

Changes to the Policy on Postgraduate Research Skills Training

Synopsis

This paper sets out revisions to the Policy on Postgraduate Research Skills Training. All changes to the policy were approved by the Graduate Education Group (GEG) on 13th September 2007.

The policy on Postgraduate Research Skills Training can be found at:
<http://www.campus.manchester.ac.uk/researchoffice/graduate/code/skillstraining>

Effective Date of Introduction

13th September 2007

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Changes to Policy

1. Section 1

Add:

"For the purposes of this policy, the term 'postgraduate research degrees' refers to doctoral, Master of Philosophy (MPhil), Master of Surgery (ChM) and Doctor of Medicine (MD) degrees."

2. Change all occurrences of 'PhD' to 'postgraduate research degree'.

3. Section 1 – Change 'qualities' to 'abilities'

4. New section on 'External Requirements' to be included after Section 2

Add:

"Drivers of the national research training agenda have redefined what institutions are expected to provide for research students. The three primary changes are:

3.1 **Research training programmes:** the Research Councils expect institutions to have formal research training programmes in place, to which all postgraduate research students should have access.

3.2 **Training needs assessment:** the QAA Code of Practice expects institutions to have a system of Training Needs Assessment (TNA) for all postgraduate research students, and procedures that keep students' training needs under regular review.

3.3 **Scale of training that is expected:** full-time students are expected to receive at least 10 days of dedicated training a year, principally in transferable skills."

5. Section 4.1 (formally 3.1) University Requirements

Change:

"A programme of skills training and development is a mandatory component of the PhD degree."

To:

"A programme of skills training and development is a mandatory component of a doctoral or MPhil degree."

6. Section 4.2 a (formally 3.2 a) University Requirements

Change Skills Audit footnote:

"The purpose of a skills audit is to formally identify the areas in which research students will need to develop skills through formal training."

To:

"The purpose of a skills audit (also referred to as the training needs analysis or development needs analysis) is to formally identify the areas in which research students will need to develop skills through formal training."

7. Section 4.2 d (formally 3.2 d) University Requirements

Change and add footnote:

"Participate in a suite of training workshops/seminars to develop the required skills where appropriate."

To:

"Participate in training opportunities¹ to develop the required skills where appropriate."

8. Section 4.3 (formally 3.3) University Requirements

Change:

"All candidates for the degree of PhD must undertake a skills audit at the beginning of their programme, and 6 months or annually thereafter throughout their prescribed period of study to determine their research, transferable and generic skills requirements."

To:

"Candidates registered for a doctoral or MPhil degree must undertake a skills audit at the beginning of their programme, and this should be reviewed at least annually thereafter throughout their prescribed period of study to determine their research, transferable and generic skills requirements."

9. Section 4.5 (formally 3.5) University Requirements

Change:

"Students are required to demonstrate satisfactory achievement of skills competencies in order to progress at the end of years 1 and 2."

To:

"Successful completion of the agreed programme of skills development and training will be a condition of progression between each year of study."

10. Section 5.1 f (formally 4.1 f) Research Students Responsibilities

¹ Training opportunities include the full range of options from self-paced study to professionally delivered workshops, to be decided upon during the personal development planning stage of the process.

Change:

"Participating in a suite of training workshops/seminars to develop the required skills, where appropriate."

To:

"Participating in training opportunities to develop the required skills, where appropriate."

11. Section 6.1 b (formally 5.1 b) Supervisor Responsibilities

Change:

"Agreeing, in consultation with the student, a 6 month or annual training plan."

To:

"Agreeing, in consultation with the student, an annual training plan."

12. Section 6.1 c (formally 5.1 c) Supervisor Responsibilities

Change:

"Ensuring that the student is aware of generic training opportunities, identify specific needs and promote participation."

To:

"Ensuring that the student is aware of generic training opportunities and promoting their participation as relevant to their specific training needs participation."

13. Section 8.1 (formally 7.1) Support and Guidance

Add:

"Relevant learned professional societies"