University of

GOOD PRACTICE GUIDE

MONITORING AND ASSESSING THE PROGRESS OF POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH STUDENTS

Contents

Introduction

The University   summarises and enshrines our current policy on monitoring the progress of students on research degrees. The purpose of this guide is to provide additional, detailed information and suggestions for good practice where relevant. The guide primarily relates to monitoring and assessing the progress of PhD students, although parts of it will also be relevant for those studying for MPhil degrees. It does not apply to those studying for Professional Doctorates, LLM or MRes degrees.

In addition to the University   , this guide also complements a number of other sources of relevant information including, School / Department Postgraduate Research Student Handbooks, and other documents within section 9 of the Guide to Policy and Procedures for Teaching and Learning.

The purpose of monitoring progress

From a University perspective, the purpose of monitoring and assessing progress is to ensure that research students are making satisfactory progress and are receiving appropriate levels of supervision, training, and support. Having good monitoring procedures in place has a direct positive influence on student submission rates.

The performance of our research students, in terms of their submission and qualification rates, is increasingly being assessed and used by external bodies such as the Research Councils and HEFCE. Some information is also now made publicly available so that other Universities, potential students and their sponsors can see how well we perform.

University policies stipulate that formal monitoring must be conducted at least once a year for all research students (including part-time and PhD by Distance and others who are studying away from the University). Where students are undergoing Confirmation of Registration, then this can been taken in lieu of an Annual Progress Review for that year of study.

We have learned from experience, that many students who are clearly experiencing difficulties as they reach the end of their registration period have not been monitored as closely as they should have been, or have been not been given sufficient explicit feedback about their performance following review meetings. Although this guide sets out the minimum requirements for progress monitoring, we strongly recommend that more frequent monitoring is carried out, with informal assessments taking place between formal monitoring points.

School / Department roles and responsibilities

Schools have full restionr p3(f)IEC003(ac)-5(hoo)1T1 0 0ETBT1 0 0/P⨍14 Tm0 g

to recommendations for a transfer of status from PhD to MPhil registration, or to registration being terminated should be referred to the Head of School.

Selection of monitors / assessors within Schools

of registration is recommended. In cases where a change of registration

Confirmation of Registration

Two assessors must be used for Confirmation of Registration. Supervisors may or may not be involved in the process, but where they are involved they should not be pr(w)2017

research students against confirmation of registration decisions and the deadline by which any appeal must be submitted. The HoS should send a copy of the letter (with supporting documentation) to the Doctoral Research Office.

This guide, along with the various templates for reporting throughout the stages of progress monitoring , is located on the Graduate School website at:

http://www.reading.ac.uk/graduateschool/supervisorsandresearchstaff/gs-staff-policies-and-procedures.aspx

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Dean of PGR Studies   October 2017