Welcome to The Graduate School at Leeds Beckett

The Graduate School at Leeds Beckett was launched in February 2018 and aims to enhance the research student experience and support the university's strategic vision by providing a focus for research-degree provision.

Whatever your reason for undertaking a research degree, the university will support you to develop academically and professionally during your time with us, so do take advantage of the range of opportunities available. Research is very rewarding, but it is also challenging. To be successful in attaining your award, you will need to be motivated, prepared to work hard and committed fully to your programme of study. The reward for doing this will be significant, both intellectually and personally, and perhaps also financially.

We hope that the time you spend with us will be enjoyable. The Graduate School is here to support you throughout your research student journey – please get in touch whenever you need help or to provide feedback.

I wish you the very best in your studies and beyond.

Kathryn Brown
Head of The Graduate School

The Graduate School team manages:

- Research student administration.
- Marketing, recruitment and admissions.
- Strategy and governance of research development and research student programmes.
- Training and development.
- A supportive environment in which students and staff can interact and work.

The Graduate School team

Kathryn Brown – Head of The Graduate School

T: +44 (0)113 812 6104
E: k.brown@leedsbeckett.ac.uk

Joanne Burgess – Research Student Manager
T: +44 (0)113 812 3585
E: J.Burgess@leedsbeckett.ac.uk

Research Student Administration (Location: Brontë 216/226)

Isabella D'Adamo – Research Student Officer (Admissions)
T: +44 (0)113 812 9396
E: researchadmissions@leedsbeckett.ac.uk

Melissa Watts – Research Student Officer (Communications)
T: +44 (0)113 812 7577
E: researchstudentadmin@leedsbeckett.ac.uk

Johanna Oxley - Research Student Officer (Data Management & Student Records)
T: +44 (0)113 81 24671
E: researchstudentadmin@leedsbeckett.ac.uk

Claire Allwood - Research Student Officer (Data Management & Student Records)
T: +44 (0)113 812 7431
E: researchstudentadmin@leedsbeckett.ac.uk

Roxanne Hawkes – Research Student Officer (Examinations & Awards)
T: +44 (0)113 812 5998
E: researchstudentadmin@leedsbeckett.ac.uk

Amy Brown – Research Student Officer (Progression and Review)

T: +44 (0)113 812 3558
E: researchstudentadmin@leedsbeckett.ac.uk

Ben Dingwall – Research Student Administrator
T: +44 (0)113 812 6891
E: researchstudentadmin@leedsbeckett.ac.uk

Staff and Student Development (Location: Brontë 210)

Sarabjit Bissas – Research Officer (Staff Research Training)
T: +44 (0)113 812 3586
E: s.bissas@leedsbeckett.ac.uk

Jo Scerri – Research Officer (Student Research Training)
T: +44 (0)113 812 3396
E: J.Scerri@leedsbeckett.ac.uk

Jane Page – Research Support Administrator
T: +44 (0)113 812 9041
E: j.page@leedsbeckett.ac.uk

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 provides professional advice and guidance on a wide range of topics at any point before, during or after your studies. If you experience difficulties, please contact us as soon as possible so that we can respond effectively. We also provide letters in support of visa applications, transcripts and stamps for railcard applications.

Our offices are open 9am to 4.30pm Monday to Friday. We an open door policy, so please do come and visit.

Research Student team
Brontë: 216/226
T: +44 (0)113 812 7337
E: researchstudentadmin@leedsbeckett.ac.uk

Staff and Student Development team
Brontë: 210
T: +44 (0)113 812 9041
E: researcherdevelopment@leedsbeckett.ac.uk

How we keep in touch with you

All communication will be via your student email. It is very important you check your email regularly so you do not miss opportunities or key messages.

Using this handbook

This handbook will guide you through all the processes for undertaking a research degree. We offer the following research programmes:

Masters by Research (MRes), Master of Philosophy (MPhil), Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), Doctor of Philosophy by Existing Published Work. We also offer the following professional doctorates: Doctor of Administration (DBA), Doctor of Education (EdD) and Doctor of Engineering (DEng).

We hope this handbook will answer all of your questions, but if there is something not covered here then please get in touch. This handbook should be read in conjunction with our **Research Award Regulations, General Student Regulations** and the **Code of Good Practice for Research.**

Contents

1: Key information about our university

Our university research is focused around three distinct themes, reflecting our strengths and aligning our 13 academic schools with the units within the Research Excellence Framework (REF).

The themes are: Health and Wellbeing, Sustainability, and Culture. They are outward facing with existing and potential links to industry, city councils, organisations and other universities.

Research within the **Health and Wellbeing** strand fosters a collaborative environment across many subject areas within research units and schools. This relates to all aspects of health and wellbeing, drawing on physical, mental, nutritional and environmental (technological, spatial awareness and design) elements. Health economics, finance and business are also included.

Research within the **Sustainability** strand brings together a number of subject areas and schools relating to the built environment, travel, tourism, engineering, business, technology and computing.

Research within the **Culture** strand is interwoven across many schools and subject areas, drawing predominately on the arts and humanities but also architecture, business, technology and computing, creating and defining physical and social space and awareness.

The Graduate School and academic schools

Whilst there is a clear distinction between The Graduate School's remit and the academic schools, we actively work together to ensure a smooth and timely progression through your studies.

Academic schools

Our schools are responsible for providing supervision, appropriate facilities and access to agreed development funding. To view your Standard Entitlements as a research student, please click here.

Alongside 13 schools that undertake research activity specific to their subject groups, there are a number of research centres covering a very wide range of subjects.

Governance and other important policies

Please read the following documents online:
Academic Regulations (Section 11: Research Awards)
General Student Regulations

The Research Degrees Sub-Committee

The Research Degrees Sub-Committee (RDSC) sits within the university's Research & Enterprise Committee. Chaired by a senior professor, the membership consists of experienced, senior research-active staff. It is the sole authority for developing policies associated with research degree programmes, making and approving changes to your student record and arrangements for your examination. The RDSC meets on a monthly basis and considers all issues relating to research degree programmes and research students.

Code of Good Practice for Research

The university expects all academics and students to conduct research to the highest standards of rigour and integrity. We are committed to providing a high-quality learning environment and ask that you, as a research student, familiarise yourself with and abide by the Code of Good Practice for Research and the Student Code of Discipline.

Plagiarism and duplication

Plagiarism is a term used for passing other people's work off as your own. This can include materials, ideas, maps and diagrams, printed or electronic.

As a research student, you are expected to know what plagiarism is and be able to manage your academic work to avoid intentional or unintentional plagiarism.

Our library has information which will help you understand and develop skills to prevent plagiarism.

Duplication is where you submit work that is identical or has a significant amount of work which has already been submitted for an award without appropriate referencing. For example, it is accepted that initial work or data from a masters programme could be used as a small part of a further study at PhD level. You must ensure you correctly reference the earlier work.

Plagiarism and duplication of work can carry severe penalties, including termination of registration.

Referencing

The university uses Harvard style referencing and has produced 'Quote, Unquote' to guide you.

Please familiarise yourself with this guide from the outset of your course.

Copyright

There may be times during your research when you will need to use copyrighted items such as images, text or videos. To understand what you can and can't use, please use the library's Copyright Clearance Service.

Research ethics

The university expects all research undertaken by staff and student complies with the legal requirements for the UK and/or the country of location of the research project. Every research student needs to comply with our ethical procedures and policy.

Intellectual Property Rights (IPR)

As a student, you will own the copyright for your thesis. If you are a sponsored student, then the copyright will rest with your sponsor, but you will be accredited. In some circumstances, the university and an external sponsor will share the copyright. Any other IPR outside the thesis itself will belong to the university.

Further university policies

[Leeds Beckett Counter Fraud and Anti-Bribery Policy](#)

[Equality and Diversity](#)

Student representation

As a research student, you will automatically become a member of the [Postgraduate Research Society](#). This is a fantastic way to meet other research students, exchange ideas and talk through challenges in a more informal way. Feedback is important to us, and the society offers various ways to provide feedback to the Graduate School and your research supervisors.

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.

Appeals

If you feel that you have been unfairly treated during your programme of study, then you may have grounds for appeal. Please note that you cannot appeal on academic grounds.
For more information, please see: [Academic Regulations Section 9](#) and [Student Hub 'Appeals'](#).

Complaints

The Graduate School will attempt to resolve concerns or complaints informally. However, if you wish to make a formal complaint, please follow our Student [Complaints Procedure](#).

Expectations and responsibilities

When you accept and start your research degree, you are entering into a contract with the university.

The university will:

➢ Provide an environment which is conducive to undertaking research.
➢ Have clear requirements and standards for all research degree programmes through its Academic Regulations (Section 11: Research Awards) and its processes and procedures outlined in the Student Handbook for Research Degree Programmes.
➢ Have admission procedures that are clear, consistent and applied in a fair manner.
➢ Ensure admission decisions involve at least two members of academic staff, one of who will be in a senior position within the school to which the applicant has applied.
➢ Ensure that each research student has an appropriate supervisory team.
➢ Ensure that appropriate facilities and training opportunities are available.
➢ Ensure that training and development is undertaken by all academic staff who are supervising research students.
➢ Provide governance through the RDSC, the decision-making committee for all research student matters and quality standards.

It is very important you familiarise yourself with the programme of study, milestones and administrative processes for your research degree (found in this handbook). This will ensure you

understand what is expected of you, the reporting mechanisms and your relationship with your supervisors.

As a research student, you will:

➢ Become familiar with and observe the relevant regulations and policies for your research programme, in particular Academic Regulations (Section 11: Research Awards) and the Code of Good Practice for Research.
➢ Attend the compulsory induction and any follow-on workshops.
➢ Use your research student email account at all times, when communicating with your supervisors and The Graduate School.
➢ 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.
➢ Commit to your research topic 35 to 40 hours per week for full-time study and between 12 and 16 hours per week for part-time study.
➢ Complete a Research Training Programme prior to examination.
➢ Ensure you understand the requirements of submission and the process of examination.
➢ Attend monthly sign-in meetings held by the Graduate School **(For Tier 4 Visa students only)**
➢ At all times, treat staff and other students with respect.

To assist you in reaching your goal, you will be assigned a supervisory team to support you, and you will take part in a Research Training Programme that will develop your research skills.

You may also find the **Student Charter** a useful document. It outlines how the university and Students' Union are working together to provide an inclusive, safe and engaging learning environment.

Supervision

All our research students are supported by a supervisory team consisting of two academic colleagues - 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.

Together, the supervisory team will:
- Provide support on your research project.
- Offer advice on relevant training.
- Monitor your academic progress throughout your studies.

More information on supervision can be found within our Academic Regulations (Section 11.12).

Supervisory team

Your Director of Studies (DoS) will:
➢ Keep up to date and understand the academic regulations and all policies and procedures relating to research degree programmes.
➢ Provide guidance on your work and the standard expected throughout the programme of study and monitor your progress.
➢ Provide guidance on the planning of the research programme, including literature, sources and appropriate methodologies.
➢ Maintain regular contact and be accessible at the agreed and other reasonable times, as well as trying to ensure as far practicable that supervisory session are uninterrupted.
➢ Provide clear, constructive feedback in an appropriate timescale.
➢ Communicate any inadequacy of progress or standards of work below those expected as soon as possible.
➢ Keep you on track to meet all milestones within the timescales and ensure you are well prepared for the confirmation of registration, annual progression and examination.
➢ Regularly review your training needs and agree a continuing programme of research training and development.
➢ Propose to the university RDSC the names of examiners for the thesis.

Your supervisor will:
➢ Support the work of the DoS and provide appropriate subject specialist and/or general guidance to you.
➢ Maintain contact with you and the DoS with sufficient frequency to ensure the DoS is aware of the progress being made.
➢ Share concerns about any lack of progress or issues.

Making the most of your supervisory meetings

The formal 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 and what work needs doing. If you wish to discuss your written work, you should remember to send it to your supervisory team two or three weeks in advance so that they have the opportunity to read it and provide constructive feedback.

These meetings will help you develop an effective working relationship with your supervisory team. Try to make these meetings as constructive as possible.

Frequency of supervision meetings and record keeping

Formal supervision meetings take place once a month for full-time students and once every two months for part-time students. Contact may, of course, be more frequent.

Feedback on your work will play an important part of these meetings. You should make notes of the meeting and these should be agreed with your supervisory team. The notes must be kept in the preferred online system, PebblePad, or in a Word document.

PebblePad can be accessed via: https://my.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/

Use of the meeting notes

The written notes will act as a reminder of the discussion and the work that needs to be done in the days and weeks following the meeting. The meeting notes will also be reviewed during the annual progression process.

What happens if something goes wrong or your supervisors leave the university?

The relationship between you and your supervisory team is very important. However, sometimes relationships break down or a supervisor may leave the university. In these cases, you should talk to your supervisory team. If you do not feel comfortable talking to your supervisory team or the issues persist, you can talk confidentially to members of the Graduate School or your school's Director of Research and/or Director of Postgraduate Programmes.

Changes to the supervisory team

Changes will only occur when:
➢ A member of the supervisory team leaves the university.
➢ There are exceptional circumstances, such as a breakdown in the relationship within your supervisory team.

In either case, the supervisory team, following discussion with you, will be required to put a request to the RDSC to make changes to the team.

Summary
➢ **Make the most of your relationship with your supervisory team.**
➢ **Use their expertise and accept constructive feedback.**
➢ **Remember, you need to organise meetings and be prepared.**
➢ **Keep a record of each meeting and spend a couple of minutes at the start of each meeting reflecting on what was said previously.**

2: The student lifecycle

Type of Student	Year	Programme of Study
PhD (FT)	1	Induction Confirmation of registration (by month 4) First annual progression (month 10/11)
	2	Annual progression
	3	Annual progression
	4	Move to write-up if criteria is met Thesis submission, examination and conferment of award
PhD (PT)	1	Induction Confirmation of registration (by month 6) First annual progression (month 10/11)
	2	Annual progression
	3	Annual progression
	4	Annual progression
	5	Annual progression
	6	Move to write-up if criteria is met Thesis submission, examination and conferment of award
MPhil (FT)	1	Induction Confirmation of registration (by month 4) First Annual progression (month 10/11)
	2	Annual progression
	3	Move to write-up if criteria is met Thesis submission, examination and conferment of award
MPhil (PT)	1	Induction Confirmation of registration (by month 6) First annual progression (month 10/11)
	2	Annual progression
	3	Annual progression
	4	Move to write-up if meet the criteria, completion of Research Training Programme (RTP) Thesis submission, examination and conferment of award
Professional Doctorate	1	Induction Confirmation of registration (by month 6) First annual progression (month 10/11)
	2	Annual progression
	3	Annual progression
	4	Annual progression
	5	Move to write-up if criteria is met, completion of RTP Thesis submission, examination and conferment of award
PhD by EPW	1	Thesis submission, examination and conferment of award
Masters by Research (FT)	1	Induction Thesis submission, examination and conferment of award
Masters by Research (PT)	1	Induction Annual progression
	2	Thesis submission, examination and conferment of award

Induction

Your first face-to-face contact with the university (unless you have been a student previously) will be at your **research student induction**. The induction is compulsory for new students, and it will introduce you to the requirements of your programme of study, the university and facilities. It will also ensure you are ready to start your research journey. During the induction, you will have the opportunity to meet senior academic colleagues and network with other students.

Research Training Programme (RTP)

We know that postgraduate research study is challenging. Today, a research student is expected to gain the skills needed to become a competent researcher in their chosen discipline whilst also developing a range of transferable skills that will broaden their career options. The RTP aims to help you do this by offering a range of development opportunities. The impact of these activities will be reflected on and collated in an e-Portfolio and, ultimately, through the production of your thesis.

At your first supervisory meeting, you should aim to discuss your training needs and complete your training needs analysis (TNA).

Unless you are an MRes student, the RTP is compulsory for all research students.

If you are studying an MRes, you will not have to undertake an RTP or produce a portfolio; however, you will be encouraged to attend the Graduate School training week.

Some students on particular programmes (those on studentships with the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) Heritage Consortium and the North of England Consortium for Arts and Humanities (NECAH), for example) will access their RTP via the formal training that is part of their programmes. Such students are, of course, welcome to take part in any RTP development opportunity provided by the university.

The RTP offers a range of workshops and seminars, both generic and subject specific, designed to develop your skills as a research student. We have mapped our development provision to Vitae's Researcher Development Framework, and their four 'domains':

➢ Knowledge and intellectual abilities.
➢ Personal effectiveness.
➢ Research governance and organisational.
➢ Engagement, influence and impact.

Please visit MyHub to see the RTP programme and to book.

In addition to the RTP, there will be opportunities to attend school-based workshops/seminars and conferences.

Your RTP must be completed prior to submitting for examination.

3: Progression and review

There are two key formal assessments to ensure you are making progress through your studies.

These are:

➢ **Confirmation of registration**
➢ **Annual progression**

Confirmation of registration (CoR)[1]

This applies to all MPhil and doctoral students with the exception of PhD by Existing Published Work students.

The CoR meeting is the first milestone in your research student journey and examines the following:

➢ Whether your project is appropriate for the level of the award.
➢ Whether you are able to deliver the project.
➢ That the necessary resources (facilities, software etc) are in place.
➢ Whether there are any ethical issues.

For more information, please click here.

Organisation the CoR

The Graduate School organises these meetings. There are established weeks when the CoR will take place. You will be invited via your student email to attend the CoR either four months after enrolment as a full-time student or six months after enrolment if you are a part-time student.

What is expected at CoR?

The document you will need to complete ahead of your CoR is normally an extension and refinement of your original research proposal. You will be guided by your supervisory team as to the precise form and length, although it is usually between 3,000 and 6,000 words.

Even at this early stage, any writing, such as your draft chapters, should follow the university's format and referencing requirements.

➢ A4 format.
➢ Arial 11.
➢ Footnotes (if used) Arial 10.
➢ Margins: Left hand side – not less than 40mm; right hand side – not less than 15mm.

The completed document should be sent to the Graduate School, with a CoR submission form (available here), no later than two weeks before the meeting.

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[1] Academic Regulations, Section 11.16

The document will be circulated to the CoR panel prior to the meeting so they can review it and prepare questions. The CoR panel is made up of senior academics, and at least one will be familiar with your area of research.

The meeting 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.

You should work with your supervisory team to prepare your submission and to ensure you are all aware of the timeframes. Your supervisory team should also attend the CoR meeting.

What are the panel looking for?

The panel will address the following questions (and you should, therefore, address these areas in your document):

➢ Will the project enable the candidate to achieve a research award at the designated level? (In other words, is this a doctoral-level study or does it meet the requirements for the other levels of research award?)

➢ Is the candidate likely to be able to pursue the research project at that level? (This is a question about your abilities – your document and your answers to questions you are posed are the evidence for this element.)

➢ Are there sufficient resources available? (Do you need particular equipment, software, travel to archives, etc? Will these things be available? This question is really about the viability of your project and is as much a question for your supervisors as for you.)

➢ Does the candidate have any training needs and have they undertaken their TNA for their RTP?

➢ Have any ethical issues been addressed?

The CoR meeting will be carried out in English and will be a sufficient length to enable full consideration of all aspects of the project and its development.

What happens at the end of the CoR?

At the end of your CoR meeting, you should leave with a clear outcome and recommendations from the panel on how you should progress your studies. Most likely, the decision will be that you continue on your programme with some recommendations about how you might proceed most effectively.

The panel may recommend a change to the award level or termination of the programme. These are unusual outcomes – but they can happen, so your preparations for the CoR should be meticulous.

You will receive an official outcome in writing from the Graduate School. The outcome is also reported at the next meeting of the Research Degrees Sub-Committee (RDSC).

Can I change the date of my CoR?

It is not normally permitted to change the date of the CoR. If you need to change the day outside of the usual CoR weeks, you must submit a written application to the RDSC as soon as possible. Only in exceptional circumstances will this be approved, and the committee will require independent evidence, such as a medical certificate or a statement from your Director of Studies, in order to approve a change of date.

Summary

➢ **Book a suitable date/time within the CoR weeks (four months if you are full-time/six months if you are part-time) and tell your supervisory team.**

➢ **Prepare your submission.**

➢ **Submit your documentation to The Graduate School by the deadline.**

➢ **Be prepared to talk about your research and answer questions**.

➢ **Remember to enjoy the process**!

Annual progression[2]

Annual progression is a very important milestone as it is the official mechanism by which you will be permitted to move from one year to another. All research students studying on a programme that lasts for more than a year will have an annual progression meeting. Its purpose is to ensure you have made sufficient progress, have plans in place and the sufficient support to complete your programme successfully.

They usually occur in the month before you are required to **re-enrol online.** For example, if you started your course in February, you can expect to attend your progression meeting in January of the following year.

At this time, you must also have confirmed that you agree to pay the next year's fees, or have provided your sponsor letter.

For more information, please click here.

Panel

The annual progression panel normally consists of two senior academics.

Other attendees
There will be representation from The Graduate School.
Supervisors are also encouraged to attend. However, panels will still go ahead without your supervisory team in attendance.

Organisation of the annual progression meeting

The Graduate School organises these meetings and the dates are set a year in advance**.**

The Graduate School will contact you and your supervisory team by email to arrange the meeting. You are responsible for ensuring you have an annual progression meeting and that you submit an annual progression report, with your supervisory team's comments, within the deadline. Failing to do this could impact on your progression and you may not be able to take up your next year of study.

What is expected – your progression document

For the annual progression, you and your supervisory team will complete a short report. The report should be no more than 500 words and should discuss the past, present and future of your studies. For example:

> **Student input**
> ➢ 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 update.
> ➢ Ethical issues and/or approval.

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[2] Academic Regulations, Section 11.14

> ➤ If you have had difficulties which you feel have hampered your progress, you must provide evidence of the extenuating circumstances and details of your discussions with your supervisors.

Supervisor input
> ➤ Comments on the student's performance and progress to date.
> ➤ Highlights issues or concerns.

You must include a **timeline** of when and how you expect to complete your thesis with your submission, which you must submit to The Graduate School. The deadline dates will be in The Graduate School email.

What will the panel be looking for?

The panel will have read your report prior to the meeting and will have prepared questions. The meeting will last no more than 30 minutes. There is no need to prepare a presentation. However, for some subjects, it might be sensible to prepare some visual material to show what you are doing.

The format of the meeting will be:

➤ A pre-meeting between the panel to discuss the documentation submitted and prepare for the discussion with the candidate.

➤ Students will usually be asked to outline their work orally and then respond to questions from the panel (normally a maximum of 20 minutes in total). No PowerPoint/formal presentation will be necessary, but sometimes it may be useful, especially if working in a visual or practical field.

➤ A discussion with the candidate regarding their work/progress.

➤ A representative from The Graduate School may discuss any issues relating to fees and registration.

➤ The panel's conclusions will be discussed with the candidate.

Outcomes

You will receive an outcome immediately after the meeting. The annual progression panel has the authority to decide the following outcomes:

➤ Continue.

➤ Continue with a written warning.

➤ Alternative award.

➤ Withdraw.

You will be notified by The Graduate School in writing of the outcome 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 next meeting of the RDSC.

Progression meeting (additional)

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'.

What to do next?

If you have received '**continue' or 'continue with a written warning**', you must re-enrol immediately. For outcomes '**alternative award' and 'withdraw,**' you will be advised of what you need to do by The Graduate School.

Summary

- ➢ **Check the Important Dates on The Graduate School's website.**
- ➢ **Book a date via your student email.**
- ➢ **Prepare the documentation and liaise with your supervisory team to complete their section. It may be useful to have a meeting prior to completing the form.**
- ➢ **Send the form to the Graduate School by the deadline.**
- ➢ **Prepare to discuss your research and answer questions.**
- ➢ **Have your next year's fees available or supply a sponsor letter.**
- ➢ **Re-enrol online and pay your fees (or supply a sponsor form).**

4: The examination process

This section explains the process by which your work will be examined. To aid the process, you should inform the Graduate School, by email, two months before you intend to submit your thesis.

The examination team

Whether you are studying for an MRes, MPhil, PhD, PhD by Existing Published Work or for a professional doctorate, your examination team will be put together in the same way. Your supervisors will put together an examination team based on the subject of your research and they will make a formal application to the Research Degrees Sub-Committee (RDSC) for approval. The RDSC will discuss the experience of the team and whether it has the appropriate subject expertise, and it will establish its independence from your supervisory team (so that the university can be reassured the process is robust and fair). Only when the RDSC approves the team can arrangements be made for the examination. The committee's decision is final.

The examination team will be set up as follows:

One external examiner – this will normally be an academic member of staff from another institution or a professional who has expertise in your area of work.
Note: university staff members who are also students will require **two external** examiners. If you are a member of staff, a graduate teaching assistant or have another type of staff/student contract but leave employment within the year prior to submission, it is likely you will still require two external examiners. Your examination arrangements will be discussed by the RDSC, with all decisions made on a case-by-case basis.

One internal examiner – a member of the university's academic staff but not one of your supervisors.
Your supervisory team should let you know who is in the examination team so that you can familiarise yourself with the members' work**.**

However, you should not make contact with the examination team under any circumstances. Any contact could compromise the independence of the examination team and threaten the integrity of the process. If you contact your examiners in advance of your viva, the examination team is likely to be declared void and the process of establishing a new team would have to begin again. This will leave you subject to a delay in achieving your award. It may also result in disciplinary procedures.

Independent chair

An independent chair will be present throughout viva voce examinations. Their role is to ensure the examination is conducted within our university guidelines and that you are not under any undue duress. The independent chair is not an examiner and will not take part in the examination of your thesis.

Supervisors

If you wish, you can ask your supervisory team to be in attendance whilst you are examined in your viva voce. The team will not take any part in the examination and nor will members they be allowed

to speak. However, it is often a good idea to have a supervisor present so they can take notes about the question areas and any amendments that you might need to make.

Examination process for MRes

The normal length for an MRes thesis should be:

Science and engineering	19,000 words
Other areas	30,000 words

Your examination team will decide whether your research meets the standards for the award (see the QAA Quality Code for Higher Education) and whether it is your own work.

It is a pass/fail award. The examiners will, in the first instance, recommend either that you be granted the award or that you be offered the opportunity to resubmit your thesis with corrections, which they must detail. Even after a second reading, the examiners could still decide not to make the award.

If you are studying for an MRes, then it is normal that your thesis is examined without you having to undertake a viva voce examination (where you verbally defend your thesis). However, the examination team can request a viva voce if they feel it necessary. If this happens to you, it is not necessarily a bad thing (examination teams may wish to meet the brilliant academic who has written something so wonderful – really!), but you will need to prepare for the process, so contact your supervisor to arrange a mock viva ahead of the real thing (see below).

Examination process for MPhil, PhD, PhD by Existing Published Work, all professional doctorates

The examination process for these awards has two elements:

➢ The thesis – this is where you demonstrate your expertise and present your research findings in writing. Your examination team will assess your thesis and prepare reports that will form the basis for discussions with you in the viva voce examination.
➢ The viva voce - where you will verbally defend your thesis.

Purpose of the viva voce
Your viva voce will enable you to:

➢ Demonstrate the thesis is your own work.
➢ Confirm you are able to defend what you have written.
➢ Show your understanding of where your work fits in the wider research field.
➢ Respond to examiners' questions and provide any clarifications of the written thesis.
➢ Establish if the work is of a sufficiently high standard to merit the award you have submitted for.

You can read more about the examination process in our Academic Regulations.

5: Preparation of the thesis (for submission for examination)

The university has requirements on how a thesis should be presented.
Your thesis should be:
- ➢ In English.
- ➢ In line with the requirements of the '<u>Format of Presentation of Theses</u>' document.
- ➢ 'Ring bound' or 'thermally bound', including any supporting materials.

A typical contents page

Everyone's thesis is different, but the following may help you to think about what sorts of things need to be in your thesis and how it might be structured. Compulsory elements are the abstract and the bibliography. No thesis ever does well without an introduction, a conclusion and a range of evidence chapters. Different subject domains have slightly different emphases. Discuss what your contents page should look like at an early stage with your supervisors. This might be similar to the thesis outline you prepared for your CoR.

SAMPLE CONTENTS PAGE

Abstract
This defines the nature and scope of your thesis and defines the contribution to knowledge it makes.

Acknowledgements
This is not compulsory, but it is customary to thank people who have been helpful in the completion of your study and to acknowledge permissions from interviewees or holders of rare materials, etc. Ask your supervisor for details.

Introduction
What is your thesis about? What questions does it set out to answer? What is your hypothesis, and (in brief) how do you set out to test it? Have your objectives been met?

Chapter 1. Literature review
Your survey of the field. This is how you establish that your work is 'filling a gap' in the literature.

Chapter 2. Methodology
What methods are available for this kind of study? Which ones have you selected and why? What gaps might there be in your choices, and why do you think your chosen method is most effective?

Chapter 3. Data
The things you have found out from pursing your methods.

Chapter 4. Data
Continuation of this discussion in a different arena.

Chapter 5. Data
Continuation of this discussion in a different arena.

Chapter 6. Findings
What does all this data tell you?

Chapter 7. Conclusions.
Is your working hypothesis supported by your findings? What are the specific answers to your original research questions? Can you establish that your objectives have been met? Are there helpful suggestions for future directions for this kind of work?

Bibliography of works cited

Appendices
Whether this is necessary depends on the kind of thesis, but it might include things like transcripts of interviews, facsimiles of unpublished source data or archive material, etc. Talk to your supervisors about this element.

Abstract

Your thesis must contain an abstract. The abstract should be about 300 words and provide a synopsis of the thesis. It should consider:

➢ The nature and scope of the work undertaken.
➢ The contribution made to new knowledge within the subject.

The abstract heading should include:

➢ The name of the author.
➢ The award title.
➢ The title of the thesis.

The abstract should be positioned after the title page but before the contents page.

Bibliography of works cited

Using the Harvard Style of referencing, you will be required to produce a list of all the materials cited in your thesis.

Other information required (if appropriate)

If your research programme is part of a collaborative group project, you will need to indicate in the thesis your contribution and the extent of the collaboration.

You are free to publish aspects of your research in advance of the examination, but you must make reference to it in the thesis. Copies of published work should be bound in with your thesis or placed in a secure pocket at the end of the thesis.

Length of thesis

The thesis should not exceed the following word limits (excluding ancillary data, eg bibliographies and appendices):

PhD:

Science and engineering	50,000 words
Other areas	100,000 words

Professional doctorate:

All subject areas	75,000 words

MPhil:

Science and engineering	25,000 words
Other areas	50,000 words

Other forms of submission

For creative and practice-based research awards, the word count for the written thesis may be lower. This is because these types of awards include a significant part of your own creative work. The creative work submitted for examination must be documented through appropriate textual and photographic, video, CD-ROM or DVD evidence, including any artefacts or documentation integral to the creation of the work.

In the case of research by creative work, the submission should conform to the guidelines set out here.

How to submit your thesis for examination

You must submit your thesis to the Research Student Officer, The Graduate School, Leeds Beckett University, Brontë Hall, 216/226, Headingley Campus, Leeds, LS6 3QW, along with the completed thesis submission form.

The form requires you to make a statement regarding the originality of your work and stating any work which may have been submitted for a comparable award. Your Director of Studies will also be asked to make a statement to this effect on the form and, where relevant, raise any concerns about the originality of the work. At this stage your, RTP should also be signed off by your supervisors.

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 and Regulations Relating to Misconduct in Academic Research or Academic Regulations Section 11.

Number of hard copies to be submitted

For students who are not staff members: three copies
For students who are staff members or need two external examiners: four copies

Number of electronic copies

A single electronic copy on CD or other appropriate electronic storage device.

The electronic copy will be checked using the university's plagiarism detection software to ensure the originality of the work. Concerns arising as a result of this check may be investigated through the regulations and procedures of the University Regulations Section 11 or the 'Code of Good Practice and Regulations Relating to Misconduct in Academic Research.

Viva voce examination venue and arrangements

The Graduate School is responsible for arranging the viva voce examination and will liaise with all parties. Please note that it can take up to three months to confirm a date.

When submitting your thesis, please make the Graduate School aware of any dates when you will not be available for your viva voce. The viva voce examination could be held at either Headingley Campus or City Campus. Once you receive your room confirmation, make sure you know where it is. It may be a good idea to familiarise yourself with the surroundings.

What happens prior to and at the examination

Prior to the day of your examination, the examination team will have had read your thesis and provided the university with preliminary reports. These reports are exchanged between each examiner and copied to the independent chair so that they are aware of points and/or areas for further discussion.

In forming their view, the examiners will consider:

➢ The academic standard of the thesis and whether it satisfies the requirements of the award.
➢ What recommendation might be made in respect of the thesis.
➢ Whether the thesis represents a significant contribution to knowledge of the subject through the discovery of new facts and/or the exercise of independent critical powers.
➢ Whether the thesis provides originality.
➢ Whether the thesis is satisfactory as regards to literary presentation and succinctness.
➢ Whether the abstract is acceptable.
➢ In the case of a candidate who has completed a programme of formally assessed coursework, whether it is obvious the candidate has benefited from the course of postgraduate study?
➢ Where a candidate's research programme is part of a collaborative group project, whether the thesis clearly indicates the individual contribution and the extent of the collaboration?

On the day, members of the examination team will have a pre-meeting to discuss their questions for you. Whilst all examinations are different, the key to the viva voce is to establish whether your work is at the standard expected for the award and that your thesis contributes new knowledge.

In the examination, you could be asked:

➢ Why you wanted to do the particular study.

➢ The rationale for your chosen methodology. The examiners may feel another would have been better; you will need to explain why your choice was correct.

➢ To justify your findings, arguments and assumptions.

➢ To explain where your research fits in the wider research context.

➢ To discuss what is innovative about your research and what impact it may have.

Expect the examiners to argue certain points with you and to highlight weaknesses in the thesis. This is normal practice, but remember this is your work and you should be confident in defending it, even when the discussion is with eminent people.

In the US, this process is called a thesis defence. Every decision you have made in producing your thesis is one that you could be called on to defend. This is normal, and if you're sure about what you have done, it should also be relatively easy to do.

How to prepare

It's normal to feel anxious about the examination, but some preparation will ensure you feel in control and confident on the day.

Examiners will expect you to have a good understanding of your thesis and its contents, so read it through to familiarise yourself with the content and make notes of areas you want to draw out in the examination discussion. Don't be put off by any mistakes you see; these can be amended after the examination.

The mock viva examination

With the exception of MRes students, all research students will undertake a mock viva in preparation for the examination process, in particular the viva voce examination. The outcome of the mock viva will be in the form of advice only.

At this stage, you will have completed either four years or six years of study on your chosen topic, and the purpose of the mock viva examination is to:

➢ Demonstrate that the thesis is your own work.

➢ Confirm that you understand what you have written and can defend it verbally.

➢ Investigate your awareness of where your original work sits in relation to the wider research field.

➢ Ensure that the thesis is at the standard and quality of the award.

➢ Practise defending your ideas against rigorous questioning.

Other resources
The Good Viva video
The materials available on Epigeum. You may also find it useful to look at help for similar experiences (eg job interviews).
Our Preparing for Examination workshop – see the RTP schedule for details.

Summary
➢ **Inform The Graduate School that you are submitting your thesis two months before. Note how many copies you need.**
➢ **Follow the guidance on preparing and formatting your thesis.**
➢ **Do some background research on your examiners – BUT do not contact them!**
➢ **Undertake a mock viva.**
➢ **Keep up-to-date with your research even though you have submitted your thesis. It will take up to three months to organise.**

6: Outcome of the examination explained

You can find out what decisions can be made by your examiners following the viva voce examination [here.](#)

At the end of your examination, you will be asked to leave the room so that the examiners can deliberate.

The deliberations can take quite a long time, so try not to get too anxious. Once a decision has been made, you will be asked to return to the room. The independent chair will inform you of the decision and any further work required and timescales for completion. All the changes required will be agreed by the examination team and written down and given to you at the end of the examination.

You will also receive a letter from The Graduate School confirming the outcome and your next steps.

Outcomes of the examination

Possible outcomes:

➢ The candidate receives the award.

➢ The candidate receives the award subject to **minor amendments** being made to the thesis within a one-month period.

➢ The candidate receives the award subject to substantive amendments being made to thesis within a three to six-month period. The examiners will be required to indicate the date by which the amendments are to be completed.

➢ The candidate is permitted to **resubmit for the award and be re-examined on the thesis with an oral examination** (and/or further examination as applicable) in any period up to 12 months.

➢ The candidate is permitted to **resubmit for the award and be re-examined on the thesis only.**

For PhD and professional doctorates (excluding PhD by Existing Published Work):
➢ The candidate has not achieved the standard of the award but has satisfied the criteria of award of an MPhil. In this case, the candidate may, after changes to the format of the thesis to meet the requirements for the degree, be awarded the degree of MPhil.

For MPhil
➢ The candidate has not achieved the standard of the award for MPhil and should be awarded the alternative award of MRes, subject to confirmation that the thesis meets the requirements for the award.

For all examinations
➢ The candidate has not achieved the standard of the award but should be offered the opportunity to resubmit and be assessed for the award of MPhil (for PhD or professional doctorate students) or MRes (for MPhil students).

If you received an outcome resulting in a resubmission and re-examination, you will only be allowed to do this once.

Minor amendments

Normally, minor amendments include the correction of typographical or grammatical errors and may include corrections to references and/or diagrams or rewriting or adding a small piece of text. The examination team is required to provide a list of such amendments, which will be outlined by the chair at the end of the examination. Don't worry about writing these down; notes will be given to you at the end of your examination and these notes will then be emailed to you by The Graduate School, detailing all amendments and timescales. You will be asked to complete these corrections within a month.

How do I resubmit amendments?

After completing your amendments, you will submit your revised thesis alongside a separate Word document. The Word document should list all the amendments made. The revised thesis and separate Word document should be emailed to The Graduate School. To speed up the process and to help the examiners, it would be beneficial to indicate the relevant page numbers for each amendment on the Word document.

The Graduate School will send the revised thesis and Word document to the internal and/or external examiner, who will review them and then state in writing that the amendments have been made to their satisfaction and that the candidate should now receive the award. In the rare occasion that the examination team is not satisfied with the amendments, you will receive further guidance from The Graduate School as to the next steps.

Substantive amendments

If you are asked to complete substantive amendments, this may take a period of between three and six months. The examination team will set the deadline for completing its corrections.

Resubmit and be re-examined on thesis and oral

If you receive this outcome it means the examiners felt there are significant deficiencies in the thesis and in the oral examination for the level of the award. The examiners may require you to undertake further research and/or revise/restructure significant parts of the thesis. The examination team is required to provide a list of such amendments, which will be outlined by the chair at the end of the examination. Don't worry about writing these down; a formal letter detailing amendments and timescales will be sent to you by The Graduate School.

How to I resubmit for examination?

Once the amendments have been completed, you will be required to resubmit the thesis and attend another viva voce examination. The resubmission and re-examination must take place within 12 months of receipt of the written outcome of the original examination.

You should submit the revised thesis along with the list of amendments indicating page numbers so the examiners can clearly see where the changes have been made.

The Graduate School will liaise with you and the examination team to arrange a suitable date for the viva voce examination.

Resubmit and be re-examined on thesis only

This decision is made when the examiners agree the candidate's performance in the oral examination and/or further examination was satisfactory but that the thesis was unsatisfactory. The amendments will normally include major rewrites of parts of the thesis and the correction of typographical or grammatical errors.

Examiners will set the deadline for resubmission of the thesis, which can be within a six to 12-month period from the original examination.

How do I resubmit the thesis?

You will be required to email your revised thesis along with the list of the amendments and how you have addressed them to The Graduate School. To speed up the process and to help the examiners, it would be beneficial to indicate the relevant page numbers for each amendment on the Word document.

The Graduate School will send the revised thesis and Word document to the internal and/or external examiner, who will review them and then state in writing that the amendments have been made to their satisfaction and that the candidate should now receive the award. In the rare occasion that the examination team is not satisfied with the amendments, you will receive further guidance from The Graduate School as to the next steps.

Awarded a lesser award

This decision is made when the examination team feels the candidate has not achieved the standard of the award being examined but has satisfied the criteria of a lower award. Some amendments may be necessary to satisfy the requirements of the lesser award.

What happens next?

On completion of the required amendments, you will be required to submit via email your revised thesis and list of the amendments and how you have addressed them to The Graduate School. To speed up the process and to help the examiners, it would be beneficial to indicate the relevant page numbers for each amendment on the Word document.

The Graduate School will send the revised thesis and Word document to the internal and/or external examiner, who will review them and then state in writing that the amendments have been made to their satisfaction and that the candidate should now receive the award. In the rare occasion that the examination team is not satisfied with the amendments, you will receive further guidance from The Graduate School as to the next steps.

Resubmit and be re-examined for a lesser award

This decision is made when the examination team feels the candidate has not achieved the standard of the award being examined but is permitted to resubmit and be re-examined for a lesser award.

Outcomes following resubmission and re-examination

You will receive 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 one-month period.

➢ For PhD and professional doctorate: the candidate has not achieved the standard of the ward and should be awarded the degree of MPhil, subject to the conditions for that award being met.

➢ For MPhil examination: The candidate has not achieved the standard of the award and should be awarded the alternative award of MRes, subject to the conditions for that award being met.

➢ The candidate has not achieved the standard of the award or that of a lesser or alternative award and shall not receive an award.

Support for research students awarded a lower degree or fail

If you are awarded the outcome of a lower degree or fail, it is important you speak to your supervisors as soon as possible to get their advice and to discuss your options. The formal outcome letter from The Graduate School will include our complaints and appeals processes. It also might be useful to contact:

➢ The Director of Postgraduate Programmes/Postgraduate Tutor and/or Director of Research
➢ The Students' Union

For information on how to make a complaint or submit an appeal, please click here.

7: Conferment of award (all research awards)

Conferment of award

When the examiners decide an award can be conferred, all relevant paperwork will be forwarded to the chair of the university Research & Enterprise Committee, or nominee of the Chair of the Committee, for final approval.

Final submission of your thesis (all awards)

Once you have received confirmation that the award has been granted, you will need to prepare your final thesis – this should be hard bound for deposit in our library. Details of how you should do this, along with information concerning graduation, will be sent to you by The Graduate School. Click here for more information on the format of your final thesis.

Graduation

Once your award has been confirmed, you will be invited to the next graduation ceremony. These are usually held in July.

You will be asked by The Graduate School to provide a 25-word outline of your research, which will be added to the ceremony programme. It will also be read out at the ceremony (if you are attending), so choose your words carefully; they will need to reflect your research but also be understood by a diverse audience.

8: Changes in circumstance which require a request to the Research Degrees Sub-Committee (RDSC)

Changes to your programme of study

Perhaps due to a change in your personal circumstances, you may need to request a change to your programme of study. The changes could include:

- A suspension of your studies.
- An extension.
- Your mode of study.
- A different title.
- A change to your supervisory team.
- An application for writing-up status.
- A suspension of your studies.

Making committee requests

The RDSC is the only committee in the university that can approve changes to your student record. This section provides guidance on making these requests. It is you and your supervisory team's responsibility to ensure any request is submitted on the correct form and is received by the deadline for RDSC meeting. The RDSC meets each month from September to July. Dates are detailed online but, as a general rule, the committee meets on the third week of each month and the deadline for submitting your request in writing is the end of the previous month.

If you wish to make a request to the RDSC, you must discuss the reasons with your supervisory team and then complete and sign the appropriate form. Please remember that the RDSC members will not know you personally, so you must supply as much information as possible for them to be able to make the right decision.

The committee treats all requests with respect and confidentiality. If your case is particularly sensitive, you can request that your situation remains confidential to only the chair and secretary of the committee.

If you think you need help, it is always better to make the request rather than suffer in silence.

Suspension

If you are likely to be absent from your studies for more than two months, you and your supervisors should request an appropriate period of suspension as soon as possible. Requests must be made to the RDSC via The Graduate School. The RDSC cannot grant a retrospective suspension.

Common reasons why you may request a suspension are:

- Ill health.
- Job pressures (not applicable to Leeds Beckett staff).

> ➤ Domestic commitments.

If you are suspending your registration on the grounds of ill health, you will need to provide a medical certificate.

The following are not acceptable reasons for suspension:

> ➤ Not being aware of regulations and/or time limits.
>
> ➤ Inability to collect data.
>
> ➤ Delays in ethical approval.
>
> ➤ Problems with the supervisory team. (This should be raised with the postgraduate tutor and/or Graduate School.)

Length of suspension
> ➤ Minimum – three months.
> ➤ Maximum – 12 months.

When you are not able to suspend
> ➤ In the first six months of study.
> ➤ In the writing-up stage.

You can suspend your registration on more than one occasion as long as you do not exceed the maximum permitted suspension period of 12 months.

Please find the suspension application form here.

Following approval of a suspension
> ➤ Your submission deadline will be extended accordingly.
> ➤ Confirmation of your revised deadline will be sent to you in writing.
> ➤ Your fee liability stops during the period of suspension.

What happens on your return to study?

To help you resume your study, we will ask you to attend a progression meeting. Your adjusted timescale will be discussed and you should bring with you an updated plan in light of the suspension period.

Extension

If there are extenuating circumstances which have prevented you from completing on time, The RDSC may consider requests for extensions to the maximum periods of study for full-time and part-time study. The length of time you ask for should be realistic as further extensions are unlikely to be

granted. The maximum extension permitted is 12 months, but the RDSC usually only agrees six months at a time.

The request for an extension needs to contain a clear outline of what work has been completed on the thesis and what is left to do. This should be accompanied by a timeline that details how the remaining work will be completed.

Note: Failure to make adequate progress will not be considered grounds for extending the maximum period of registration.

Students are not automatically granted extensions. These requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis. If you encounter difficulties during your studies and can't work on your thesis, it is important you seek advice about suspending your studies.

Changes to mode of study

If you need to change from full-time to part-time or vice versa, you must complete the appropriate RDSC request form and submit it to The Graduate School. If approved, your end date will be readjusted to reflect the new mode of study.

Changes to supervisory team

Whilst it is not normal to change a supervisory team, there may be a number of reasons why it is necessary, such as a supervisor leaving the university or a change in your research focus. If this is the case, the change of supervisory team form should be completed with your existing supervisory team and submitted to the RDSC.

In the unlikely event that there is a breakdown of a supervisory relationship, all attempts will be made to resolve the issues as soon as possible. You could talk through the issues and discuss actions with the Director of Postgraduate Programmes or Postgraduate Tutor and colleagues in The Graduate School, so please contact them if you are having problems. All meetings will be held in confidence. If it is agreed the supervisory team is changed, the appropriate form should be completed and submitted to the RDSC.

Withdrawal of registration

Should you wish to withdraw from your programme of study, you should write to, or email, The Graduate School, which will inform the supervisory team and other relevant parties.

If you withdraw your registration, you will be offered an exit interview, when the reasons for withdrawal will be discussed with your Director of Studies.

Application to move to the writing-up stage

Application to transfer to writing-up (MPhil/PhD/professional doctorates only)

Note: Students registered for the awards of Masters by Research (MRes) and PhD by Existing Published Work are not eligible to apply to transfer to writing-up.

At the end of your registration period, a student, in agreement with their supervisory team, may apply for a transfer to writing-up.

Please note, for a student being sponsored, a different registration period may be enforced and a transfer to writing-up might be earlier.

Any application for transfer to writing-up requires approval from the RDSC on the recommendation of the Director of Studies.

The period of writing-up differs from the normal registration period, as the expectation is that the research is complete and time is needed to focus on pulling together the thesis.

The following principles outline the writing-up period and aim to assist the research student and supervisory team when taking the decision to apply to transfer to writing-up:

➢ Recommendation to transfer to writing-up is an academic judgement and will not be permitted for financial reasons.

A student may apply for transfer to writing-up when they:

➢ Have completed their research study within the registration period.
➢ No longer require supervision.
➢ Can demonstrate that they have all draft chapters written.
➢ The role of the supervisory team consists of reviewing draft copies of the thesis as a whole in preparation for imminent submission. Supervisors are not expected to review any new material presented by the student nor make in-depth comments on individual chapters.
➢ A period of writing-up is for 12 months only. A student may only apply for transfer to writing-up once.
➢ A fee of £500 (non-refundable) will be charged.
➢ A student cannot apply for a period of suspension during a period of writing-up.
➢ At the end of the writing-up period, if a student has not submitted they may, in exceptional circumstances, make a request to extend their registration to the RDSC.
➢ The maximum extension period is 12 months. On approval, the student will be charged full tuition fees until the point of submission.

Outcomes from the RDSC

We aim to send all outcomes from the RDSC within 10 working days of the Committee meeting.

We realise this might be an anxious time for you, but please do not contact The Graduate School asking for your outcome. The drafted minutes and outcomes all need to be approved by the chair of the RDSC before anything can be released. Your outcome will be sent to your student email address.

Absences and other disruptions

You must inform your supervisors and The Graduate School if you are absent or your studies are disrupted for any reason. All information will be treated confidentially.

Please report all absences of a month or more that are due to illness or injury, or if you experience any problems that mean you will be unable to study for a month or more.

Supervisors and Directors of Research/ Directors of Postgraduate Programmes are required to notify The Graduate School immediately of any unauthorised absences or if they have concerns about your attendance or progress.

If you entered the UK on a Tier 4 visa sponsored by Leeds Beckett University and you fail to comply with this requirement, then we may withdraw your sponsorship.

9: Professional doctorates

This section covers the following professional doctorates:

- ➢ Doctor of Education (EdD)
- ➢ Doctor of Business Administration (DBA)

Information about our new Doctor of Engineering (DEng) will be provided soon.

A professional doctorate is an internationally accepted doctoral qualification that enables candidates to develop a project leading to a significant contribution to professional practice. These programmes are designed for professionals in all sectors.

As with any other research degree, a piece of original research will need to be produced. However, your research will be informed by experiences in your professional practice and will usually seek to develop an understanding that contributes to professional practice more broadly.

The professional doctorate programme has a series of structured learning research training and discipline-specific workshops. Through these workshops, you will develop an understanding of theoretical issues relevant to your professional context and you will begin thinking about what you want to look at in your research and the methods to be used.

This section provides information relating to the structured learning modules, the process of assessment and requests for extensions relating to the assignments. All other information concerning the research degree processes and assessment milestones can be found in the main body of this handbook.

Programme structure

1.1. Aims of the programme

The programme aims to:
- ➢ Provide the opportunity for professionals in their specific field to further progress their professional learning and development through an extended period of research-based study with the intention of making original contributions to knowledge.
- ➢ Develop practitioners' understanding of research and its application to their field.
- ➢ Engage practitioners in critical discussions and reflections that involve deep consideration of the relationship between theory and practice with other practitioner, academic and research communities.

1.2. Specific learning outcomes

On completion of a professional doctorate, you will:
- ➢ Have made an original contribution to knowledge and/or enhancement of professional practice.
- ➢ Understand in depth aspects of professional knowledge and practice related to your area of research.
- ➢ Be able to locate your own area of inquiry within the existing field of knowledge and consider multiple perspectives when analysing the field..
- ➢ Understand the theoretical underpinning of research approaches pertinent to your specific field.

- Have critically examined, developed and deployed theoretical and conceptual frameworks relating to professional research and practice in your field.
- Be able to consider a range of methodological approaches and make informed decisions about your application.
- Be able to articulate complex ideas through a range of communication media, including writing for publication, conference presentation and other means relevant to your field of professional practice.

1.3. Skills and other attributes

On completion of the professional doctorate, you will:
- Be able to discuss and resolve the theoretical and methodological controversies which surround your specific professional field and you will also be able to think innovatively about the investigation and solution of problems.
- Have developed advanced skills in designing and planning research, including the selection and use of appropriate software, to enhance your professional development, both individually and collaboratively.
- Be able to conduct a broad-ranging literature review and isolate and discuss themes that arise from it. You will be to select and use appropriate methods, quantitative and/or qualitative, within a particular professional setting.
- Have developed advanced skills in gathering and analysing data, writing appropriately for a variety of audiences and articulating and disseminating research findings using a range of media.
- Be skilled in facilitating critical evaluation and implementation of research-based evidence.

1.4. The structure and content of the programmes

The professional doctorate programme is structured into two stages.

Stage 1 consists of structured learning modules, delivered through a series of key workshops/discussion groups covering a range of issues pertinent to the development of your specific research study and your role as a practitioner researcher. The skills and knowledge obtained throughout Stage 1 will directly contribute to the development of the research study.

Stage 2 will further focus on the development of a thesis of 60,000 words, which will be assessed by a viva voce examination. For details on examination process, please see (page Section 4).

Doctor of Education (EdD)

STAGE 1:	Structured learning
Year 1/2	Module 1 Research methods 1 (methodology) Module 2 Research methods 2 (writing and dissemination) Module 3 The practitioner as researcher (literature review) **Confirmation of registration (see Section 3)**
Year 2	Module 4 Policy practice and professional learning (policy context); gain ethical approval for project
STAGE 2:	Development of thesis (60,000 words)
Year 2/ 3	Data collection; draft chapters 1, 2 and 3; draft analysis chapters

Year 4:	Draft findings, summary and contributions chapters; refine overall thesis and submit for examination

Doctor of Business Administration (DBA)

STAGE 1:	Structured learning
Year 1	Module 1: Introduction, research design and proposal Module 2: Current issues in business and management research **Confirmation of registration (see Section 3)**
Year 2	Module 3: Research philosophy and doing a literature review Module 4: Advanced research methods
STAGE 2	Development of thesis (60,000 words)
Year 3 & 4	Planning and preparing a thesis Preparing for the viva

1.5. Learning activities

Learning activities will include:
➢ A series of lectures and workshops that explore critical aspects of the field of education from research and practitioner perspectives.
➢ Key discussion workshops, including ones that support the development of methodological knowledge, provide a critical review of policy and practice literatures and key debates and knowledge of the practitioner as a researcher.
➢ Supervisory sessions that support the development and progression of the research-based thesis component of the qualification.

In addition, the course will enable you to take advantage of further learning opportunities, such as the attendance of and contributions to seminar series and conferences, research methodology workshops and other opportunities that will support your networking and engagement with wider professional, academic and research communities, including those available to postgraduate researchers within and outside the university.

1.6. Assessment

Stage 1 is measured by assessment. The assignments during Stage 1 will be assessed on a pass/fail basis, but feedback will be provided. The unit will be marked internally by the module leader, drawing on the Taxonomy of Assessment for Research Awards as well as other requirements for the assessment.

Doctor of Education (EdD)

Research methods (1)	5,000 to 7,000-word methodologically focused paper suitable for presentation to a conference and/or journal that provides a critical analysis of an aspect of ethical research methodology pertinent to the field of educational research and to the development of your thesis.

Research methods (2)	5,000 to 6,000-word research paper suitable for presentation at a conference that will stand as evidence of a range of dissemination and reflective approaches pertinent to the field of educational research and to the development of your thesis. This paper will form the basis of the CoR document.
The practitioner as researcher	5,000 to 6,000-word literature review relating to your own area of practice.
Education policy, practice and professional learning	5,000 to 7,000-word referenced research report that contextualises the sector/setting within which you will be conducting your research project. This is likely to include details of worksite, professional practice and recent policy implementation(s), together with critical considerations of factors impacting on policy formulation, professional learning and your sense of professionalism.

Assessment schedule for the EdD

All dates are approximate	Date commenced	Submission	Resubmission
Research methods (1)	1 November	28 February	Mid-April
Research methods (2)	1 March	30 April	Mid-June
The practitioner as researcher	1 May	31 August	Mid-October
Education policy, practice and professional learning	1 September	30 November	Mid-January

Doctor of Business Administration (DBA)

Document 1:	2,000 to 2,500-word draft research proposal and plan identifying an area of research that is of interest to you and will be of benefit or interest to all or some of the following: • The researcher as a practising manager or professional. • The academic community. • Professional associations, trainers and developers. • Managers and organisations. • Policymakers and/or regulators. The importance of the field to these various constituencies should be discussed. A number of specific research questions relevant to the general field or topic of the research should be identified and explored. These should be capable of sustaining research effort over the duration of the programme. It is important that a range of questions should be identified because each of the subsequent pieces of assessed work should normally relate to at least one of the research questions. The more questions a researcher has prepared, therefore, the greater the ease with which this requirement can be met. The approach to the overall project and methods to address the research questions should be specified along with a work plan. **This report will form the basis of the CoR – see Section 3.**

Document 2:	5,000 to 6,000-word final research report that will respond to the feedback on the draft and refine the research questions, approach and methods. An initial literature review should be included. This will map the potential field of study, identify major recent and current contributions and show how the proposed project will relate and connect with current literature and how that literature will be used to inform the project.
Document 3	10,000 to 12,000-word critical literature review and initial development of conceptual framework that will include: • A discussion of the various academic fields appropriate to the topic identified in document 1. • A reasoned selection from the range of field identified. • A critical review and evaluation of the literature. • A set of working definitions of the key concepts to be used in the research. • An initial attempt at the identification of a conceptual theme or a conceptual framework.
Document 4:	10,000 to 12,000-word report on a small empirical project focusing on a research question or issue from within your general research topic which could be investigated using a range of methods. The method(s) selected should be an elaboration of those proposed in document 2. The report should include: • A discussion of the importance of the research questions. • A discussion of the research question and its suitability for the chosen approach and methods. • An identification of the research focus or theme. • A methodological discussion of the implications of using the chosen approach. • A discussion and justification of the research methods to be used. • A discussion of the issue of validity and interpretation arising from the use of the methods. • An analysis of the material. • Conclusions and themes for further research.

Assessment schedule for the DBA

All dates are approximate	Date commenced	Submission	Resubmission
Document 1	Oct or Feb	31 March or 31 July	Mid-May or mid-September
Document 2	April or Sept	30 Sept or 28 Feb	Mid-November or mid-April
Document 3	Oct or Feb	31 March or 31 July	Mid-May or mid-September
Document 4	May or Sept	31 Aug or 31 Dec	Mid-October or mid-February

All structured learning modules will have a submission date and a resubmission date set at the start of the module. If you do not pass a module at the first attempt, you will be offered the opportunity to resubmit. If you fail on your second attempt, you may be offered the opportunity to register on an

alternative or lesser award (MPhil or MRes). This decision will be made at the annual progression event.

Stage 2 is the production of a piece of original research in the form of a written thesis (60,000 words) which will draw on the knowledge and skills attained throughout Stage 2.

Assessment involves the presentation of the thesis and an oral examination (viva voce). **For the examination process, please see Section 4.**

Research Training Programme

You are required to engage with the university's Research Training Programme (RTP). You will therefore need to complete a Training Needs Analysis (TNA), Skills Audit, and TNA plan, which will include a portfolio of evidence.

1.7.   Requesting an extension for an assessment

If you require an extension for an assessment, you should complete a [Request for Suspension & Extension form.](#)

You may be granted an extension of up to five working days by your module tutor or of between six working days and one month by the Research Degrees Sub-Committee (RDSC). If you wish to request an extension of more than five working days, you must attach evidence to support your request.

If you require an extension of more than one month, you will need to formally suspend your studies as outlined [here.](#)

The Assignment Extension Request form must be submitted to the module tutor in all cases.

The module tutor will not accept the form if it is incomplete and/or evidence is not attached. When this happens, the form will be returned and you will be asked to resubmit once you have obtained the appropriate evidence.

Forms should be submitted by the submission date of the assessment. Extensions will not normally be granted when the form is submitted after the submission date.

The course leader will assess the form within 48 hours of submission. They can then:

➢ Ask for further evidence*.*
➢ Grant or refuse an extension of up to five working days*.*
➢ Forward to the secretary of the RDSC.

If the course leader is unable to process the request within 48 hours (for example, they are on leave), the decision may be made by another EdD module tutor.

10: PhD by Existing Published Work

The PhD by Existing Published Work route is intended primarily for research-active academic staff who, for one reason or another, haven't had the opportunity to undertake a research programme leading to a PhD. Applications for this award will consist of a coherent body of published work that is of the same quality, rigour and level as required of a standard PhD in the chosen field and constitutes an original contribution to knowledge.

For eligibility, general and application requirements, please click here.

Making an application

The completed and signed university application form for PhD by Existing Published Work should be submitted to the Graduate School and **must** be accompanied with the specified information requirements as set out here.

Application process

The application and the additional information will be initially reviewed at the next RDSC.

Outcome following the initial review

You will be invited to a formal interview by a review panel consisting of senior academics within the RDSC.

Alternatively, you may be asked for further information by the Research Degrees Sub-Committee (RDSC), or your application may be unsuccessful.

Formal interview/confirmation of registration

➢ Successful applicants will be invited to attend a formal interview.
➢ The interview will be held by a review panel consisting of selected members of the RDSC.

At the interview, you must be able to satisfy the review panel of:

➢ The coherence of the submission.
➢ The extent to which the proposed application and additional information demonstrates work which is original and has extended the forefront of the discipline in question.
➢ The extent to which the proposed submission for the award is commensurate with that of a PhD.

Decision outcomes

You will either be successfully recommended for registration on the award or your application will be unsuccessful. If unsuccessful, you may appeal this decision - see Academic Regulations, Section 11.23.3.3.

Enrolment and registration

Successful applicants will be contacted by The Graduate School and enrolled and registered at the next intake date.

Supervision

You will be assigned a supervisor who will act as Director of Studies. The Director of Studies will provide advice on which of the publications should form the final submission along with the preparation of the synopsis. The synopsis (no more than 10,000 words) will describe the aims of the research undertaken to produce the publications. It will also incorporate an analytical discussion of the main results and will put the total work submitted in context.

Preparation for examination

At the examination stage, you should submit sufficient copies of your synopsis and published work to The Graduate School. For members of staff, an additional external examiner will be required. Therefore, four copies will usually be required. The submission must include the following:

(A) Title page
This should give the following information:
➢   An appropriate title relating to the candidate's area of research.
➢   The full name of the candidate.
➢   The month and year of submission.
➢   The following statement:
Published works submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of Leeds Beckett University for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy on the basis of Existing Published Work.

(B) Contents page
This should list all the published works on which the submission is based.

(C) Declaration on collaborative research
Where appropriate, a statement clearly setting out the relative input of the contributing/collaborating parties.

(D) Abstract
An abstract of approximately 300 words.

(E) Synopsis
The synopsis should be no more than 10,000 words. In preparing this, you should pay particular attention to the assessment requirements for this award (see Section 11.23.6 of the University Academic Regulations) and you should address the following:

The research context

A review of the field of research, setting out of the place of the current submission within that

research context and with particular emphasis on the cumulative nature of the contribution. This review should include reference to recent and current research and publications in the field.

The coherence of the works submitted

The synopsis should explain how the works submitted relate to each other and the field of study. You may comment on the sequential development of the submissions in terms of, for example, theory, methodology, techniques and research context.

The original contribution to knowledge in the field of research

The synopsis should clearly set out the originality of the research presented and demonstrate how this has contributed to the progress of the discipline.. You should emphasise the originality of the research, both as a whole and in terms of the methodological, technical and theoretical advances made as part of the research.

In this context, the synopsis should also include a discussion of the additional insights that can be gained from a consideration of the submission as a whole.

(F) Publications

A high-quality reprint or photocopy (at least A5 but preferably A4 size) of all the publications cited in the application for registration, if necessary giving proof of authenticity. In the case of creative work, original works may be presented or, where necessary, they may be represented by other means as appropriate to their medium. These must be clearly catalogued and recorded.

Presentation requirements – PhD by Existing Published Work

The published works and accompanying documentation should be presented in a box file of sufficient rigidity to support the weight of the enclosed material when standing upright.

For information on the examination process, please refer to Section 4 of this handbook