

# **Procedure for Withdrawing and/or Amending Postgraduate Research Degrees**

**October 2007**

**Research Office Graduate Education Team**

## **CONTENTS**

1. **Scope**
2. **Sources of Support**
3. **An overview of the process for approving amendments to degrees**
4. **An overview of the process for withdrawing a degree**
5. **Reporting**

**Appendix 1: Degree Amendment Form**

**Appendix 2: Withdrawal of Degree Form**

**Procedure for Withdrawing and/or Amending Postgraduate  
Research Degrees  
October 2007**

## **1. SCOPE**

This procedure and the associated pro-formas should be used when seeking approval for amendments to research degrees that lead to an award of the University. The PhD is a University award and it would not be necessary or appropriate for amendments to all PhD subjects to be approved. This process is designed for other types of new research degree such as new awards under the professional doctorate title, variations of research master's programmes and PhD awards that involve an alternative or distinct method of research presentation.

This document provides general guidance on the approval process.

**NOTE:** whilst approval is not required for changes to all PhD awards it is important that amendments and withdrawals are reported to the necessary administrative offices to ensure that the University's records and publicity material are kept up to date. Please ensure that the following offices are notified of any changes:

- Head of Student Records, Planning Support Office (and Ms Penny Jones, Student Records Office)
- Head of Recruitment and Admissions
- John Rylands University Library Faculty Librarian

## **2. SOURCES OF SUPPORT**

- Recruitment and Admissions Office: for help with market research.
- Your Faculty Quality or Graduate Administrator: for advice on the approval process.
- Administrative staff within your School: for support with the preparation of documentation.

## **3. AN OVERVIEW OF THE PROCESS FOR APPROVING AMENDMENTS TO DEGREES**

Amendments can be classed as major or minor according to whether or not they are significant in intent or effect. Major amendments require approval by the Faculty whilst minor amendments can be approved by a School and reported to the appropriate Faculty (so that it can monitor the nature and cumulative effect of minor amendments to degrees). The following are examples of the types of amendment. This is not an exhaustive list; Faculty Graduate administrators in discussion with the Research Office, will be able to offer advice on whether individual cases should be treated as major or minor changes.

<b>Type of amendment</b>	<b>Process</b>	<b>Level of approval</b>
a) New or revised degree title (no change to degree aims and intended learning outcomes)	Completion of degree amendment form and revised programme specification	Faculty
b) 'Re-branding' of a degree (with change to degree aims and intended learning outcomes)	Approval of new degree (using existing degree documentation where appropriate and possible). Completion of a degree withdrawal form.	Faculty

**Procedure for Withdrawing and/or Amending Postgraduate  
Research Degrees  
October 2007**

c) New pathway through an existing scheme	Completion of degree amendment form and new/revised programme specification. List of additional units (including unit specifications for any new units)	Faculty
d) Add or change units (no change to degree aims and intended learning outcomes)	Completion of new or amended unit specifications	School (with copies to the Faculty)
e) Add or change units (with change to degree aims and intended learning outcomes)	Completion of degree amendment form and new programme specification plus list of new/amended units (including unit specifications for any new units)	Faculty
f) Withdraw a degree	Completion of degree withdrawal form	Faculty

#### **4. AN OVERVIEW OF THE PROCESS FOR WITHDRAWING A DEGREE**

All proposals to withdraw a degree must be approved by the Faculty. Unless all Schools affected by the withdrawal agree, then one year's notice must be given. In this context, it is helpful to specify explicitly any units within the degree that are *not* to be withdrawn if they affect other Schools.

#### **5. REPORTING**

Once a degree amendment or withdrawal has been approved by the appropriate Faculty committee, the Faculty Graduate Administrator should send the completed form to the following people:

Head of Student Records, Planning Support Office (and Ms Penny Jones, Student Records Office)  
Head of Recruitment and Admissions (and Michelle Kirkpatrick for options (a), (b) and (f) on page 2)  
John Rylands University Library Faculty Librarian  
Head of Graduate Education, Research Office

**Procedure for Withdrawing and/or Amending Postgraduate  
Research Degrees  
October 2007**

**APPENDIX 1: DEGREE AMENDMENT FORM**

Degree Qualification and Degree Title (current title)		
School		
Faculty		
Statement of details of the type of amendment proposed (e.g. change to degree title)		
Rationale for the amendment		
If a degree has been re-named, please give details of the new title here		
From what date will the amendment(s) be implemented?		
Does the amendment(s) affect prospective students with offers from the University, and if so, has the Recruitment and Admissions Office been consulted?	Yes / No	
Does the amendment(s) affect existing students and, if so, have they been consulted?	Yes / No	
Does the amendment(s) affect students in other Schools?	Yes / No	
If Yes, please state which Schools.		
Have all the Heads of School/affected approved the change/s? Please attach evidence (e.g. a copy of an e-mail or extract from minutes).	Yes / No	
If the degree is accredited by a Professional or Statutory Body, has it approved any changes?	Yes / No	
Name and signature of PG Director		

**Procedure for Withdrawing and/or Amending Postgraduate  
Research Degrees  
October 2007**

	Date
Name and signature of Chair of Faculty committee	Date

The following offices must be informed by the Faculty Graduate Administrator of all approved amendments (except those to units):

Head of Student Records Section, Planning Support Office  
Head of Recruitment and Admissions  
John Rylands University Library Faculty Librarian  
Head of Graduate Education, Research Office

**Procedure for Withdrawing and/or Amending Postgraduate  
Research Degrees  
October 2007**

**APPENDIX 2: WITHDRAWAL OF DEGREE FORM**

*Unless all Schools affected by the withdrawal of this degree agree to its withdrawal, one year's notice of the intention to withdraw the degree must be given.*

Degree Qualification and Degree Title	
School	
Faculty	
Student Record Code	
Reason(s) for the withdrawal of the degree	
When will be the date of the last intake to the degree?	
Does the withdrawal affect existing students? If so: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how many students are left to complete the degree</li> <li>• what is the expected date of completion of the last cohort of students</li> <li>• how many units remain to be taken</li> <li>• will students continue to have access to facilities.</li> </ul>	
Is academic and administrative support available for the degree (and any units to be withdrawn) until its closure?	
What processes will be in place to monitor the timely completion of students on the degree being withdrawn? Has a Programme Director been designated to oversee the completion of the degree, including co-ordination of the annual monitoring exercise?	
Is there an External Examiner in place until the degree closes and all students have completed?	
As a result of the degree withdrawal, are units to be withdrawn which will affect students in other Schools? If so, please list the units and the Schools affected. What arrangements have been made to cover this?	
Does the withdrawal affect students to whom offers have been made?	
Have all the Heads of School affected approved the withdrawal? Please attach	

**Procedure for Withdrawing and/or Amending Postgraduate  
Research Degrees  
October 2007**

evidence (e.g. a copy of an e-mail or extract from minutes).	
What arrangements are in place for the supervision of dissertations/theses?	

Name and signature of PG Director	Date
Name and signature of Head of School	Date
Name and signature of Chair of Faculty committee	Date

When the proposal to withdraw the degree has been approved by the Faculty, the Faculty graduate administrator must return copies of the signed form to:

Head of Student Records Section, Planning Support Office  
Head of Recruitment and Admissions  
John Rylands University Library Faculty Librarian  
Head of Graduate Education, Research Office