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Research Student Handbook 2025

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Using your PGR Student Handbook

This handbook was authored by the Graduate School and published in February 2024. We have taken care in ensuring the information in this handbook is up to date. However, if you notice inaccuracies or broken links, please let us know by emailing researchstudentadmin@leedsbeckett.ac.uk

This handbook is intended to be used as a guide. You and your research supervisors should use this handbook in conjunction with relevant [university policies, procedures and academic regulations](#).

We can make minor updates to the handbook at any point during each academic year. A log of all updates can be found at the back of this handbook.

If you require a copy of a previous version of the Research Student Handbook, please contact researchstudentadmin@leedsbeckett.ac.uk

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LBU Research Student Essentials

The Graduate School

The Graduate School manages the administration for all our postgraduate research students (PGRs), as well as the researcher training and development programme (RTP).

The Graduate School will be your main point of contact in relation to administrative matters, policy and processes, regulations, and student development opportunities. The team can also refer you to services and support available to you across the University.

Contacting the Graduate School

The team works Monday to Friday.

Email: researchstudentadmin@leedsbeckett.ac.uk.

Telephone: 0113 812 5375

We have lots of information available on our webpages: www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/the-graduate-school/

The Graduate School will always contact you using your student email address. Therefore, it is essential that you have access to this, and check it regularly. Not doing so may result in you missing key information about your degree, or missing deadlines.

Student Services

The Graduate School can help you with matters relating to your supervisory team, the administration of your research programme and using Student Admin Manager (SAM). However, you are also able to access a range of support, services and opportunities that can enhance your student experience and your academic studies.

The Student Advice team is located within Student Services and is an essential part of your Student Support Network. The Student Advice team are dedicated to ensuring you are able to access all the support, advice and opportunities available to you, delivered by teams across the University.

The team can be found in our Student Services Centres (Monday – Friday) and are also accessible via telephone, email and online chat.

The team also has Student Life Advisers who are here to assist you when you need specific advice relating to your circumstances and how they may be affecting your time at university. The Advisers are trained colleagues who run appointments to help you access information and support options both within the University, such as Student Money, SIAC (Student Immigration Advice and Compliance), Disability Advice and Student Wellbeing, as well as external support from a range of services in the community.

You can talk to Student Advice about any issues that may be affecting your time at university. To book an appointment with an adviser contact studentadvice@leedsbeckett.ac.uk and include your name, Student ID Number and brief overview of what you would like to discuss.

Student Services Centres Locations and Opening Hours

Monday: 09:00 – 17:00

Tuesday: **10:00** – 17:00

Wednesday: 09:00 – 17:00

Thursday: 09:00 – 17:00

Friday: 09:00 – **16:30**

City Campus: Ground Floor of Leslie Silver Building

Headingley Campus: Ground Floor of Priestly Hall

Email: studentadvice@leedsbeckett.ac.uk

Telephone: 0113 812 3000

Webpages: www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/student-information/student-advice

Leeds Beckett Students' Union (LBSU)

As a Leeds Beckett Student, you are a member of the Leeds Beckett's Students' Union (LBSU), and you can access all the support and opportunities they have to offer.

LBSU is a not-for-profit organisation, and it's our mission to make students' lives better! We're here to support, connect and represent you and we act upon your feedback to ensure your academic experience is up to scratch. You can submit your thoughts through your Course Rep, or if you'd like to influence the Students' Union's policy stance on particular issues or our priorities for improving the student experience across the University, submit your ideas on our Have Your Say platform, which is designed to make change happen!" - LBSU "

Contacting LBSU

Email: lbsu-welcome@leedsbeckett.ac.uk

Telephone: 0113 812 8400

Webpages: www.leedsbeckettsu.co.uk

Postgraduate Research Students' Community

As a research student, you will automatically become a member of the [Postgraduate Research Community](#). This community provides an online space for all PGR students to come together to build a network, and provide support and feedback on their student experience at Leeds Beckett.

Information about the community and how to join is provided on their website. If you have any questions or problems with joining a community, please contact studentvoice@leedsbeckett.ac.uk.

Postgraduate Research Student Representatives

Each year both doctoral and master's level PGR students have the opportunity to become a PGR representative for their School. The PGR representative role provides a means by which the PGR community is represented in formal University and Students' Union structures and through which PGR students can raise any issues and concerns, communicating their opinions and thoughts on their student experience to the appropriate colleagues.

Having PGR representatives also provides opportunities for PGR students to influence and be co-creators in the formulation and development of future University policy affecting research degree programmes, ensuring that the PGR student perspective is considered.

There is also the opportunity for you to put yourself forward for election on to the University Research Ethics Committee and the Research and Enterprise Committee when a position becomes available.

Library and IT Services

The [Library and Student IT Advice Team](#) are your first point of contact for queries on research and referencing skills, borrowing, software access, MyBeckett, email, wi-fi, Turnitin, online meeting tools, Office 365 and more. They can be [contacted via email, phone, in person or chat](#).

The University provides students with a free [Microsoft Office 365](#) subscription for the duration of your studies at the University. This includes a range of Microsoft Apps and OneDrive, a secure cloud storage facility. More information on how to access O365 can be found [here](#).

[Library services](#) provide in person and online services and support including:

- library tool 'Discover' to cross search books and journals.
- guidance on research data management
- guidance on reference management
- study spaces
- training via their skills for learning programme
- [subject guides](#)
- one to one appointments with an Academic Librarian for your school to help with a range of skills including academic writing and finding library resources.

For more information on how to access Library and Student IT Services please refer to the [Research Support](#) webpage.

Student Admin Manager (SAM)

The Graduate School uses an online web-based system called **Student Admin Manager (SAM)** to manage the administration of the Research Student journey. This is a single point of information, which provides details of your research programme, highlights key deadlines and tasks as well as a dedicated area for training and development opportunities. Research students, supervisors, key academic staff and the Graduate School all use this system.

To login to SAM please go to: <https://sam.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/do/lbu-login/login>

The following resources provide further information on using the system:

[SAM User guide](#)

[SAM Examination guide](#)

[Demonstration of full SAM system \(recording\)](#)

[Demonstrations of various SAM processes](#) can be found in the RTP Module under SAM Information & Guides

Governance and Important Policies

Key Policies for Research Students

This handbook contains key information that you will need throughout your degree. However, there are key university policies that you should be familiar with. A full list of policies that apply to students is available on the [university website](#). These include policies relating to the use of social media, wellbeing, pregnancy and parenthood, and data protection, to name a few. **This handbook should be read in conjunction with all university policies.**

For your convenience, some of the policies relevant to your student journey are linked below.

[The Student Contract](#)

[Academic Regulations, Section 11: Research Awards](#)

[Academic Engagement Policy](#)

[The Student Code of Conduct](#)

Other policies relating to research include:

[Intellectual Property Rights](#)

[Open Research Policy](#)

[Policy and Procedures for Investigating Allegations of Misconduct in Research](#)

[Research Ethics](#)

Research Degree Sub-Committee (RDSC)

The [Research Degree Sub-Committee](#) (RDSC) is the main decision-making body in relation to research degrees and focuses on strategic issues and oversees the quality and standards of the University's research awards.

The Committee is chaired by a senior professor; the membership consists of Directors of Research and experienced research-active staff from across the institution.

The Committee meets three or four times a year.

RDSC Decision Panel

The Decision Panel serves as a sub-committee to the RDSC and meets monthly to consider and approve requests for:

1. Change of supervisor/s
2. Examination arrangements
3. Extension or suspension
4. Early submission
5. Writing-up
6. University-led withdrawal
7. Staff to become directors of study, research supervisors and/or advisors

The Decision Panel will include the following five members:

- Chair of RDSC
- Graduate School Manager/delegate
- Three RDSC Committee Members (on a rota basis)

Where a decision is deemed by the RDSC Decision Panel to be beyond their remit the Panel may defer consideration of the request and consult the Chair of Research Degrees Sub-committee for advice on how to proceed.

School-level Panels

Where an appropriate school-level committee or group is in place, the RDSC Decision Panel gives delegated authority to schools for consideration and approval of requests for:

1. Change of thesis title
2. Change of mode
3. Thesis embargo
4. Student-led withdrawal

The Panel is chaired and convened by the director of research in each school.

Where a decision is deemed by the school-level committee or group to be beyond their remit they may defer consideration of the request and consult the Chair of Research Degrees Sub-committee for advice on how to proceed

Academic Honesty, Research Ethics and Good Research Practice

Academic Honesty

Academic honesty (sometimes referred to as academic integrity) is a fundamental

principle within the University and is strongly linked to good academic practice. The University has processes to investigate alleged breaches of academic honesty and, where a breach of academic honesty is admitted or found, applies appropriate penalties as defined in 'Section 10' of the [Academic Regulations](#).

The University seeks to educate its students about academic honesty prior to assessment to reduce breaches of academic honesty, and to highlight the severity with which certain offences will be dealt. Academic judgement regarding the nature and severity of the case will be applied prior to investigation of a suspected breach of academic honesty.

Plagiarism is the substantial, unacknowledged, incorporation in your work of material derived from the work (published or unpublished) of another. "Work" includes, but is not limited to, materials in all formats and sources including print, electronic, online, audio visual etc.

Research students should ensure that they fully understand what plagiarism is and be able to conduct your research to avoid intentional or unintentional plagiarism.

Plagiarism carries severe penalties, including termination of registration.

To learn more about academic honesty and plagiarism you can complete an [academic honesty tutorial online](#). A good understanding of citation and referencing will help you to avoid plagiarism.

Research Ethics

The University expects that all research undertaken by staff and student complies with the legal requirements and ethical standards for the UK and/or the country of location of the research project. Every research student needs to comply with our [Research Ethics Policy](#).

Referencing

Most schools in the University uses Harvard referencing. However, there are some exceptions such as Psychology and Law, who use APA and OSCOLA respectively. Please familiarise yourself with the relevant referencing style for your research.

The library has made a comprehensive guide to Harvard referencing, 'Quote, Unquote', which is [available online](#). There are reference management software available to help you manage your reading and citations. Sessions on Reference Management, Zotero and Endnote are available within the Research Training Programme.

Copyright and Sensitive Material

Copyright provides legal protection to original works once recorded or fixed in some form, and the copyright owner has exclusive rights for the use and distribution of the protected work, with certain exceptions. Some introductory information about copyright is [available online](#).

There may be times during your research when you will need to use items such as images, text or videos which are subject to copyright. To understand what you can and can't use, please contact the [Copyright Clearance Service](#), which is part of the Library.

Before submitting your thesis, you should be familiar with Third Party Copyright, regulations regarding sensitive or personal information, the eThesis Policy and have completed the 'Deposit Checklist'. Complete information about these regulations can be found [online, via the Library](#).

You can also contact the Library for support on these topics by emailing theses@leedsbeckett.ac.uk

Artificial Intelligence

We recognise that the availability of generative AI tools is part of the learning and research landscape, and that these resources can bring many benefits to your development of skills and academic learning.

The University's expectations on generative AI are set out in the [Originality & Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence \(GAI\) Statement for PGRs](#). This guide is specific to PGRs at Leeds Beckett (there is a different document for undergraduate and taught postgraduates)

and is designed to help you with the responsible, lawful, and ethical use of these tools throughout your academic studies.

Other AI tools, such as Research Rabbit or Scholarcy, can help you better visualise the research landscape in your topic. However, use these tools with caution, as they may overlook key literature or nuances within sources.

Further guidance on Generative artificial Intelligence can be found:

<https://libguides.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/artificial-intelligence>

Research Data Management

Your research will require you to collect and create a large quantity of research data throughout your degree. This may include personal or sensitive data. To manage this data in compliance with the University's [Open Research Policy](#) and [Research Ethics Policy](#), you will need to create a Data Management Plan (DMP).

For guidance on how to create and use a DMP, [information is available online via the library](#).

Your Research Programme

Expectations and Responsibilities

By accepting an offer to study at Leeds Beckett and by completing the process of registration and enrolment, you agree to abide by the terms of the [Student Contract](#). This contract sets out how the University will provide to you any teaching, examination, assessment and other educational services for which you are registered and enrolled.

The student contract also sets out your responsibilities as a student. For research students, this includes meeting your supervisory team, completing progression requirements and other milestones and examinations, in each case to an agreed timescale. You must also abide by the University's policies, and procedures. Further details of policies and procedures and where to find them can be found in the '**Governance and Important Policies**' section of this handbook.

As a research student, you must:

- Become familiar with and observe the relevant regulations and policies for your

research programme, in particular Academic Regulations (Section 11: Research Awards), the Student Contract, the Academic Engagement Policy and the Code of Good Practice for Research

- Use Student Admin Manager (SAM)
- Attend the compulsory induction and any follow-on workshops.
- Regularly check your student email account
- Complete online enrolment with the University at the start of each academic year
- Pay your tuition fees on time at the start of your course and then annually.
- Keep in regular contact with your supervisory team.
- Prepare appropriately for your meetings with your supervisory team and make a record of each meeting.
- Raise any issues or difficulties concerning your progress with your supervisors promptly.
- Meet all milestones for your programme of study and undertake all necessary preparation, including ethical approving.
- Complete a Research Training Programme prior to examination.
- Ensure you understand the requirements of submission and the process of examination.

Supervision

Your Supervisory Team

All our research students are supported by a supervisory team. The supervisory team will be proposed by the relevant School with the relevant members of academic staff, during the process of consideration of the application.

The team will consist of at least two academic colleagues. You will have a Director of Studies and a Supervisor. Sometimes, an advisor might be added to the team when specialist knowledge of the research or methodology is required. In exceptional circumstances, an additional supervisor may be added.

The supervisory team will:

- Provide support and guidance on your research project.
- Offer advice on relevant training.
- Monitor your academic progress throughout your studies.

- Provide you with clear and constructive feedback.
- Stay in regular contact with you.

Changes to your supervisory team are approved by the Research Degree Sub-Committee Decision Panel. The composition of your supervisory team is based on academic judgement and cannot be challenged by students.

In the unlikely event that you have concerns about your supervisory team, you can seek advice and guidance from the Graduate School, your school's Director of Research or Director of Postgraduate Programmes.

Your Supervision Meetings

Your supervisory meetings are an opportunity for you to discuss your research, progress, challenges and concerns. You will need to provide an update and evidence of what you are currently working on. If you wish to discuss your written work, you should remember to send it to your supervisory team in advance so that they have the opportunity to provide constructive feedback.

Formal supervision meetings take place at least once a month for full-time students and at least once every two months for part-time students.

You will receive feedback on your work at these meetings. You should use SAM to make notes of the meeting, and these should be agreed with your supervisory team. Written notes will act as a reminder of the discussion and will also form part of your annual progression review pack in SAM.

Visa-sponsored students must have monthly, in-person supervision meetings and make record of these meetings on SAM. This is an expectation in relation to your visa sponsorship.

PGR Journey and Milestones

This table sets out a typical timeline for a research journey. The excludes any period of writing up. More information on ‘writing up’ is included in the next section.

Award (Mode of Study)	Year	Milestones
PhD (Full-Time)	1	Induction
		Confirmation of Registration (<i>by month 12 and before reenrolment</i>)
	2	Annual progression
	3	Annual progression Thesis submission, examination and conferment of award
PhD (Part-Time)	1	Induction
		Confirmation of Registration (<i>by month 12 and before reenrolment</i>)
	2	Annual progression
	3	Annual progression
	4	Annual progression
	5	Annual progression
6	Thesis submission, examination and conferment of award	
Mphil (Full-Time)	1	Induction
		Confirmation of Registration (<i>by month 12 and before reenrolment</i>)
	2	Annual progression Thesis submission, examination and conferment of award
Mphil (Part-Time)	1	Induction
		Confirmation of Registration (<i>by month 12 and before reenrolment</i>)
	2	Annual progression
	3	Annual progression
4	Thesis submission, examination and conferment of award	
Masters by Research (Full-Time)	1	Induction
		Thesis submission, examination and conferment of award
Masters by Research (Part Time)	1	Induction
		Annual progression
	2	Thesis submission, examination and conferment of award
PhD by EPW	1	Thesis submission, examination and conferment of award

Periods of Registration

As stated in the Academic Regulations, the University has expected and maximum periods of registration. These are presented in the table below.

Registration commences from the date you register and enrol as a research student at the University. Where students are eligible, any period of 'writing-up' is included in the period of registration.

Award	Expected	Maximum
Master's by Research (full time)	1 year	1 year
Master's by Research (part time)	2 years	2 years
Master of Philosophy (full time)	2 years	3 years
Master of Philosophy (part time)	4 years	5 years
Doctor of Philosophy (full time)	3 years	4 years
Doctor of Philosophy (part time)	6 years	7 years
Doctor of Philosophy in Creative Practice (full time)	3 years	4 years
Doctor of Philosophy in Creative Practice (part time)	5 years	6 years
Professional Research Doctorate (part time)	6 years	7 years
PhD by Existing Published Works	1 year	2 years

Writing Up

If you are registered on an MPhil, PhD or a Professional Doctorate, you are permitted to apply for a period of 'writing up'. If you are in 'writing-up', you will pay a reduced fee and should not require or receive any supervision. However, you will be able to access the library and other learning facilities of the University.

The writing-up period will be a minimum of 2 months and a maximum period of 12 months which may not be extended. Any period of writing-up will count towards your overall period of registration.

If a requested period of writing up extends beyond your expected end date, the approval of a writing up request will automatically apply an extension to your period of registration.

Requests for writing up are completed via SAM and considered by RDSC Decision Panel.

Progression and Review

There are two formal assessments to ensure you are making good progress through your studies. These are:

- Confirmation of Registration
- Annual Progressions

Confirmation of Registration (CoR)

All MPhil and doctoral students will have a CoR, with the exception of PhD by Existing Published Works.

The Confirmation of Registration (CoR) is the first milestone in your research student journey. This milestone will happen before the end of your first year of study. The CoR examines the following:

- Whether your project is appropriate for the level of the award
- Your ability to deliver the project.
- Whether you have necessary resources (facilities, software etc) in place.
- Your training needs.
- Ethical issues

At the CoR, you will be questioned by a panel of senior academics. At least one member of the panel will be familiar with your area of research.

The CoR will be the first formal occasion where you will have the opportunity to talk about your research, including your aims, methods and timeframes. Whilst you will be questioned by the panel, it will be a supportive environment and the panel will provide recommendations to help your progression.

Your supervisory team should attend the CoR and assist you in your preparations.

Preparing for the CoR

In preparation for your CoR, you will need to produce a document that is usually an extension and refinement of your research proposal. Your supervisory team will provide guidance as to the precise format and length, although it is usually between 3,000 and 6,000 words. The document will be circulated to the CoR panel prior to the meeting so they can review it and prepare questions.

The Graduate School will notify you of a time, date and location for your CoR, but you should not wait for a date to be set before you begin working on your CoR document.

Your CoR is a formal assessment. Changing the time and date of your CoR will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances. Please contact the Graduate School for advice.

CoR Outcomes

At the end of your CoR meeting, you should leave with a clear outcome and recommendations from the panel. The discussion will result in one of the following outcomes:

- Confirmation of registration for the award
- Confirmation of registration for a lesser award
- Termination of programme

You will receive an official outcome from the Graduate School via SAM. The outcome is also reported to the Research Degrees Sub-Committee (RDSC).

Annual Progression

Annual Progression (AP) is the mechanism by which you will be permitted to progress from one year to another. All research students studying on a programme that lasts for more than one year will have an AP meeting. The purpose of the AP is to ensure you have made sufficient progress, have plans in place and sufficient support to complete your programme successfully.

You will have an AP in every year after your first year of study. (In your first year, your CoR serves as your AP). Your APs will usually occur around the anniversary of your start date. For, example if you started in October, your AP will usually be held each October.

The AP panel normally consists of who senior academics. Your supervisors are encouraged to attend, but the AP can be held in their absence. The meeting will last approximately 30-minutes.

Preparing for the AP

In preparation for the AP, you and your supervisory team will complete a short report through the SAM system. The report should be no more than 500 words and should discuss the past, present and future of your studies. This report should be submitted to via SAM, no less than two weeks before the AP. You should include details of:

- Work you have done during the previous year.
- What you are doing now
- Future plans – how you are working towards the end of your programme.
- RTP activity
- Ethical issues
- Any difficulties which you feel have affected your progress.
- A timeline of when you expect to complete your thesis.

Your supervisors will also provide details of:

- Your performance to date
- Any issues or concerns about your progress on your research programme

You may also be asked to prepare a 10-min presentation on your progress.

The AP panel will have read your report prior to the meeting and will have prepared questions.

The Graduate School will notify you of a time, date and location for your AP, but you should not wait for a date to be set before you begin working on your AP report.

Your APs are a formal assessment. Changing the time and date of your AP will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances. Please contact the Graduate School for advice.

AP Outcomes

You will be told the outcome of your progression at the end of the meeting. The annual progression panel has the authority to decide the following outcomes:

- Continue registration.
- Continue with a written warning/conditions.
- Recommendation for a lesser award
- Withdraw

You will be notified by The Graduate School of the outcome via SAM and any work to be undertaken as part of the conditions of continuing on your programme.

The outcomes of annual progression will be reported to the RDSC.

Interim Progression Meeting

During the academic year, if there are issues or concerns with your progress, a meeting may be arranged to discuss your problems and the provision of appropriate support. This meeting can also serve as a follow up to the annual progression should you receive the outcome 'continue with a written warning'.

You will be advised by your supervisory team on how to prepare for an interim progression meeting.

The Graduate School will notify you of a time, date and location for your any interim progression meeting you may have.

An interim progression meeting is a formal meeting. Changing the time and date of an interim progression will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances. Please contact the Graduate School for advice.

Absence from Your Studies

There may be times during your studies that you need to take a break. This may be a short absence for a holiday or a break from studying, or you may need to take an extended break due to illness or personal circumstances.

Visa-sponsored students

Visa-sponsored students should note that taking a break from your studies for any reason can impact your visa sponsorship, especially if you intend to leave the country. If you need to take a break from your studies, please contact the **Student Immigration Advice and Compliance Team (SIAC)** for advice before you begin any period of absence.

Email: siac@leedsbeckett.ac.uk

Tel: 0113 812 8811

Short-Term Absences

If you are absent for less than two months, you should input the absence on SAM and notify your supervisory team. Guidance on how to do this can be found in [SAM User Guide](#).

Your supervisory teams are required to notify the Graduate School of any unauthorised absences or if they have concerns about your engagement with your studies. The expectations and processes related to engagement for research degree students and the support services available are detailed in the [Academic Engagement Policy](#).

Long-Term Absences (Suspensions)

If you are absent from studies for longer than two months, you and your supervisors should request an appropriate period of suspension from the RDSC Decision Panel. To apply for a suspension, you will need to make a request via SAM. Guidance on how to do this can be found in the [SAM User Guide](#).

- Suspensions are for a minimum of two months and a maximum of 12 months.
- Suspensions cannot be requested in the first six months of study or in the writing up stage*.
- Fees are not applicable during the period of suspension.
- Any period of suspension will not count towards your overall period of registration.
- You will not receive any supervisory support during a period of suspension.
**unless the suspension is maternity-related*

Retrospective requests for suspension are not permitted.

When you return to study, you will be asked to attend a progression meeting where you will be expected to provide an updated plan for continuing your programme of study.

Maternity, Paternity and Parental Leave

The University has [Pregnancy, Maternity and Paternity Policy and Guidance](#). We strongly encourage you to familiarise yourself with this document, which contains essential information about the support available to you, your rights and responsibilities as a student and the University's responsibilities.

We ask that PGRs inform the Graduate School in writing at least 15 weeks before the baby is due. This allows sufficient time for the University to review the Student Support Form and make any necessary arrangements for suspension of studies. You should consider informing the Graduate School, regardless of whether you intend to seek support from the University or suspend your studies so that we can complete a health and safety assessment.

Please note that for health and safety reasons, students are required to take a minimum of two weeks of compulsory maternity-related absence from study starting from the date of the birth.

Changes to Your Registration

You may need to make changes to your registration at some point during your programme of study. For some students, making a change to your registration can come as a result of experiencing difficulty or a change in personal circumstances. As a PGR student, you have access to all the University's support, advice and guidance services. More details on the support available can be found in the '[Student Services](#)' section of this handbook' and [online](#).

All changes to your registration must be discussed with your supervisory team and a request made to RDSC. Requests are made via SAM, and guidance on how to do this can be found in the [SAM User Guide](#).

Most requests are considered by the RDSC Decision Panel that takes place monthly. All outcomes will be communicated to you and your supervisory team within 10 working days of the panel.

Some requests are considered at school level. These are outlined in the [Research Degree Sub-Committee \(RDSC\)](#) section of this handbook.

You should discuss all change requests with your supervisory team.

Extensions

The RDSC Decision Panel considers requests for extensions to the maximum periods of study for full-time and part-time study.

If you are considering an extension, you should carefully consider whether you would like to *suspend* or *extend* your studies. If you are extending your period of registration, you are expected to maintain the expected level of engagement. Therefore, if you are experiencing extenuating circumstances that are affecting your ability to maintain engagement with your studies, you should consider whether a suspension may be more appropriate. In some cases, you may also wish to consider changing your mode of study.

- Extensions are approved up to a maximum of 12 months. Further extensions are unlikely to be granted.
- Failure to make adequate progress is not considered as reasonable grounds for an extension request.
- Requests need to contain a clear outline of what work has been completed on the thesis and what is left to do. A timeline that details how the remaining work will be completed must also be included.
- Extensions **are chargeable with fees to the nearest month.**

To help you consider an extension or suspension, you may wish to review the following sections of this handbook:

[PGR Journey and Milestones](#), [Writing Up](#), [Long-term Absences \(Suspensions\)](#)

Mode of Study

The 'mode of study' refers to whether you study full-time or part-time. If you are considering changing your mode of study, you should check any financial and funding implications. [Student Money Advice](#) and the [Fees Team](#) will be able to provide you with information and advice.

Visa-sponsored students cannot study part-time.

Please note that if you are on a funded programme or studentship, you may not be permitted to change your mode of study. Please contact your supervisory team for advice.

Thesis Title

Many students find that they want to refine their thesis title as they make progress with their research. You should discuss these changes with your supervisory team.

Please note that if you are on a funded programme or studentship, you may not be permitted to change your title. Please contact your supervisory team for advice.

Changes to Your Supervisory Team

Changes will only occur when a member of the supervisory team leaves the University or where there are exceptional circumstances, such as a breakdown in the relationship within your supervisory team, or a change in research focus. Your supervisory team will discuss any changes with you.

If you are having difficulty with your supervisory team, you can contact the Graduate School, who will handle the matter sensitively, and be able to provide you with advice.

Appealing an RDSC Outcome

As a research student, you have a right to appeal any decision of the RDSC or decision panel outcome. The requirements for a valid appeal are set out in the Academic Regulations; please note that there is no appeal against academic judgement.

For more information, please see the Academic Regulations and the [Appeals and Complaints](#) section of this handbook.

Research Training Programme (RTP)

The RTP requires students to identify, develop and record the key skills you need as a researcher. This process is implemented and completed through SAM.

As part of the programme the Graduate School offers a range of workshops and seminars including some that are compulsory. Your school, the Library and other university services such as Centre for Learning and Teaching will also offer opportunities.

Unless you are an MRes Student or studying for a PhD by Existing Published Works, the RTP is compulsory for all research students. You will not be able to submit your thesis before completion of the RTP.

Please refer to the:

- [Research Training Policy](#) for a comprehensive explanation of the programme
- [SAM User Guide](#) for guidance on how to access your development analysis, training plan and log as well as the training events offered by the Graduate School
- [Research Training Programme \(VLE01108\)](#) module in MyBeckett for recordings, resources, links and guidance.

Thesis Submission

Preparing Your Thesis for Submission

The length, style and format of a thesis can vary depending on the award and the research topic; therefore, you should take guidance from your supervisory team on specific requirements regarding your thesis.

This section provides guidance on requirements and restrictions of all LBU theses.

Thesis Requirements

All LBU theses must include the following:

1. A title page.

An example title page can be found at appendix A of this handbook.

The title page must include:

- Thesis title
- Student's full legal name
- Name of the University
- Month and year of submission
- Degree for which the thesis is submitted

2. An abstract.

Max word count: 300 words

3. Table of contents

4. List of references

Word Counts

The thesis word count includes everything from the start of chapter 1 up to the end of the last chapter.

Included in word limit:

- Tables
- Footnotes/Endnotes
- Table/figure legends

Excluded from word limit:

- Abstract
- Tables of contents/of figures/of tables/ of acronyms
- Acknowledgement and dedications
- List of references
- Appendices
- Editions of texts

The table below provide guidance on the usual word count of an LBU thesis. You should check specific word count expectations and requirements with your supervisory team prior to submission.

Award	Word Count (+/- 10%)
Master's by Research	30,000 words
MPhil	50,000 words
PhD	80,000 words
Professional Doctorates	See individual course specification

Thesis format

Some awards and research topics will have different or additional requirements for a thesis. You should check the style and format of your thesis with your supervisory team prior to submission.

The usual format requirements for LBU theses are as follows:

Font size: Minimum of 12

Spacing: Minimum of 1.5, except for indented quotations or footnotes which can be 1.0

Page Numbers: Numbering should be sequential and must include everything in the thesis, including diagrams, blank pages, etc.

In-text references and reference list: Harvard Style (*please check with your supervisory team as some Schools use different styles such as APA or OSCOLA*)

Submitting Your Thesis

You will submit your thesis via SAM. Practical guidance on how to do this can be found in the [SAM User Guide](#). Occasionally students are required to submit hard copies of their thesis for examination purposes. The Graduate School will advise you if this is required, and how to do this.

When you submit your thesis, you and your supervisory team will be required to make a statement to confirm the originality of the work. It is recommended that you utilise the Turnitin function available via MyBeckett during your studies to address any possible issues of plagiarism in advance of submitting your work. Research students who do not already have access to the Turnitin module can self-enrol via MyBeckett using CRN 01412. Queries regarding this can be made by contacting researcherdevelopment@leedsbeckett.ac.uk

Any concerns raised by the Director of Studies may be investigated before the thesis is provided to the examiners. Any investigation will conform to the provisions of the Code of Good Practice for Research, Regulations Relating to Misconduct in Academic Research and the Academic Regulations.

Upon submission, your supervisory team will also be asked to sign off on your completion of your Research Training Programme (RTP).

Examinations

Key Elements in Research Examinations Explained

Examination of the Thesis

Your thesis is the written document that presents your research. Your examination team will read your thesis thoroughly ahead of your viva voce exam.

Oral Examination (viva voce)

Students registered on an MPhil, PhD and Professional Doctorate will require an oral examination where you are required to defend your thesis. This exam is called a 'viva voce', or 'viva', for short. The viva is an opportunity for you to defend your thesis, demonstrate your understanding of your research and its significance.

This exam will happen in-person unless in exceptional circumstances which have been agreed by the Research Degree Sub-Committee.

Mock Viva Voce

All students are entitled to a mock viva voce examination. This should be organised by your supervisory team ahead of your official examination, and with enough time to receive constructive feedback on your performance.

Examiners

There will be at least two examiners on each examination panel. One examiner will be an internal (an LBU academic) and one will be an external (an academic from another university).

LBU staff who are also undertaking a research award will have three examiners, and two will be external.

Your supervisory team will propose an examination team to RDSC Decision Panel approximately 6-months before you are due to submit your thesis.

Independent Chair

At Leeds Beckett, we have independent chairs at our viva voce examinations. Their primary responsibilities are:

- All viva-voce examinations are conducted in accordance with our University Academic Regulations
- All requirements for amendments or re-submission are agreed by the examiners and clearly conveyed to students before the conclusion of the examination.

An Independent Chair is not an examiner. An Independent Chair will not participate in any decision on the academic merit of the thesis, which is the responsibility of the examiners.

If you have concerns about the conduct of your examination, or you would like the outcome explaining to you, the independent chair will be able to help you in the first instance.

MRes Examinations

Format of MRes Examination

Examination for Master's by Research awards is normally through consideration of the written thesis only. However, if examiners have read the thesis and completed the assessment reports and consider that the assessment process requires a meeting between the examiners, the Graduate School will arrange such a meeting.

The examiners may request an oral examination in addition to assessing the thesis. This may be particularly useful in determining the outcome of borderline cases.

MRes Examination Outcomes

The examiners may give one of the following outcomes:

- The candidate receives the award
- The candidate receives the award subject to minor amendments being made to the thesis within a 1 month period
- The candidate receives the award subject to substantive amendments being made to the thesis within a 1-3 month period. The examiners will be required to indicate the date by which the amendments are to be completed
- The candidate is permitted to re-submit for the award (within a 6 month period)

Re-Examination for the Award of MRes

If your examination outcome has required you make amendments to your thesis, your thesis will be re-examined. At this point, the examiners may give one of the following outcomes:

- The candidate receives the award
- The candidate receives the award subject to minor amendments being made to the thesis within a 1 month period
- The candidate shall not receive the award.

MPhil, PhD and Professional Doctorate Examinations

Format of MPhil, PhD and Professional Doctorate Examinations

The examination for these research awards normally proceeds in two stages:

1. The submission and preliminary assessment of a thesis.
2. An oral examination where the candidate is required to defend the thesis.

Upon submission of your thesis, it will be sent to your examination team. The examiners will read the thesis and produce an independent preliminary assessment report on it. Once completed, these reports will be exchanged among the examination team. The reports are confidential and do not indicate a final decision on your examination outcome. They are for assuring due process and form a basis for discussion among examiners in agreeing what they would like to ask you at your viva voce exam.

Viva Voce Arrangements

Approximately 6-months before you are due to submit your thesis: Your supervisory team will propose a suitable team to the RDSC who will consider the experience of the examiners and approve the panel or suggest that alternatives are necessary.

1-month before you submit your thesis: You will complete the 'Intention to Submit' form on SAM.

You will submit your thesis via SAM before your 'End Date'.

After you have submitted your thesis:

- The Graduate School will ensure that you do not have any outstanding fees.
- The Graduate School will begin to organise your viva. This will include completing employment checks for external examiners, finding mutually convenient dates and making practical arrangements, such as room bookings.
- The Graduate School will advise you of the date, time and specific arrangements for your viva.

Your viva voce exam will usually be held within 3 months of you submitting your thesis. However, this is not always possible. There may be delays related to the availability of examiners and their completion of preliminary reports. The Graduate School will keep you updated in the event of any delays.

MPhil, PhD and Professional Doctorate Examination Outcomes

Once your examiners have read your thesis and you have completed your viva voce exam, they will give one of the following outcomes:

- The student receives the award.
- The student receives the award subject to minor amendments being made to the thesis within a 1-month period.
- The student receives the award subject to substantive amendments being made to thesis within a 3–6-month period. The examiners will be required to indicate the date by which the amendments are to be completed.
- The student be permitted to re-submit for the award, and be re-examined on the thesis only (within a 6 month to 12-month period)
- The student be permitted to re-submit for the award, and be re-examined on the thesis with an oral examination (and/or further examination (as applicable) within a 12-month period)
- That the student has not achieved the standard of the award but should be offered the opportunity to re-submit to be assessed for the award of MPhil (PhD, or Professional Doctorate registrations) or MRes (MPhil registrations). In exceptional circumstances, a student who has not achieved the standard of the doctoral award may be offered the opportunity to re-submit to be assessed for the award of MRes.
- **(For PhD and Professional Doctorate)** That the student has not achieved the standard of the award but has satisfied the criteria for award of an MPhil. In this case the student may, after possible changes to format of the thesis to satisfy the terms of the regulations for the degree, be awarded the degree of MPhil (within a 6-month period)
- **(For MPhil examinations)** That the student has not achieved the standard of the award of MPhil, and should be awarded the alternative award of MRes subject to confirmation that the thesis meets the requirements of the award (within a 3-month period)

Where a student is required to make amendments, a full list of amendments will be provided via SAM.

Re-Examination for the Award of MPhil, PhD and Professional Doctorates

Upon examination, the examiners may give one of the following outcomes:

- The candidate receives the award
- The candidate receives the awards subject to minor amendments being made to the thesis within a 1-month period
- **(For PhD, Professional Doctorate)** That the candidate has not achieved the standard of the award, and should be awarded the degree of MPhil, subject to the conditions for that award being met (within a 6-month period)
- **(For MPhil examinations)** That the candidate has not achieved the standard of the award of MPhil, and should be awarded the degree of MRes subject to the conditions for that award being met (within a 3-month period)
- That the candidate has not achieved the standard of the award or that of a lesser or alternative award; and shall not receive an award

Resubmission Guidance for all Research Awards

In the event that you are required to resubmit your thesis, or have an additional viva voce, your supervisory team and the Graduate School will ensure that you know what is required of you and what the arrangements for resubmission/re-examination will be.

In the event of resubmission/re-examination, your examination team will usually remain the same.

You will submit your revised thesis via SAM. You will also submit a document that details all the changes you have made to the thesis. Your thesis and details of your amendments will be sent to your Director of Studies who will review your work add their comments to the online thesis amendments form.

Your thesis will then be sent to the examination team who will review them and then state in writing that the amendments have been made to their satisfaction.

If you require another viva voce exam, the Graduate School will organise this for you.

Post Viva

Thesis repository

Upon successful completion of your Research Degree and viva voce, and after making any necessary corrections or amendments, you are required by [University Regulations 11.17.2](#) to deposit your thesis in the [Leeds Beckett Theses and Research Data Repository](#). This will also be harvested to [Ethos](#).

Before doing so, ensure that you have removed any sensitive material and obtained permissions for any third-party copyright materials. More information is available in the [Etheses deposit guidance on the library website](#).

Your thesis should be deposited to the repository before attending graduation.

Embargoes

If your thesis contains information that cannot be made immediately available, you may apply for an embargo. To request an embargo, please email researchstudentadmin@leedsbeckett.ac.uk in the first instance. The School Level RDSC Decision Panel will then consider your request. For more details on the reasons for an embargo and the maximum duration typically allowed, refer to Section 5.5 of the [E-thesis policy](#).

Graduation

Once your award has been formally conferred, the Graduate School will write to you with your Award Conferment Letter. This is usually in the weeks following your examination outcome. You will be invited to the next [graduation](#) ceremony by the University.

Appeals and Complaints

Academic Appeals

If you feel that you have in some way been disadvantaged during your studies and this is reflected in your results, then you may have grounds for an academic appeal.

There are four grounds of appeal, which are:

1. Computational error
2. Material procedural and administrative error
3. Course management deficiencies
4. Previously undisclosed extenuating circumstances

Full details of the regulations and procedures for submitting an appeal can be found [online](#) and in Section 9 of the [Academic Regulations](#). Students can appeal the following:

- Transfer of Registration
- Registration for an alternate award
- The outcomes of the Annual Progression Panel, including the Confirmation of Registration
- The examiners' decision in respect of a research award of the University

Appeals on the grounds of academic judgement are not permitted grounds of appeal under these regulations.

Complaints

The Graduate School can help to resolve concerns or complaints informally. If an issue is not resolved, you can make a formal complaint by following our Student Complaints Procedure.

The Casework Team are responsible for managing student complaints and provides advice to students on the complaints procedure. Information about the Student Complaints Procedure and contact details for the team are [available online](#).

Students' Union Advice Service

The [Students' Union Advice Service](#) provide all students with advice relating to housing and money, as well as university procedures such as:

- Complaints
- Academic Appeals
- Disciplinarys
- Fitness to Study

Email: suadvice@leedsbeckett.ac.uk

Telephone: 0113 81 28400

Update Log

Date	Update
October 2025	Publication

Appendix A *Example title page*

[Thesis Title]

[Student Full Legal Name]

Leeds Beckett University

[Month and Year of Submission]

This thesis is submitted in [fulfilment/partial fulfilment] of the requirements of Leeds Beckett University for the degree of [Name of Award].