the date of their being notified of the decision or, in the case of a part-time student, a period of 12 months from the date of their being notified of the decision. In the case of this decision being reached by the Panel, the student will be informed in writing of the Panel's reasons.

If this is the student's second application to transfer their registration to PhD, registration for MPhil should be confirmed.

The Panel may, if it is so minded, intimate to the research student the recommendation it will be making to the Graduate School Board of Studies. It must, however, be emphasized that the Panel's recommendation is provisional and subject to review by the Graduate School Board of Studies.

If the decision is to confirm registration for MPhil, the research student will have recourse to the University's appeals procedure. Details of this can be obtained from the Graduate School.

Should transfer to PhD be approved by the Graduate School Board of Studies, a letter notifying transfer will be issued directly to the student.

Students preparing submissions for both MPhil/PhD transfer and final PhD submission should consult the Research Degree Regulations for guidance.

Appendix A:

Joint Statement of the Research Council's/AHRB's Skills Training Requirements for Research Students

JOINT STATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH COUNCILS'/AHRB'S SKILLS TRAINING REQUIREMENTS FOR RESEARCH STUDENTS

INTRODUCTION

The Research Councils and the Arts and Humanities Research Board play an important role in setting standards and identifying best practice in research training. This document sets out a joint statement of the skills that doctoral research students funded by the Research Councils/AHRB would be expected to develop during their research training.

These skills may be present on commencement, explicitly taught, or developed during the course of the research. It is expected that different mechanisms will be used to support learning as appropriate, including self-direction, supervisor support and mentoring, departmental support, workshops, conferences, elective training courses, formally assessed courses and informal opportunities.

The Research Councils and the AHRB would also want to re-emphasise their belief that training in research skills and techniques is the key element in the development of a research student, and that PhD students are expected to make a substantial, original contribution to knowledge in their area, normally leading to published work. The development of wider employment-related skills should not detract from that core objective.

The purpose of this statement is to give a common view of the skills and experience of a typical research student thereby providing universities with a clear and consistent message aimed at helping them to ensure that all research training was of the highest standard, across all disciplines. It is not the intention of this document to provide assessment criteria for research training.

It is expected that each Council/Board will have additional requirements specific to their field of interest and will continue to have their own measures for the evaluation of research training within institutions.

Appendix B:

Edge Hill University Research Degree Regulations

Edge Hill University

Research Degree Regulations

For students undertaking research study leading to the awards of Master or Doctor of Philosophy

ACADEMIC REGISTRY
October 2010 (Subject to approval by Academic Board)

N Research Degree Regulations

N1 OPERATION OF AWARDING POWERS

N1.1 Research Degrees of the University are awarded by the Academic Board under the powers outlined in section A2.

N1.2 Awards are confirmed by the Graduate School Board of Studies operating under devolved powers from the Academic Board.

N1.3 The Graduate School Board of Studies is a sub-committee of Academic Board and is responsible to the Board for the assurance of the standard of research degree awards and for the development and operation of the processes and procedures of all aspects of research degree registrations

N1.4 In operating its research degree awarding powers, the University is alert to, and assures consistency with, the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) and the Code of Practice for Postgraduate Research Programmes.

N2 AWARDS OFFERED

N2.1 The University offers the following awards:

i ***Master of Philosophy*** *(MPhil) (FHEQ level 7)*

The Master of Philosophy (MPhil) is awarded to a candidate who, having critically investigated and evaluated an approved topic and demonstrated an understanding of research methodology appropriate to the field of study, has presented and defended a thesis, by oral examination (or approved alternative), to the satisfaction of the appointed examiners.

ii ***Doctor of Philosophy*** *(PhD) (FHEQ level 8)*

The Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) is awarded to a candidate who, having critically investigated and evaluated an approved topic resulting in an independent, significant and original contribution to knowledge and demonstrated an understanding of research methodology appropriate to the field of study, has presented and defended a thesis, by oral examination (or approved alternative), to the satisfaction of the appointed examiners.

N2.2 Awards offered are defined by a series of benchmarks relating to the general level of knowledge and skills required to register for the award and the qualification and study levels required to achieve the award. (Qualification level descriptors are taken from the FHEQ and are shown as *Appendix 3*).

N3 APPLICATION OF THE ACADEMIC REGULATIONS

N3.1 Except as specified in this section, research students and research degree programmes are subject to the general Academic Regulations of the University as they apply.

N4 ADMISSION

N4.1 The normal entry requirement for a research degree is a first or upper second class honours bachelor degree from a United Kingdom university or other institution recognised for this purpose by the Graduate School Board of Studies, or a qualification which is regarded by the Board as equivalent. The normal entry requirement for a PhD direct registration is a Masters degree by research.

N4.2 The University may also accept other qualifications and/or professional experience in lieu of the general entry requirement. In such cases, applicants may be required to provide evidence of their suitability for research degree study through the provision of a prior learning portfolio.

N4.3 All pre-doctoral applicants must successfully complete the Postgraduate Certificate (PG Cert) in Research or otherwise satisfy the requirements for MPhil/PhD or direct PhD registration.

N4.4 Applicants for research degrees must provide at least two academic references from appropriate referees who can attest to the applicant's academic attainment and fitness for research.

N4.5 All applicants must show sufficient command of the English language to complete a programme satisfactorily and to prepare and defend a thesis in English. Applicants whose first language is not English or who originate from countries whose national language is not English are required to demonstrate English language proficiency to minimum standards. For the purposes of these regulations, the minimum standard required is specified as an IELTS score of 7.0 or equivalent.

N4.6 Appropriately qualified applicants will be interviewed before an offer of a place is made. Interviews will be conducted by a Research Student Admissions Panel, appointed through the Graduate School, comprising a minimum of two research active members of staff who will have received appropriate training, at least one of whom will be an experienced supervisor.

N4.7 Offers are made by, and are subject to, the approval of the Director of the Graduate School who will seek assurance from the Dean of Faculty or Head of Department that, as far as can be determined at this initial stage, adequate and appropriate supervisory arrangements can be made and that the research environment, governance arrangements, available resources and facilities are suitable to the proposal.

N4.8 Following admission, a student will be formally allocated at least one experienced supervisor who will work with the student to develop an application to register for a research degree programme.

N4.9 Admission and enrolment to the PG Cert in Research does not guarantee registration for MPhil/PhD. On successful completion of the PG Cert programme, students are either recommended for MPhil/PhD registration, or alternatively exit with the award of a PG Cert in Research.

Students who continue to MPhil/PhD registration will not be awarded a PG Cert, but will continue towards the doctorate (or in some cases an MPhil). Those students who progress to MPhil/PhD registration, but are unsuccessful in gaining an MPhil will be awarded the PG Cert in Research. The PG Cert in Research, therefore, is purely an exit award.

N4.10 Admission may be additionally subject to completion of a specified programme of related studies or research training. Normally any such requirement will be integrated into the requirements for the PG Cert in Research.

N4.11 Applicants may not appeal an admissions decision. Applicants who are dissatisfied with any aspect of the admissions process may use the University Complaints Procedure.

N5 ENROLMENT

N5.1 Students are required to enrol with and pay fees to the University once they have accepted the offer of a place. Initial enrolment is normally to the PG Cert in Research which is a requisite element of research degree programmes for pre-doctoral students.

N5.2 There are two enrolment points during the academic session: October & January. Students who are accepted for registration to a research degree programme are required to enrol and pay fees for each academic session, or part of session, they remain registered.

N5.3 Students may enrol as either full-time or part-time students.

N6 REGISTRATION FOR AWARD

N6.1 Registration is normally for MPhil or MPhil with the possibility of transfer to PhD. Exceptionally, the Graduate School Board of Studies may accept applications for PhD direct.

N6.2 The maximum length of the pre-registration period is either governed by the regulations for the PG Cert in Research or otherwise set at 12 months from the point of admission for full-time and part-time students.

N6.3 The minimum and maximum periods of registration are as follows:

Award	**Minimum**	**Expected**	**Maximum+**
MPhil			
Full-time	12 months	24 months	36 months
Part-time	24 months	36 months	54 months
PhD (inclusive of MPhil registration period where appropriate)			
Full-time	24 months	36 months	48 months
Part-time	36 months	54 months	72 months

+The Graduate School Board of Studies may approve a maximum of 12 months suspension of study (intercalation) in accordance with regulation N10.4.

N6.4 In those cases where a student combines periods of full-time and part-time enrolment during the registration, the maximum registration period will be calculated on a pro-rata basis.

N7 APPROVAL OF REGISTRATION

Registration procedures are detailed in the University's Research Student Handbook.

N7.1 Applications to register for a research degree programme are subject to approval by the Graduate School Board of Studies. Initial assessment of the proposal is through formal presentation by the student to a Registration Review Panel, appointed through the Graduate School, comprising three research active members of staff, one of whom will normally be a member of the student's proposed supervisory team. The Chair of the Panel is approved by the Graduate School Board of Studies. Exceptions to these arrangements require the approval of the Chair of the Graduate School Board of Studies.

N7.2 On completion of the assessment, the Panel will submit a report to the Graduate School Board of Studies with one of the following recommendations:

i. The student should be registered for the degree for which registration is sought;
ii. The student should be registered for MPhil only in the first instance;
iii. The student should not be registered for a research degree at the present time.

N7.3 In cases under iii above, a student will be allowed to resubmit a proposal for consideration within a six-month period. Further applications will not be considered and the student will be required to withdraw.

N7.4 The Graduate School Board of Studies will consider applications to register, along with reports and recommendations from Panels. In approving an application to register, the Board shall satisfy itself that:

i. the research student is suitably qualified;
ii. the programme of research submitted by the applicant is viable and appropriate to the standard of the award sought (as demonstrated through successful completion of the PG Cert in Research);
iii. the supervisory arrangements are adequate and sustainable in terms of the programme requirements;
iv. appropriate resources and facilities are available for the conduct of the programme of research;
v. ethical approval has been obtained where appropriate or the proposal has been referred to the Research Ethics Committee for further consideration;
vi. where a project is wholly or partly funded by an external agency or there is a collaborating institution, this does not inhibit the fulfilment of the objectives of the project and/or the academic requirements of the research degree, nor potentially give rise to a conflict of interest with the University.

N7.5 Where the committee is not satisfied on any of these points, the application may be rejected, referred back for further work or remitted for Chair's Action subsequent to the receipt of further information as required by the Graduate School Board of Studies.

N7.6 The Graduate School Board of Studies may approve registrations where the research student's own creative work forms, as a point of origin or reference, a significant part of the intellectual enquiry, subject to the work having been undertaken, or being put to substantial new use, as part of the registered programme of research.

N7.7 The Graduate School Board of Studies may approve registrations in which the principal focus is the preparation of a scholarly edition of a text or texts, musical or choreographic work or other original artefact(s).

N7.8 In the case of registrations under N7.6 or N7.7, the application for registration will set out the form of the intended submission and the proposed methods of assessment for approval by the Graduate School Board of Studies.

N7.9 The date of registration is deemed to be the date of the Graduate School Board of Studies meeting at which approval of the research programme is obtained. The committee may approve backdating the date of registration, with appropriate justification, to a date not earlier than the date of the Panel meeting recommending approval of the registration.

N8 SUPERVISION

N8.1 The supervisory team is approved by the Graduate School Board of Studies as part of the approval of registration.

N8.2 The supervisory team will consist of at least two and normally not more than three supervisors, at least one of whom will have previous experience of successful supervision at the level of the award for which the student is registered.

N8.3 The supervisory team will collectively demonstrate active engagement in research bringing a range of skills and knowledge relevant to the project.

N8.4 One member of the team, who will be a permanent member of staff of the University, will be designated as Director of Studies. The Director of Studies has responsibility to ensure supervision of the candidate on a regular and frequent basis, manage the supervisory team and ensure the quality of the research project.

N8.5 Other members of the team will have specific subject and/or methodological expertise and may be drawn from outwith the University.

N8.6 In addition to the supervisors, an adviser, or advisers, may be proposed to contribute some specialised knowledge or a link with an external organisation or collaborating institution.

N8.7 A research student is generally ineligible to act as a member of a supervisory team for another research student, but may be appointed as an adviser. Exceptions may be considered where the proposed supervising student already holds a research degree award.

N8.8 The maximum number of students that can be supervised concurrently by an individual member of staff of the University is eight. Deans of Faculty and Heads of Department are responsible for ensuring that the workload allocation model takes account of the requirements for research student supervision.

N8.9 Any change to the supervisory arrangements must be approved by the Graduate School Board of Studies. Where a change is necessitated by the ill-health, retirement or other long-term unavailability of a member of the supervisory team, appropriate alternative arrangements must be proposed by the relevant Dean of Faculty/Head of Department such that the student is not disadvantaged in project progression.

N8.10 Students who experience difficulties with any aspect of supervision should first seek to resolve these informally through discussion with the Director of Studies. Unresolved difficulties should be raised with the relevant Head of Department or Dean of Faculty or the Director of the Graduate School for action. Exceptionally, this may lead to a change in supervisory arrangements, subject to approval by the Graduate School Board of Studies.

N9 TRANSFER OF REGISTRATION TO DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

N9.1 Students registered for MPhil with the possibility of transfer to PhD who wish to transfer to PhD must submit a transfer application to the Graduate School Board of Studies. Normally, such applications should be submitted no later than eighteen months from first registration for full-time students or thirty-six months for part-time.

N9.2 Applications must be supported by the supervisory team.

N9.3 Applications to transfer must be accompanied by a transfer report of no more than 6000 words outlining:

i. progress to date in the literature review, methodological development and data collection;
ii. the original contribution to knowledge that will be made by the research;
iii. the written work to date, its form and whether it has been seen and commented on by supervisors;
iv. the timetable for thesis submission;
v. a detailed plan of the final thesis structure.

N9.4 Applications to transfer are initially assessed by a Transfer Review Panel, appointed through the Graduate School, by means of a formal presentation of the application by the student.

N9.5 Membership of the Transfer Review Panel will comprise three research active members of staff no more than one of whom will be a member of the supervisory team. One member will be external to the University and at least one of the independent members will have experience of supervising at least one PhD to successful completion. The Chair of the Panel will be approved by the Graduate School Board of Studies. Amendment to these arrangements requires the approval of the Chair of the Graduate School Board of Studies and will only be given where exceptional mitigating circumstances apply.

N9.6 On completion of the assessment, the Transfer Review Panel will prepare a report making one of the following recommendations to the Graduate School Board of Studies:

i. the application to transfer be approved;
ii. the application be referred back for further work and resubmitted.

N9.7 Where a referral is approved by the Graduate School Board of Studies, the student will be allowed a period of no more than nine months (for full-time students) or twelve months (for part-time students) to make a resubmission. Written feedback will be provided to the Graduate School by the Transfer Review Panel for transmission to the student.

N9.8 Only one resubmission of an application to transfer to PhD is permitted. Where an application is rejected for the second time, the MPhil registration will be maintained.

N9.9 Students who are refused permission to transfer at the second submission may appeal under the University's Appeals Procedure (see section N19).

N10 CHANGES TO REGISTRATION

N10.1 With the exception to change in mode of study, changes to registrations are by application and are subject to the approval of the Graduate School Board of Studies including:

i. Suspension of study (intercalation)
ii. Extension to the period of registration
iii. Change in award level
iv. Early Submission

N10.2 All changes to registration must be supported by the supervisory team.

N10.3 A student registered for PhD who is unable to complete, or seeks to exit before submission for PhD, may apply for the registration to be remitted to MPhil. Equally, a student originally registered for MPhil alone may apply to transfer the registration to PhD. In either case, the Graduate School Board of Studies will satisfy itself, having regard to the transfer regulations outlined in section 9, that the standard of award applied for is appropriate and can be met.

N10.4 A suspension of study (intercalation) may be approved where a student is prevented from making progress with the research because of illness or other reasonable cause. The maximum suspension period per application is twelve months. Normally, a student shall only be permitted periods of suspension totalling twelve months during the registration. Exceptions are subject to approval by the Graduate School Board of Studies.

N10.5 An agreed period of suspension will not be included in calculating the period of registration specified in N6.3.

N10.6 Applications for extension must be supported by evidence of exceptional the circumstances which have prevented completion within the normal timescale.

N10.7 Withdrawal from registration must be notified to the Graduate School by the Dean of Faculty or Head of Department for report to the Graduate School Board of Studies.

N10.8 Where a student is not making satisfactory academic progress and/or is no longer in contact with his/her supervisory team, the Graduate School Board of Studies may formally terminate a registration.

N11 ANNUAL MONITORING, PROGRESS AND ASSESSMENT

N11.1 In order to assist progression, all students will be offered opportunities to acquire appropriate generic and transferable skills as part of the University's Research Support Programme and through other relevant events.

N11.2 All students are encouraged to maintain a Personal Development Portfolio (PDP) and will be provided with appropriate guidance when they register.

N11.3 The University will operate an annual review system in relation to research degree registrations involving both the research student and the Director of Studies.

N11.4 Documentation from the supervisory team will include a recommendation in relation to progression to the next academic session.

N11.5 Where a student fails to make satisfactory progress or respond appropriately to feedback, registration may be terminated under N10.8 above.

N11.6 A student who is denied progression or whose registration is terminated under these regulations may appeal under the Research Degree Appeals Procedures

N12 SUBMISSION OF THE THESIS

N 12.1 A thesis will be submitted in English, unless otherwise approved by the Graduate School Board of Studies.

N12.2 Submission must be completed within the period of registration and must comply in length, style, layout and presentation with *Schedule A* to these regulations. Submissions may be in print or electronic format.

N12.3 Where the student's own creative work has formed a significant part of the intellectual enquiry under N7.6, the final submission must be accompanied by a permanent record of the creative element of the work, where practicable, bound in with the thesis.

N12.4 Where the principal focus of a programme of research has been the preparation of a scholarly edition of a text or texts, a musical or choreographic work or other original artefact(s) under N7.7, the completed submission must include a copy of the edited text(s) or collection of artefact(s), appropriate textual and explanatory annotations together with a significant introduction and critical commentary which sets the text(s) or artefact(s) in their relevant historical, theoretical and/or critical context.

N12.5 The thesis is generally regarded as a public document. Exceptionally, the Graduate School Board of Studies may approve an application for a thesis to remain confidential to enable a patent application to be lodged or to protect commercially or politically sensitive material.

N12.6 Applications for confidentiality are normally made and approved at the time of registration. Where the need for confidentiality only becomes apparent as the research progresses, a later application may be made but must precede submission of the thesis for examination.

N12.7 The period of confidentiality will not normally exceed three years. Exceptions are at the discretion of the Graduate School Board of Studies.

N12.8 The copies of the thesis submitted for examination will remain the property of the University but intellectual property rights (IPR) and copyright normally resides with the research student. Where a student is being sponsored in relation to the research, agreement on the allocation of IPR will be agreed at the time of registration. Where appropriate, the University will assist the student, on an agreed basis, in the exploitation of IPR.

N13 EXAMINATION ARRANGEMENTS AND THE APPOINTMENT OF EXAMINERS

N13.1 Examination arrangements, including proposals for the appointment of examiners, are approved by the Graduate School Board of Studies.

N13.2 The Director of Studies is responsible for submitting proposals for the examination team to the Graduate School Board of Studies at least six months prior to the proposed date of the examination.

N13.3 A research degree student will be examined by at least two examiners, normally including one internal and one external examiner. In addition, the Graduate School Board of Studies will nominate a suitably experienced independent member of staff to chair the viva and to keep notes in relation to the process.

N13.4 An additional external examiner is required for students who are also members of staff[1] of:

i. the University;
ii. a designated partner institution of the University;
iii. a collaborating institution as designated on the approved registration documentation .

N13.5 Examiners will be experienced in research in the general area of the student's thesis and, where practicable, will have specialist experience in the particular topic that is the subject of examination.

N13.6 The examining team must collectively hold a minimum of two previous examinations of research students at the level of the award being examined. One external examiner must have previous examining experience (see also N13.3).

N13.7 An external examiner may not have acted previously as the student's supervisor or adviser nor have been, within the previous three years, either a supervisor of another research student, or an external examiner on a taught course, in the same Department.

N13.8 External examiners will be clearly independent of both the University and any partner or collaborating institution and will not have been employed by the University, or any partner or collaborating institution, during a period of three years prior to appointment. The Graduate School Board of Studies will ensure that an external examiner is not appointed with such frequency that familiarity with the University might be considered prejudicial to objective judgement.

N13.9 The internal examiner will be a research active member of the University's permanent or emeritus professorial staff who will not be the student's supervisor, former supervisor or adviser at the corresponding level of study.

N13.10 Where there is a requirement for the thesis to remain confidential, examiners must be prepared to agree to maintain such confidentiality.

N13.11 Examiners are required to maintain confidentiality within the examining process and in particular with respect to the thesis until publication.

N14 THE EXAMINATION

N14.1 The examination for the degrees of MPhil and PhD has two stages:

i. the submission and preliminary assessment of the thesis;
ii. the defence of the thesis by oral examination (or approved alternative).

[1] The following are not considered to be subject to this regulation: staff on fractional contracts less than 0.3 FTE, associate tutors teaching fewer than eight hours per week, graduate teaching assistants and staff who have been appointed to a full-time or permanent contract within one year of examination.

N14.2 It is a student's responsibility to:

i. solely determine when a thesis is ready for submission whether or not this has the approval of the student's supervisors[2];
ii. ensure the thesis is submitted within the registration period and complies with the required format;
iii. submit a declaration form confirming that the content of the thesis has not been submitted for a comparable academic award (although reference to work already submitted may be made in a thesis covering a wider field).

N14.3 Where a student wishes to submit a thesis prior to the expiry of the 'expected' period of registration (see N6.3), confirmation by all members of the supervisory team that the thesis is of an appropriate standard to merit examination is required.

N14.4 A supervisor's agreement to the submission of a thesis does not ensure its approval by the examiners nor can it be used as grounds for appeal against the outcome of an examination or introduced as evidence in any such appeal.

N14.5 Normally, oral examinations (or approved alternatives) will be held on mainland Britain. Exceptions must be approved by the Chair of the Graduate School Board of Studies.

N14.6 All examinations will be conducted in English.

N14.7 The oral examination will focus on the programme of work and on the field of study in which the programme lies. Where, for reasons of sickness, disability or comparable valid cause, the Graduate School Board of Studies is satisfied that a student would be at serious disadvantage if required to undergo an oral examination, an alternative form of examination may be approved. Such approval will not be given on the grounds that the student's knowledge of English is inadequate.

N14.8 Students may not take any part in the formal arrangements for the examination nor have any formal contact with the external examiners between their appointment and the oral examination (or approved alternative).

N14.9 Supervisors may attend the oral examination as observers with the prior written consent of the student and the examiners but must withdraw prior to the deliberations of the examiners on the outcome of the examination.

N14.10 The Graduate School Board of Studies, through the Chair of the examination viva, will ensure that the conduct of examinations and the presentation of the examiners' recommendations are undertaken in accordance with the University's regulations. Where the Graduate School Board of Studies is made aware of a failure to comply with the specified procedures, the examination may be declared invalid and new examiners appointed.

N15 PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT OF THE THESIS

N15.1 Prior to the oral examination (or approved alternative), each examiner will be sent a copy of the thesis and is required to submit an independent preliminary report in a prescribed format to the Graduate School indicating a provisional recommendation.

[2] *Students are strongly advised not to submit without the support of their supervisory team but retain the right to do so.*

N15.2 Examiners may not consult with each other in preparing their report.

N15.3 Recommendations will be based on the examiner's judgement of the thesis in relation to the requirements for the award as set out in section N2.1.

N15.4 If an examiner is of the opinion that no useful purpose would be served by conducting an oral examination (or approved alternative), this will form the basis of the recommendation.

N15.5 Where all the examiners are of the opinion that no useful purpose would be served by conducting an oral examination (or approved alternative), they will provide the Graduate School with written guidance on the deficiencies of the thesis for the student who will then have a period of no more than twelve months to revise the thesis for re-examination (see section N17).

N15.6 Where the preliminary recommendations from the external examiners are not in agreement, the Graduate School will consult with all the examiners to reach a decision as to whether to proceed with the oral examination (or approved alternative).

N15.7 The examiners may not recommend that a student fail outright without holding an oral examination (or approved alternative).

N16 FIRST ORAL EXAMINATION

N16.1 Examinations are conducted as set out in section N14.

N16.2 Following the oral examination (or approved alternative) the examiners will, where they are in agreement, prepare a joint report and recommendation to the Graduate School Board of Studies and, where the recommendation is to make the award, certify that the thesis meets the criteria for the award.

N16.3 The following recommendations are available to the examiners:

i. that the student be awarded the degree;

ii. that the student be awarded the degree subject to amendments being made to the thesis, with the amended thesis being submitted by a specified date and no later than twelve months from the date of receipt of guidance from the examining team. The examiners will provide written guidance to the student, via the Graduate School, on what amendments and corrections are required. In certain circumstances under this clause, the examiners may authorise one of the internal examiners to sign-off any amendments on behalf of the examining team. Where appropriate, this will be indicated explicitly on the joint report prepared by the examiners;

iii. that the student be permitted to be re-examined for the degree, with or without a further oral examination (or approved alternative), with the amended thesis being submitted by a specified date and no later than twelve months from the date of receipt of guidance from the examining team. The examiners will provide written guidance to the student, via the Graduate School, on the deficiencies of the examination;

iv. that no award is made and that the student may not be re-examined. The examiners will prepare an agreed statement of the reasons for their recommendation which will be communicated to the student via the Graduate School;

v. in the case of a PhD, that the student be awarded an MPhil with or without amendments being made to the thesis, with the amended thesis being

submitted by a specified date and no later than twelve months from the date of the receipt of guidance from the examining team. The examiners will provide written guidance to the student, via the Graduate School, on what amendments and corrections are required;

vi. in the case of a PhD, that the student be permitted to be re-examined for the award of MPhil, with or without a further oral examination (or approved alternative), with the amended thesis being submitted by a specified date and no later than twelve months from the date of the receipt of guidance from the examining team. The examiners will provide written guidance to the student, via the Graduate School;

vii. the examiners may require a student to undertake a further examination in addition to the oral component. Such examination will be subject to the specific approval of the Graduate School Board of Studies and will normally be held within two months of the oral examination (or approved alternative) and shall be deemed to be part of the first examination;

viii. that malpractice has occurred and that the student be considered under the University's Malpractice regulations (see section N18).

N16.4 Where the examiners are not in agreement following the oral examination (or approved alternative), each examiner will prepare a separate report and recommendation and these will be considered by the Graduate School Board of Studies. The committee will determine one of the following outcomes:

i. to accept a majority recommendation provided that such recommendation includes the views of at least one external examiner;

ii. to accept the recommendation of the external examiner;

iii. to require the appointment of an additional external examiner.

iv. to require the appointment of a new examining team.

N16.5 Where an additional external examiner, or new examining team, is appointed, independent preliminary report(s) on the thesis will be prepared and, where necessary, a further oral examination (or approved alternative) be conducted. The additional external examiner, or examining team, shall not be informed of the opinions or recommendations of the original examiners.

N17 RE-EXAMINATION

N17.1 Only one re-examination for a research degree award is permitted.

N17.2 Where it is satisfied that just cause exists, the Graduate School Board of Studies may approve an extension to the resubmission timescales detailed in N16.3.

N17.3 The examining team responsible for the final recommendation from the first examination will operate for re-examination except that the Graduate School Board of Studies may require that an additional external examiner be appointed.

N17.4 On submission of the revised thesis, examiners will complete preliminary report forms as detailed in section N15.

N17.5 The appropriate form of re-examination will depend on the outcome of the first examination and/or the examiners' recommendations with respect to the revised thesis.

N17.6 Three forms of re-examination are possible:

i. The thesis only to be examined without an oral examination (or approved alternative);

ii. An oral examination (or approved alternative) without the need to further revise the thesis;

iii. Re-examination of the thesis and an oral examination (or approved alternative).

N17.7 Following the re-examination, the examiners will agree a written report and recommendation to the Graduate School Board of Studies.

N17.8 In the case of re-examination, the following recommendations are available to the examiners:

i. that the student be awarded the degree;

ii. that the student be awarded the degree subject to amendments being made to the thesis, with the amended thesis being submitted by a specified date and no later than six months from the date of the receipt of guidance from the examining team. The examiners will provide written guidance to the student, via the Graduate School, on what amendments and corrections are required. In certain circumstances under this clause, the examiners may authorise one of the internal examiners to sign-off any amendments on behalf of the examining team. Where appropriate, this will be indicated explicitly on the joint report prepared by the examiners;

iii. that no award is made. The examiners will prepare an agreed statement of the reasons for their recommendation which will be communicated to the student via the Graduate School;

iv. in the case of a PhD, that the student be awarded an MPhil with or without amendments being made to the thesis, with the amended thesis (if required) being submitted by a specified date and no later than twelve months from the date of the receipt of guidance from the examining team. The examiners will provide written guidance to the student, via the Graduate School, on what amendments and corrections are required;

v. that malpractice has occurred and that the student be considered under the University's Malpractice regulations (see section N18).

N17.9 Where the examiners are not in agreement, the provisions of N16.4 apply.

N18 ACADEMIC MALPRACTICE

N18.1 Academic malpractice is regarded as a serious academic offence and especially within the context of a research degree. Details of what constitutes an academic offence are given in *Schedule B* to these regulations.

N18.2 All allegations of malpractice by the examiners in respect of research degrees following submission of the thesis will be referred to the common procedure outlined in *Schedule B* and a Panel of Inquiry will be established.

N18.3 The Panel will comprise a Chair (a Dean or Professor of the University) and two research active members of staff nominated by the chair of the Graduate School Board of Studies drawn from a standing panel of the committee. No member of the Panel will have had any previous involvement with the student nor will they be drawn from the subject area in which the student's research is based.

N18.4 The panel will meet as soon as possible and not later than six weeks from the date an allegation is formally submitted by the examiners.

N18.5 For the purposes of these regulations, the terms of reference of the Panel of Inquiry will be to determine whether malpractice has taken place and, if so, to make a recommendation with respect to the penalty to be applied to the Graduate School Board of Studies.

N18.6 The following recommendations are available to the Panel:

i. The accusation is unfounded and the student should be permitted to continue to examination without penalty;

ii. The accusation is upheld and the student should be failed with an opportunity for retraining and resubmission under the re-examination regulations (section N17). (Note this recommendation is not available if the student is already registered for re-examination);

iii. The accusation is upheld and the student should be failed outright with a recommendation for exclusion.

N18.7 The Chair of the Graduate School Board of Studies will confirm the position of the student at the earliest opportunity and in any event within two weeks of the hearing.

N18.8 Students who are deemed to have committed malpractice under N18.5 have a right of appeal under the Appeals Procedures of the University (see *Appendix 22*).

N18.9 Where evidence of academic malpractice becomes available subsequent to an award having been made or recommended by the examiners, the malpractice regulations will be invoked and the original decision may be set aside (see also section A2.5).

N19 ACADEMIC REVIEW AND APPEALS

N19.1 All fail decisions, or awards made at a lower level than the registered award, will be reviewed for process and procedure by a standing panel of the Graduate School Board of Studies as a matter of good practice.

N19.2 Research degree students may appeal Graduate School Board of Studies decisions relating to progression and award under the terms of the Appeals Procedure set out in *Appendix 22*.

The following regulations are supplementary to *Appendix 22*:

N19.3 Staff membership of the Appeals Committee will comprise research active members of staff nominated by the Chair of the Graduate School Board of Studies drawn from a standing panel of the committee. No member of the Panel will have had any previous involvement with the student nor will they be drawn from the subject area in which the student's research is based.

N19.4 Where an appeal against progression is upheld, the recommendation for reconsideration will be to the Graduate School Board of Studies.

N19.5 Where an appeal against an award decision is upheld, the recommendation for reconsideration will be to the Graduate School Board of Studies and will be referred back to the examining team.

N19.6 Where the examining team upholds the original recommendation, the Graduate School Board of Studies will determine whether any further action is necessary including the appointment of new examiners.

N20 COMPLAINTS

N20.1 The University operates a universal Complaints Procedure which may be used by students in relation to any aspects not covered under the Appeals Procedure.

N12: SCHEDULE A - SPECIFICATION FOR THESIS SUBMISSION

1. **TEXT**

The text of the thesis, excluding ancillary data, shall not normally exceed the following guidelines:

(i) SCIENCE, ENGINEERING, ART AND DESIGN:

Degree of PhD	40,000 words
Degree of MPhil	20,000 words

(ii) ARTS, SOCIAL SCIENCES AND EDUCATION

Degree of PhD	80,000 words
Degree of MPhil	40,000 words

Where the thesis is accompanied by material in other than written form or the research involves creative writing or the preparation of a scholarly edition, the written thesis shall normally be within the range:

Degree of PhD	20,000 - 40,000 words
Degree of MPhil	15,000 - 20,000 words

Submissions in excess of these limits will not be accepted without prior permission of the Chair of the Graduate School Board of Studies on recommendation from the supervisory team.

2. **FORMAT**

Theses may be submitted in printed or electronic format. Where submission is in printed format, an electronic copy is also required. The format for submissions will be made in accordance with the following rules:

(a) **Printed Theses**

(i) Theses shall normally be to A4 size. Research students requesting permission to use a format larger than A4 should be aware that the production of microfiche and full-size reproduction may not be feasible.

(ii) Copies of theses shall be presented in a permanent and legible form: either in typescript or in print. Where copies are produced by photocopying process, these shall be of a permanent nature; where electronic printing is employed, a laser type printer shall be used. The size of character used in the main text, including displayed matter and notes, shall not be less than font size 11.

(iii) The Thesis shall be printed on the rectoside of the page only; the paper shall be white and within the range 70g/m to 100g/m.

(iv) The margin at the left hand binding edge of the page shall not be less than 40mm; other margins shall not be less than 15mm.

(v) Double or one-and-a-half spacing shall be used in the typescript except for indented quotations or footnotes where single spacing may be used.

(vi) Pages shall be numbered consecutively throughout the text including photographs/diagrams included as whole pages.

(vii) There shall be an abstract of approximately 300 words bound into the thesis which shall provide a synopsis of the content. The abstract shall state the nature and scope of the work undertaken together with the contribution made to the knowledge of the subject treated. Three loose copies of the abstract shall be submitted with the thesis. These shall have as a heading:

the name of the author;
the degree for which the thesis is submitted; and
the title of the thesis.

(b) **Electronic Theses**

(i) Theses shall be produced using appropriate software packages which, where possible, are in common use within the University. The research student shall consult with the University Library at an early stage on the presentation and software for the thesis.

(ii) Theses shall be produced in a format that allows the document to be electronically archived, for example through conversion into a PDF or XML file.

(iii) Where theses contain specialised electronic elements (e.g. interactive formulae, or audio-visual clips), students should seek advice from the University Library on how to embed this information into the main file.

(c) **Title Page**

The title page of each thesis shall give the following information:

(i) the full title of the thesis;
(ii) the full name of the author;
(iii) that the degree is awarded by the University;
(iv) the award for which the degree is submitted in partial fulfilment of its requirement;
(v) the collaborating establishment (if any);
(vi) the month and year of submission.

(d) **Abstract**

An abstract of the thesis of approximately 300 words shall be submitted in electronic format. The abstract shall state the nature and scope of the work undertaken, together with the contribution made to the knowledge of the subject treated and shall have as a heading:

the name of the author;
the degree for which the thesis is submitted; and
the title of the thesis.

A list of no more than 10 identifying keywords shall be submitted for indexing and information retrieval purposes.

3. **THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY COPY**
(Note: and additional copy of the thesis is required for the Department)

(i) Where the thesis is produced in printed format:

(a) One copy of the final, approved, version should be made available for the University Library. The binding shall be black in colour and of a fixed type so that leaves cannot be removed or replaced; the front and rear boards shall have sufficient rigidity to support the weight of the work when standing upright. The outside front board shall bear the title of the work, the name and initials of the candidate, the qualification and the year of award; the same information (excluding the title of the work) shall be shown on the spine of the work, reading downwards. Such information shall be printed to a minimum size of 24pt type.

(b) An electronic copy of the thesis, in a format such as Microsoft Word, together with accompanying media, shall also be submitted.

(ii) Where the thesis is produced in digital format, a copy of the final, approved version should be made available to the University Library.

Appendix C:

Edge Hill University Research Ethics Framework and Research Ethics Forms

Edge Hill University

Research Ethics Framework

Updated September 2010

Contents

Introduction

1.1. In November 2006, the Research and Knowledge Transfer Committee (R&KTC) initiated a review of research ethics at Edge Hill University (EHU). This review sought to incorporate current thinking about research ethics within a critical reflection on Edge Hill's policies and procedures. The aim was to produce a Research Ethics Framework (REF) that reflects best practice, is characterised by integrity and effectiveness, and instils confidence in both those who are subjects in the process of ethical scrutiny and those who operate the framework. The REF was developed with consultation across the institution and deliberated upon by R&KT and Research Degrees Committee (RDC) before submission for approval to Academic Board (AB) in June 2007. RDC has now been superseded by the Graduate School Board of Study (GSBoS)

1.2. The REF takes cognisance of the existing principles, policies and procedures of:

1.2.1. Key research organisations such as the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), Arts and Humanities Research Board (AHRC), the Natural Environmental Research Council (NERC), the British Educational Research Association (BERA), Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC), Medical Research Council (MRC) and the NHS Central Office for Research Ethics Committees (COREC);

1.2.2. Key quality assurance and funding agencies in Higher Education such as the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) and the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA)

1.2.3. Other universities and research ethics specialist resources.

1.3. Whilst taking appropriate cognisance of best practice elsewhere, the REF seeks to provide for three distinctive aims for EHU as a 'University of Choice' and a 'Learning Led University':

1.3.1. To meet the particular obligations, responsibilities and duties of an institution committed to best practice and performance in its

knowledge creation, development and transfer activities and their outputs in relation to the wider community and society.

1.3.2. To recognise that ethical concerns are at the core of the University's community and culture, and to inculcate them in its knowledge creation, development, production and transfer activities and their outputs.

1.3.3. To propagate ethical conduct as central to the University in its external and internal relations, in the pursuit of its knowledge creation, development and transfer activities and their outputs.

1.4. The REF goes beyond a statement of abstract values and/or a set of policies and procedures to address legal and professional concerns as to the ethical import of knowledge creation, development and transfer activities in two respects:

1.4.1. It recognises research as a generic activity of the University, beyond traditional definitions of research and within the broader definition of 'advanced scholarship' that EHU uses in describing the diverse knowledge creation, development and transfer activities (specifically, scholarship of application, discovery, integration and learning) that it engages in, taking in the processes by which knowledge is produced at every level of learning. For the purposes of this document, the most common expression of this activity will be research and knowledge transfer. In its import, all forms of knowledge creation, development, production and transfer should conform to the REF.

1.4.2. It recognises that ethical understandings and practices arise from the culture and practices of a community, and therefore it establishes ethical principles that EHU as a learning community seeks to foster in all of its relations, activities and outputs.

1.5. The University recognises that its REF does not operate without context, but is bounded within and should conform to wider legal and ethical contexts or which the University has obligations:

1.5.1. The University is obliged to operate within British and European law and keep the legal obligations of the University in such agreements that it enters into and research and knowledge transfer engaged in;

1.5.2. The University is obliged to operate within the guidelines and specifications set out by the QAA, HEFCE and other governing bodies in higher education;

1.5.3. The University is obliged to recognise and respect the codes of ethical conduct of professional associations that its staff belong to and practice under;

1.5.4. The University is obliged to recognise and respect the particular obligations both it and members of the Edge Hill community (through the University) enter into in respect of research and

knowledge transfer activities, such as funding councils or bodies.

1.6. The REF comprises four distinct parts:

1.6.1. A statement of values and principles
1.6.2. A statement of policy
1.6.3. An outline of the structure and procedures for ethical scrutiny and deliberation within the institution, including the formation of a standing Research Ethics Committee (REC).
1.6.4. An outline of the procedures for ethical scrutiny and guidance for staff, postgraduate research students and undergraduate/taught postgraduate students

1.7 The Purpose of the REF is not to provide a permanent set of prescriptions, proscriptions and perorations designed to cover all and every eventuality. It seeks, through the development of a set of principles, structures, processes and procedures, to both ensure that ethical concerns are at the forefront of thinking about and the practice of research and knowledge transfer and ensure compliance with the principles and spirit of the REF.

2. Values and Principles

2.1 The REF is founded upon a number of ethical values and principles that provide a core around which best practice in ethical deliberation, reflection and conduct can be based. These values are necessarily broad in character and contextualised within the Universities mission statement and institutional research and knowledge transfer strategies, but they establish underpinnings that commit the University and its members to ethics in its conduct and practices.

2.2. The REF's values and principles are:

2.2.1. **Responsibility and Duty** – All members of the University community have an ethical responsibility and duty to address ethical issues in their relationships in research and knowledge transfer – whether senior managers, academic, administrative or service staff or students. This is a personal responsibility as a member of the University community, and sets the first obligation for ethical reflection upon the individual, in their conduct and practice in research and knowledge transfer activities. It is a fundamental principle that staff and students engaged in research adopt a continuing personal commitment to act ethically, to encourage ethical behaviour in those with whom they collaborate, and to consult where appropriate concerning ethical issues. This responsibility is regarded as integral to individuals practice in research and scholarly activity, as a contractual part of the individual's employment or registration with the University. This

responsibility extends from conduct in relationships, processes and collaborations to such issues as managing or using resources and time, seeking guidance for best practice and due diligence to ethical scrutiny. Researchers and those who manage or oversee research and knowledge transfer have a responsibility and duty to be open to and sensitive to ethical issues and seek scrutiny/guidance advice and support where ethical questions arise that require scrutiny. The exercise of individual responsibility is critical to the REF because it allows the University to adopt an approach to ethical scrutiny that focuses on guidance and support, and only exceptionally in compliance and constraint.

2.2.2. **Integrity and Quality** – Ethical research and knowledge transfer activity is achieved when such activity reflects intellectual integrity, honesty and transparency. Best practice recognises that ethical reflection and scrutiny/guidance, advice and support are not an adjunct to but are integral to both the processes of research and knowledge transfer and the presentation of outputs. High quality research and knowledge transfer products and practices are intrinsically ethical and ethical deliberation and scrutiny is a constant and constructive part of the research process.

2.2.3. **Sensitivity and Duty of Care** – Ethical research and knowledge transfer activities involve a fundamental duty of care to the 'stakeholders' involved in the research process, whether participants or other researchers. This includes ensuring such conditions as confidentiality and anonymity, informed consent, treatment with dignity, avoidance of harm or deception, appropriate dissemination. The physiological, psychological and social well-being of, and avoidance of deleterious consequences for, the research participant should always be a significant consideration of the researcher or research team. Likewise, for those managing research or researchers, the well-being and dignity of research staff engaged in research and knowledge transfer should be a central priority. Research relationships should be characterised, wherever possible, by mutual respect and trust, and by honest and open communication within the research team, between researchers and managers, and between researchers and research participants.

2.2.4. **Independence of Researcher** – Ethical research and knowledge transfer activities are always best assured in respect of ethical considerations if the researcher retains independence in their research and research relationships. This independence involves the exercise of their intellectual freedom and their free choice of who they choose to collaborate with or join in research or knowledge transfer agreements with, and under what terms. Within the context that all external research and knowledge transfer relationships should conform to the REF, the REF protects and preserves the independence of the researcher. Such activities that operate or produce outputs under conditions of coercion, withholding of key access to knowledge pertinent to the research and inducement to misrepresent research findings

cannot be regarded as ethically informed and run contrary to the REF.

3. Characteristics of the REF

3.1 The REF comprises a statement of value and principles and the structures policies, procedures and practices wherein the University can have confidence that it maintains appropriate ethical scrutiny, guidance and support in respect of research and knowledge transfer. In doing so, the University has a number of guiding characteristics as to its operation of the REF and ethical scrutiny.

3.2 The operation of the REF is informed by the following key characteristics:

3.21 **'Light touch'** – The University seeks to minimise the bureaucratisation of the REF by developing an ethically sensitive culture that will encourage individual responsibility, ethical self-reflection and voluntary engagement in debates on ethical issues. It intends the bureaucratic process to be 'light touch' in order to minimise the impact and workload on researchers, and to allow for the acquisition of full and detailed information for scrutiny in forms that are easily accessible to and of minimal burden for researchers. The standardised forms for ethical scrutiny will ask for a minimum of relevant information and allow researchers to use relevant disciplinary conventions or external formats for presenting research proposals provided that all relevant information is presented.

3.2.2 **Proportionality to risk** – The University views research ethics scrutiny as being operated proportionally to risk, where bio-medical or clinical research, research with vulnerable subjects and research with ethical concerns (covert, deceptive or otherwise contradicting ethical guidelines) constitutes high risk research. Low risk research might involve documentary research, research not directly involving human subjects or theoretical or philosophical work. Whilst it is for researchers and/or relevant University boards, bodies or procedures to determine whether research is high risk or low risk, the assumption should always be that it is better to seek ethical scrutiny if there is doubt. All high risk research should be subject to ethical scrutiny and the higher the risk the more that scrutiny should include full use of ethical procedures in EHU, notably the institutional REC. Ethical scrutiny is mandatory for all research involving: biomedical or clinical intervention; degrees of deception or covert activity or such other research that suspends normal ethical practices; research with vulnerable subjects. Notwithstanding judgement of risk, the University asserts that all research has an ethical content, and that ethically informed researchers should be aware of the ethical dimensions of their research.

3.2.3 **Congruence with External Ethical Scrutiny** – The University recognises that it has a responsibility to engage in ethical scrutiny of research and knowledge transfer through established policies and procedures that assure it that all research and knowledge transfer has ethical consideration. At the same time, it recognises that a significant amount of research and knowledge transfer activity involving external funding or public bodies is required to submit to ethical scrutiny as a part of its development. Where that ethical scrutiny involves established and reputable procedures under the aegis of established and reputable agencies (such as research councils, COREC), ethical scrutiny at EHU will involve receiving the papers submitted for such scrutiny and a record of response, only exceptionally requiring separate information and deliberation.

3.2.4 **Critical Peer Review** – The University characterises research ethics scrutiny as a critical peer review process. Ethical scrutiny, except for when the outcome requires changes for research to meet ethical standards or those exceptional cases when it is necessary to refuse ethical approval, will focus on enabling the researcher and enriching the proposal. Critical peer review seeks to strengthen the proposal through constructively challenging the thinking of the researcher and this is how ethical scrutiny should be envisaged. When called upon, the REC will deliberate on ethical problems raised independent of any other influences and on grounds of ethical judgement only, and encourages this in Departmental and Faculty scrutiny.

3.2.5 **Guidance, Advice and Support** – The University emphasises the role of the REC and Departmental and Faculty ethics scrutiny as primarily providing guidance, advice and support to those involved in knowledge creation, development and transfer and the University in sustaining such activity. A key function of the REC is to promote ethical awareness and reflection. This may involve recommendations for staff development, training, resource of appropriate external supports and other means by which ethical research and knowledge transfer can be enhanced.

3.2.6 **Institutional Role** – The University invests in the REC the responsibility to deliberate on specific proposals for research and knowledge transfer with a view to approving, referring back for amendment or refusing approval of individual cases referred to it. It undertakes these functions through delegated responsibility from RKTC and GSBoS, and its minutes and recommendations go to RKTC and GSBoS for ratification. Refusal of ethical approval will be regarded as an exceptional outcome in an institution where an ethical research culture is fostered. The REC is also mandated to consider all aspects of ethical principle, conduct and practice in knowledge creation, development and transfer within and by the University and its constituent agencies. The REC provides an semi-autonomous forum where such judgements can be seen as transparent and

unbiased, with all sections of the EHU community able to put submissions to the REC, Hence, the REC operates not simply to deal with individual cases but also to provide reflexive scrutiny for the ethical conduct and practices of knowledge creation, development and transfer across the constituents (Faculties, Departments, Service Areas) involved in such at University.

4. Research Ethics Committee

4.1 The REC is the primary means by which EHU ensures that research and knowledge transfer activities conform to the REF. The REC is a semi-autonomous committee that sends its minutes and decisions/recommendations to RKTC and GSBoS, but whose agenda and engagement with research and knowledge transfer activities is set by the REC itself or any member of the University community making a submission to the REC. As such, the REC is seen as fulfilling an institutional role, with its work accountable to the University, but at the same time operating with independence and according to ethical principles above all other concerns.

4.2 The REC will normally meet three times a year. It may dispense with routine business through e-mail between meetings and confirm its actions at its next meeting. A sub-committee of the REC can be convened to consider individual cases requiring ethical scrutiny where time is a factor, and the full REC will consider a sample of individual cases as part of its agenda when it meets as well as confirming any sub-committee recommendations.

4.3 The purview of the REC is to consider:

- 4.3.1 The effectiveness of the REF and the maintenance of best practice in ethical guidance, advice, support and scrutiny
- 4.3.2 University policy, procedures and practices that impact upon research and knowledge transfer giving rise to ethical concern
- 4.3.3 Ethical scrutiny and deliberations through structures within Faculty, Department or Service Areas (through receiving relevant minutes and papers)
- 4.3.4 Staff development and other means to encourage the development of an ethically informed research culture.
- 4.3.5 Such matters that are referred to it by R&KT and GSBoS or any member of the University community.
- 4.3.6 Individual Cases
- 4.3.7 The management and hearing of appeals where individual research and knowledge transfer activities have had ethical approval withheld.

4.4 The REC is constituted by 13 members and two ex-officio officers:

- 4.4.1 Chair (Appointed by the Vice Chancellor/Pro-Vice Chancellor and with ongoing research and knowledge transfer activity in ethics)

4.4.2 One Representative appointed from each Faculty Research Committee (3 members)
4.4.3 One Postgraduate Research Student nominated from the Research Student network (1)
4.4.4 Two External Members – Ethics Experts from other Universities (2)
4.4.5 Two Elected members from across the University (2)
4.4.6 Two Lay Members – non-specialist and normal members of the local community with some appropriate experience in private/public/voluntary sector governance (2)
4.4.7 One elected member from Student Support and Learning services (1)
4.4.8 One elected member from University Recognised Research Centres
4.4.9 Director of Graduate School or designate (ex-officio)
4.4.10 Secretary (ex-officio – from the Graduate School Administration Office – responsible for compiling minutes and recommendations, confirming them with the Chair and ensuring their inclusion in RKTC and GSBoS agendas)

4.5 Where the REC delegates a sub-committee to act for it (through the Chair), the sub-committee should consist of no less than five full members, one of which should be an external or lay member.

4.6 REC makes two forms of findings in its deliberations:

4.6.1 Decisions on individual's cases of research and knowledge transfer projects referred or self-referred to it. The decisions it can make are to approve a project; require amendments to the project proposal prior to one further scrutiny; or reject the project.
4.6.2 Recommendations on submissions, issues and concerns that come onto its agenda and that involve institutional policies, procedures and recommendations.
4.6.3 Both decisions and recommendations are received and in the case of the latter acted upon by R&KTC or GSBoS (depending on whether it involves postgraduate students by research).

4.7 The REC will provide an Annual Monitoring Report to RKTC and GSBoS detailing its deliberations and recommendations in addition to its minutes and where relevant papers being considered by those committees.

5. Procedures for Referral and Scrutiny

5.1 The REC provides a central focus for ethical scrutiny in EHU. In turn, all Faculties/Departments/Service Areas are required to have clear structures and procedures for ethical scrutiny determined at that operational level, and to both report them and the business and decisions they make through minutes and papers to REC. REC has

responsibility for reporting and quality assurance on the effectiveness of all institutional forms of ethical scrutiny and their operation.

5.2 The REC can receive submissions for consideration by any member – individual or group – of the University community on matters of ethical concern. It may request data/information from relevant constituent parts of the University in pursuing its response to such submissions. These may involve matters of institutional policy and procedure or individual research and knowledge transfer activities requiring approval.

5.3 In addition to individual submissions, there are a number of points in the process of research and knowledge transfer activities when research and knowledge transfer might be referred to the REC. It should be stressed that referral for ethics scrutiny should not be regarded as a negative but a developmental step in the research and knowledge transfer process. All referrals and self-referrals are submitted with the same status and process, and on the same forms (see Appendix 2), though variables such as the experience of the researcher and the status of the project will be factors in the deliberations of the REC:

5.3.1 External funding bids for research and knowledge transfer might be referred by the Director of the Graduate School or their designate. These referrals would normally come directly to REC.

5.3.2 Applications for internal funding such as the Research Development Fund or Faculty funding might be referred by the Director of the Graduate School or Dean of Faculty or their designates. These referrals would normally come directly to REC, but bids for Faculty funding may be scrutinised at Faculty level.

5.3.3 Research and knowledge transfer activities by staff might be referred by Director of the Graduate school or Faculty or their designates, Faculty or Departmental Research Committees or Ethics structures/procedures; Co-ordinators/ Directors of Research Centres or Groupings. These referrals might first be scrutinised at Faculty/Departmental level.

5.3.4 Postgraduate research students' research and knowledge transfer might be referred though the Registration or Transfer Panels, the Research Supervisor or the GSBoS. These referrals would normally come directly to REC.

5.3.5 Taught postgraduate students and undergraduate students' research and knowledge transfer might be referred by supervisors, Programme Leaders or other Staff. These referrals might first be scrutinised at Faculty/Departmental level.

5.4 Ethical scrutiny should begin at the appropriate level of reporting, which will normally be at Faculty/Departmental levels. Whether cases are referred to the REC is a matter of the relevant ethics structure/procedure in place, with the responsibility accruing to the chair or designated person responsible for operating the

Faculty/Departmental structure/procedure, on grounds of proportionality of risk and degree of ethical concerns. REC might exercise its right to seek to engage in scrutiny where an individual case clearly represents significant challenges for ethical deliberation.

5.5 In the case of co-terminus ethical scrutiny, where ethical scrutiny is required both through the institutional processes and outwith the institution with external bodies – such as local research ethics committees in the case of ethics research – project details should be reported to REC and REC will act in concert with the external process so as to minimise delay and duplication of work in acquiring ethical approval.

5.6. Where referral/self-referral of a case or issue is made, the following procedure applies:

5.6.1 All referrals/ self-referrals and submissions should be submitted in writing to the Secretary to the REC in the Academic Quality Unit in a form that provides all the pertinent detail for deliberation and judgement to take place.

5.6.2. The Secretary will liaise with the Chair who will determine if the case or issue should be held over for the next meeting of the REC, dealt with by a sub-committee of the REC, or dealt with through routine e-mail contact.

5.6.3 The appropriate committee, sub-committee or e-mail deliberation will take place at the earliest opportunity.

5.6.4 Those who make self-referrals or submissions to the REC are entitled to attend the REC or its sub-committee for the relevant item.

5.6.5. The decision/recommendation and the reasons for the decision/ recommendation will normally be communicated within 14 days of the completion of the deliberation.

5.7 Where advice is sought as to whether an individual case or concern is appropriate to refer to the REC or Faculty/Departmental processes for ethical scrutiny, there are a number of sources of advice that might be informally approached. If the issue cannot be resolved informally, it should normally be referred directly to the REC:

5.7.1 The Chair of the REC

5.7.2. The Chair of Faculty or Departmental Ethics processes.

5.7.3. Deans, Associate Deans, Heads of Department and Programme Leaders where the case or issue is under their jurisdiction.

5.7.4. The University Ethics Forum.

6. Appeals

6.1 All researchers have the right to appeal against the judgement of Faculty/departmental Ethical Processes or decisions (not

recommendations) of the REC. There are two grounds for such appeal:

6.1.1 Where the researcher feels that the research scrutiny has made a judgement based on erroneous assumptions about the case or issue referred or been unfair in its consideration of the case or issue;

6.1.2 Where there have been any irregularities in the procedures adopted by the research scrutiny.

6.2 All appeals should be made in writing within ten working days of the notification of the decision of the REC.

6.3 Appeals against decisions at Faculty and Department level are heard by the REC or its sub-committee. Appeals against the REC are heard by a full meeting of the REC.

6.4 The appeal is heard at the next meeting of the full REC, which will review the grounds for the decision and consider the grounds of appeal presented with the appellant.

6.5 The RESC may:

6.5.1 Uphold its original decision to reject the proposal;

6.5.2 Uphold the appeal of the appellant and approve the original proposal;

6.5.3 Uphold the appeal of the appellant but refer the decision until appropriate revisions have been made to the proposal.

6.6. Following an unsuccessful appeal, and where the appellant is dissatisfied with the decision of the REC, they have the right to submit a final appeal to the R&KTC (or GSBoS where the appellant is a postgraduate research student). This appeal must be lodged through the Chair of the R&KTC (or GSBoS) within ten working days of receipt of REC's final decision. A panel of not less than three members of the R&KTC (or GSBoS), who have not previously been associated with the proposal, will make a final decision which will be based solely on the procedural propriety of REC's decision-making process. The researcher will be notified in writing within five working days of this hearing.

Edge Hill University

RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER COMMITTEE
RESEARCH DEGREES COMMITTEE

Research Ethics Committee

Application for Institutional Ethical Approval

Name (lead researcher)

Names and affiliations of research team

Status (Staff, PGR)

Title of Project

Form of Project
(research, consultancy)

Duration of Project **From**

To

Location(s) of Project

Source of Funding of The Project

Ethical Approval Information	Yes	No	Detail
Has this proposal been through internal ethical approval processes? (please specify and append documentation as appropriate)			
Has this proposal been through co-terminus ethical approval procedures? (please specify and append documentation as appropriate)			
Has this proposal been through external ethical approval procedures? (please specify and append documentation as appropriate)			
Is the proposal an extension of a project that has previously undergone ethical approval procedures? (please specify and append documentation as appropriate)			
Does the proposal require a specific ethical approval action (letter, facility) to be produced to support the project (please specify)			

Outline of the Project and Ethical issues **Ethical approval applications should include details under the categories listed below. They can be presented in a submission written for this specific approval or consist of documents written that outline the project (for example to external funders) as long as a cover sheet clearly specifies where each of the categories listed are elaborated upon. Submissions should include such detail as allows readers to gain a clear understanding of the applicants attention to ethical issues and problems**
Title of the Project / Aims and Objectives of the Project
Outline of the Project
Methodology and Outline of Methods and Analysis
Identification of Research Participants
Timescales and Staging of the Project
Budget and Logistics (Full economic cost)/ Sources of Funding
Specific Ethical Considerations/Risk Assessment
Relevant Supporting Papers (such as Consent letters, Information Sheets)
Confirmation that EHU policies and procedures have been followed (such as risk assessment, health and safety protocol)
Processes by Which Ethical Review Will be in Place Throughout the Project
Details of Research Staff

Approval Form

Applicants Signature
(Lead Researcher/
Project Leader)

Comments and Signature Line Manager (Department/Faculty/University) for the Project
Signed Position

Comments and signature of Chair of any prior internal ethical approval process (deferrals require the report/minute of the meeting that considered the proposal to be appended)
Signed Committee

Administrative
Committee/Sub-Committee Date:
Minute Reference
Approval Date
Note of Further Action where needed:
Signature of Chair

Edge Hill University

RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER COMMITTEE
RESEARCH DEGREES COMMITTEE

Research Ethics Committee

Notification of External Ethical Approval

Name of Edge Hill University Researcher(s):
with an involvement in the Project

Names and affiliation of External Researchers:

Title of Research Project:
(with very brief – 100 word
Maximum outline of the project)

Form of Project (research,
consultancy, service evaluation)

Duration of Project From

To

Location(s) of Project

Source of Funding of
The Project

Research Governance Body
Giving Ethical Approval

Please note: This form should be lodged with the appropriate REC or UREC. It should be accompanied by a copy of:

- **the full submission document for research ethics approval**
- **the formal notification of ethical approval**

Signature of Researcher(s)

Appendix D:

PDP Forms

Year of Study: _____ **Form: PGRPDP 1**

PERSONAL AND GENERIC SKILLS AUDIT

Skill Type	Previous training & activity in this area	Skills audit Score (1-6) 1 = weak 6 = strong	Goals What I would like to be able to achieve in this area	Future training needs and possible sources of support
RESEARCH SKILLS AND TECHNIQUES				
Being able to recognise and validate problems and to formulate and test hypotheses				
Being able to demonstrate original, independent and critical thinking				
Having the ability to develop theoretical concepts				
Having a knowledge of recent advances within my field and in related areas				
Having an understanding of relevant research methodologies and techniques and their appropriate application within my research field				

Having the ability to analyse critically and evaluate my own findings				
Having the ability to analyse critically and evaluate the findings of others				
Having the ability to summarise, document, report and reflect on my progress and development				

Questions for, and issues and concerns to be discussed with my supervisor(s)	
1	
2	
3	
4	

RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT	Previous training & activity in this area	Skills audit Score (1-6) 1 = weak 6 = strong	Goals What I would like to be able to achieve in this area	Future training needs and possible sources of support
Having a broad understanding of the context, at the national and international level, in which research takes place				
Being able to demonstrate awareness of issues relating to the rights of other researchers, of research subjects, and of others who may be affected by a piece of research, e.g. confidentiality, ethical issues, attribution, copyright, malpractice, ownership of data and the requirements of the Data Protection Act				
Demonstrate appreciation of standards of good research practice in my institution and/or discipline				
Understand relevant health and safety issues and demonstrate responsible working practices				
Understand the processes for funding and evaluation of research				
Be able to justify the principles and experimental techniques used in my research				

Understand the process of academic or commercial exploitation of research results				

Questions for, and issues and concerns to be discussed with my supervisor(s)	
1	
2	
3	
4	

RESEARCH MANAGEMENT	Previous training & activity in this area	Skills audit Score (1-6) 1 = weak 6 = strong	Goals What I would like to be able to achieve in this area	Future training needs and possible sources of support
Be able to apply effective project management through the setting of research goals, intermediate milestones and prioritisation of activities				
Be able to design and execute systems for the acquisition and collation of information through the effective use of appropriate resources and equipment				
Be able to identify and access appropriate bibliographical resources, archives, and other sources of relevant information				
Be able to use information technology appropriately for database management, recording and presenting information				

Questions for, and issues and concerns to be discussed with my supervisor(s)	
1	
2	
3	
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PERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS	Previous training & activity in this area	Skills audit Score (1-6) 1 = weak 6 = strong	Goals What I would like to be able to achieve in this area	Future training needs and possible sources of support
Demonstrate a willingness and ability to learn and acquire knowledge				
Be creative, innovative and original in my approach to research				
Demonstrate flexibility and open-mindedness				
Demonstrate self-awareness and the ability to identify my training needs				
Demonstrate self-discipline, motivation, and thoroughness				
Recognise boundaries and draw upon/use sources of support as appropriate				
Show initiative, work independently and be self-reliant				

Questions for, and issues and concerns to be discussed with my supervisor(s)	
1	
2	
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4	

COMMUNICATION SKILLS	Previous training & activity in this area	Skills audit Score (1-6) 1 = weak 6 = strong	Goals What I would like to be able to achieve in this area	Future training needs and possible sources of support
Be able to write clearly and in a style appropriate to purpose, e.g. progress reports, published documents, thesis				
Be able to construct coherent arguments and articulate ideas clearly to a range of audiences, formally and informally through a variety of techniques				
Be able to constructively defend research outcomes at seminars and viva examination				
Be able to contribute to promoting the public understanding of my research field				
Be able to effectively support the learning of others when involved in teaching, mentoring or demonstrating activities				

Questions for, and issues and concerns to be discussed with my supervisor(s)	
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NETWORKING AND TEAMWORKING	Previous training & activity in this area	Skills audit Score (1-6) 1 = weak 6 = strong	Goals What I would like to be able to achieve in this area	Future training needs and possible sources of support
Be able to develop and maintain co-operative networks and working relationships with supervisors, colleagues and peers, within the institution and the wider research community				
Be able to understand my behaviours and impact on others when working in and contributing to the success of formal and informal teams				
Be able to listen, give and receive feedback and respond perceptively to others				

Questions for, and issues and concerns to be discussed with my supervisor(s)	
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CAREER MANAGEMENT	Previous training & activity in this area	Skills audit Score (1-6) 1 = weak 6 = strong	Goals What I would like to be able to achieve in this area	Future training needs and possible sources of support
Appreciate the need for and show commitment to continued professional development				
Be able to take ownership for and manage my career progression, set realistic and achievable career goals, and identify and develop ways to improve employability				
Demonstrate an insight into the transferable nature of research skills to other work environments and the range of career opportunities within and outside academia				
Present my skills, personal attributes and experiences through effective CVs, applications and interviews				

Questions for, and issues and concerns to be discussed with my supervisor(s)	
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OTHER SKILLS (As identified by you or your supervisor)	**Previous training & activity in this area**	**Skills audit Score (1-6) 1 = weak 6 = strong**	**Goals What I would like to be able to achieve in this area**	**Future training needs and possible sources of support**
Other skill (relevant to you or your discipline)				
Other skill (relevant to you or your discipline)				
Other skill (relevant to you or your discipline)				
Other skill (relevant to you or your discipline)				
Other skill (relevant to you or your discipline)				
Other skill (relevant to you or your discipline)				

Questions for, and issues and concerns to be discussed with my supervisor(s)	
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Name: _____ **Form: PGRPDP 2**

Faculty / Department: _____

Record of Supervisory Contact

Date	Main Issues Discussed / Activities Undertaken	Actions Agreed

Name: _____ **Form: PGRPDP 3**

Faculty / Department: _____

Record of Training and Development Activities

Date	Nature of Activity	Where or How Undertaken	Brief Summary of Content

Appendix E:

Policy Statement on Research Students and Teaching

Policy Statement on Research Students and Teaching

1. Preamble

Edge Hill recognises and values the important part played by its research students in the academic and social life of the University. It recognises that, in offering places to research students, it is contributing both to the provision of trained researchers who will make a contribution to society, and also to the training of the next generation of academics. As part of this research training process, the University is committed to providing the best possible opportunities for its research students' professional development. A key part of the professional development for students intending to make higher education their career is experience of teaching and the enhancement of teaching skills. This policy is intended to clarify the Edge Hill's position regarding research students' access to paid, part-time teaching opportunities and the associated training requirements.

2. General Principles

Edge Hill believes that the following principles should apply regarding research students' access to part-time teaching:

a) The self-identified needs of each research student should lie at the centre of Edge Hill's policy on access to part-time teaching

b) Full-time and part-time research students should be treated in the same way

c) Bursaried and self-funded research students should be treated in the same way

d) Edge Hill should seek to maximise the extent to which the teaching experience of research students is certificated

e) Appropriate support should be given to research students who are intending to teach both prior to that teaching and during the course of it.

3. Considerations to be taken into account when allocating teaching to research students

When allocating teaching to any particular student, Deans of Faculties, Heads of Departments and Supervisors must take account of the following points.

a) The central focus of a research student's activity while at Edge Hill should be the production of a thesis appropriate to the degree for which registration has been or is being sought.

b) There should be no obligation on a research student to undertake teaching.

c) Teaching which is undertaken by research students should, wherever possible, be relevant to the research they are pursuing.

d) Supervisors should be involved in the decision as to whether or not a research student is allocated teaching.

e) In their first year of study, research students have the obligation to develop a programme of work and define their research project and, as a consequence of this fact, should generally undertake significantly less teaching than would be the case in later years.

f) While the single pay rate and the maximum number of hours teaching which a full-time research student can undertake implies that each hour of teaching is equal in terms of the work it involves, this is not the case. Lectures, seminars and tutorials involve very different amounts of work regarding preparation and marking. Additionally, there are demands of administration and student counselling which are consequent to some types of teaching and not to others.

g) Bearing in mind the principle (see 2(b) above) that, as far as possible, full-time and part-time research students should be treated in the same way, it must be recognised that full-time students should be dedicating almost all of their time to the pursuit of a project which will lead to a higher degree in a very limited time, while for some part-time students, part-time teaching may be helping them to finance their MPhil/PhD studies. This means that, while a maximum number of hours teaching per year can be applied to a full-time student, it is inappropriate to do so for part-time students.

h) Research students can sometimes feel pressured towards teaching, particularly when this teaching is to be undertaken for his or her supervisor.

4. General Policy

a) If a research student indicates a desire to teach, part-time teaching may be made available. This teaching should be seen as part of the process of professional development associated with the pursuit of a higher degree by research.

b) The maximum amount of teaching which a *full-time* research student may normally undertake is 90 hours and in the allocation of this teaching due regard must be given to the forms of teaching being allocated and to the demands, responsibilities and administration which accrue to them. (See Notes 1 and 2 below) There is no maximum for *part-time* students, but in allocating teaching, regard must be had to 3(a) above.

c) The 90 hours referred to above is a maximum rather than an entitlement. There will be circumstances in which less than this maximum, or indeed no teaching, will be available for any particular research student.

d) Normally, no research student should undertake teaching duties unless they have first attended the induction workshop on teaching in Edge Hill or an equivalent programme (or have been booked into such a programme). This workshop is organised each year as part of the Edge Hill induction programme for new staff and introduces new teachers to the activity of teaching and will introduce experienced teachers new to Edge Hill to the variety of teaching practice in Edge Hill.

e) Wherever possible, approaches to research students inviting them to teach should be made through the supervisor.

f) For bursaried research students the permission of the supervisor *must* be obtained by a subject leader before a research student can be issued with a timetable.

g) For self-funded and part-time students, the supervisor should be notified of any part-time teaching which a research students is being invited to undertake and, in the light of the student's progress to date, the supervisor should advise the student about any potential adverse impact upon the student's future progress.

h) Supervisors who are considering inviting research students to undertake teaching for them should be extremely sensitive to any potential pressure which the student may be feeling and should, if they have any reason to suspect that this pressure may be present, seek advice from the Director of the Graduate School who may discuss the matter directly with the student.

i) During their first year of study for a higher degree, a full-time research student should normally only undertake teaching which is:

- fully supported
- related to their research
- of an appropriate mode and level.

j) The Director of Studies of each full-time research student must supply the Research Degrees Committee with a statement to the effect that this is the case and justify any deviation from this norm. A proforma will be issued to the Director of Studies of each full-time research student by the Chair of RDC for completion and submission to the first meeting of the Committee in each academic session.

k) If a research student undertakes more than a minimal amount of teaching during a second or subsequent year of study for a higher degree, they should be encouraged strongly to register for the Edge Hill Certificate in Teaching and Learning unless the supervisor deems it to be inappropriate given the demands on the student's time. This issue will be addressed as part of the annual student monitoring process.

l) Available part-time teaching should be directed in the first place towards students who indicate a desire to use their higher degree as a means of entry to academic life.

Note 1

The Working Group which developed this policy was concerned by the assumption that any one hour of part-time teaching is equivalent to any other. In some cases a research student's teaching will be made up entirely of seminar work, while in others there may be a significant number of lectures to write. There is a further complication in that accepting one hour per week of seminar work may entail the research student in marking up to 40 coursework assignments and 20 examination scripts. On occasion, a research student may be asked to teach an entire module with all the associated administration that comes with that role (at one lecture per week and two seminars, this would count for 30 hours of teaching). To this formal commitment should be added the fact that, because they may well be on the premises, full-time research students are likely to be easily accessible by undergraduates who are seeking advice and this commitment can be considerable. All of these issues have a quality dimension both for the postgraduates doing the teaching and for the undergraduates who are being taught.

Note 2

The recommendation of the ESRC regarding the students to whom they award bursaries is that, in their second and third year of study, students may teach undergraduates to the extent of taking '*seminar or tutorial groups and marking assignments* for a maximum of 180 hours each year.' HEQC's *Guidelines on the Quality Assurance of Research Degrees* states that 'teaching and demonstrating duties should not normally exceed 180 hours per annum *including time for preparation and marking*…' (emphasis added)