

## Year Review process at SEED

Towards the end of the academic year, all departments at SEED evaluate progress and development made by PhD students. This evaluation is performed by a panel constituted by an independent reviewer (chosen by the supervisory team), the supervisory team and, if required, the PGR department coordinator. In cases where the supervisor does not attend the review meeting with the student, two or more independent reviewers will be required. The supervisor should inform the reviewers about the student's progress and discuss the panel's recommendation after the review. The panel evaluates written work submitted by the PhD candidate, submitted two weeks before the review. During the review, the student has the opportunity to orally defend their research proposal and answer the panel's questions. The panel is chaired by an independent reviewer. This formal evaluation process determines whether students have met required milestones of their PhD program and offers valuable feedback.

This document establishes the expected minimum academic achievements for each year of the PhD program and details the assessment criteria for each of the year review panels. *The milestones and requirements presented here do not apply to Professional Doctorates students who are asked to meet different assessment criteria.*

### Responsibilities of the panel members

**Student:** To attend the annual review meeting; to submit the work required on time; to engage with the training requirements of the PhD programme; to complete their sections of the annual review form before the annual review meeting in a timely manner allowing the panel enough time to consider all inputs on the form. Students should also ensure they are available following

the annual review meeting to discuss the outcome with supervisors or independent reviewers and/or Department Coordinators.

**Main Supervisor:** Must complete the annual review form in conjunction with the co-supervisor. The supervisor must ensure that the student is aware of the purpose and frequency of all types of progress review meetings and the possible outcomes of these meetings as set out in the [Policy on the Progress](#) and Review of Postgraduate Research Students. The supervisor should either attend the annual review meeting with the student and independent ~~reviewer or meet with the student after the meeting to discuss the final report.~~ *Supervisors should be providing feedback on the work submitted before the review and give feedback and support to the student to revise the work accordingly before it is submitted for consideration.*

Supervisors should ensure that the standard of work expected is explained and discussed with the student. The supervisors should also ensure that they meet with the student following the annual review meeting to discuss the outcome.

**Co-Supervisor:** Complete the annual review form in conjunction with the main supervisor; either attend the annual review meeting with the student and independent reviewer or meet with the student after the meeting to discuss the final report; if required provide feedback on the work submitted before the review and give feedback and support to the student to revise the work accordingly before it is submitted for consideration. The supervisors should also ensure that they meet with the student following the annual review meeting to discuss the outcome.

**Independent Reviewer/s:** To read the work submitted; to write the report following the annual review meeting giving constructive comments on the

work submitted and the performance in the annual review meeting; to provide the report to the supervisors.

**Department Coordinator/PGR Director:** Will support the allocation of the independent reviewer/s when supervisory teams have exhausted all options within their Department. The Department Coordinator will consider the recommendation and will confirm the final outcome by authorising the annual review form. The PGR Director will consider all recommendations for withdrawal or downgrading and be prepared to meet with the student if the outcome is not a positive one.

### **Work to be submitted and reviewed**

For every year-review panel, students are expected to submit a written report. The content and format of this submission varies in year 1, 2 and 3. In addition, each department may request specific contributions. These will be duly published and discussed with supervisors at the beginning of each academic year. Regardless of the format and components requested, there are minimal assessment criteria that must be met by students of all departments.

#### ***Year 1 review panel:***

Students are expected to demonstrate through a written submission that they have developed a research proposal. They should be able to identify: a) a problem of research, b) how the proposal is positioned within existing academic literature, c) appropriate and interrelated research questions, d) a set of objectives and e) a detailed methodological strategy. Students should have completed training on ethics, research integrity and risk assessment, either through Epigeum or equivalent training offered by the School, Faculty or through Learning and Development. The written submission will typically

consist of a literature review and a methodological section. Students are also expected to address potential ethical concerns emerging from their research design and a timetable detailing a plan of action. The written submission should be between 8,000 and 12,000 words. PGRs writing an article-based thesis may discuss a draft of a first paper instead of a literature review. First year students are expected to have completed the three modules offered as Research Training at SEED.

#### ***Year 2 review panel:***

Students are expected to provide a written report describing the work carried out during their data gathering (e.g. data collection/work with datasets) stage. Candidates will be asked to demonstrate the suitability of the employed methodological strategy. Students are expected to be able to explain the research questions their project will answer and how this will lead to a substantial original contribution to knowledge. The written work should provide a report on the data gathered/progress made with existing datasets; a beginning of the analysis for PGRs undertaking fieldwork; and an outline of the thesis. In addition, students should provide a written commentary on how their original research design has changed along with a renewed timetable to completion.

#### ***Year 3 review panel:***

The student is expected to submit draft chapters of their literature review, methodological chapter, a sample of their empirical section, and have clearly identified a significant contribution to knowledge. Students should submit 3 chapters selected in discussion with the supervisors. Students are expected to have completed their data gathering and analysis stage. Candidates are asked to present a realistic timetable for completion and discuss with supervisors whether they will require additional time to complete their PhD program.

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### **Part-time students**

#### **Expected milestones**

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Part-time students are expected to complete six (6) different year reviews. The expected academic achievements for years 2, 4 and 6 mirror those presented for full-time PhD students in years 1, 2 and 3 respectively.

For their first annual review, part-time students are expected to present a revised and extended research proposal, together with sections of their literature review. The written report should be between 5,000 to 10,000 words and should be uploaded onto eProg and sent to panel members two weeks before the review. For their third-year review, students are expected to have their ethics application to begin their research approved. In addition, candidates will be expected to submit a written report on data gathering developments. In year 5, part-time students are expected to submit draft copies of their literature review chapter and a sample of their empirical or analytical section.

### **Expectations regarding training**

First-year PhD students (full-time and part-time) should have completed the research training modules offered by SEED. In addition, throughout the PhD programme, candidates are expected to undertake specialised training. Details of seminars, workshops and conferences attended should be logged onto eProg. A strategy for research and methodological training should be discussed and reflected on the 'Research Development Form' on eProg.

### **Evaluation process (full-time and part-time students)**

The review panels are constituted by an independent reviewer, members of the supervisory team and, if requested, the PGR departmental coordinator. The independent reviewer chairs the panel and is in charge of filling the main section of the year-review form on eProg. The selection of the independent reviewer should be made in consultation with the student. The reviewer can

be from any department in SEED. Based on the written submission and the oral defence, the results of the examination, for both full-time and part-time PhD students, can be as follows:

A: The student can progress to the next year of study.

B: The student is referred to complete the additional work specified by the panel. The maximum time that can be allocated for revisions is 10 weeks. The panel should clearly list the amendments to be incorporated and specify the deadline for re-submission.

C: The student is referred to complete the additional work specified by the panel and attend a further review meeting. The second panel should occur no later than 10 weeks from the first and before the second week of September.

D: Following review of the additional work submitted the panel recommends that it is not achievable to meet the required standard and the panel recommends that the student should not be allowed to proceed to the next year of study.

### **Full-time students**

#### **Year 1 evaluation criteria:**

Students should be able to articulate a feasible research design, locating the problem of research within existing literature and identifying a set of interrelated research questions. The student should be able to provide evidence of a suitable methodological strategy relevant to their research (for example, having identified appropriate case studies, possible gate keepers and key actors, organisations or processes).

**Year 2 evaluation criteria:**

Students should demonstrate that they have gathered, collected and compiled sufficient empirical data for the completion of their doctoral project. Evidence detailing the use of specific methodological tactics and the material obtained should be introduced in the annual review form. Students should be able to reflect how the analysis of their empirical material is supported by and allows to develop their conceptual developments addressed on the literature review chapter.

**Year 3 evaluation criteria:**

Students should be able to present a final chapter structure for the thesis and detail the logical progression of the argument to be developed in the thesis. The written sample presented for examination should demonstrate a clear integration between the empirical findings and the conceptual apparatus used for the research. The candidate should be able to identify the original contribution to knowledge developed through the research project.

**Part-time students****Year 1 evaluation criteria.**

Students should be able to situate their research problem within relevant literature and have identified feasible research questions. Candidates should be able to justify the epistemological principles that underpin their research.

**Year 2 evaluation criteria.**

Students should be able to articulate a feasible research design, locating the problem of research within existing literature and identifying a set of

interrelated research questions. The student should be able to provide evidence of a suitable methodological strategy relevant to their research (for example, having identified appropriate case studies, possible gatekeepers and key actors, organisations or processes).

**Year 3 evaluation criteria**

Students are expected to have identified a suitable methodological strategy that is justified for the proposed research design. Candidates are expected to have initiated their data gathering stage, presenting relevant empirical data.

**Year 4 evaluation criteria**

Students should demonstrate that they have gathered, collected and compiled sufficient empirical data for the completion of their doctoral project. Evidence detailing the use of specific methodological tactics and the material obtained should be introduced in the annual review form. Students should be able to reflect how the analysis of their empirical material is supported by and allows to develop their conceptual developments addressed on the literature review chapter.

**Year 5 evaluation criteria**

Students should be able to mobilise their conceptual framework to describe, understand or explain the empirical material or findings of their research project.

**Year 6 evaluation criteria**

Students should be able to present a final chapter structure for the thesis and detail the logical progression of the argument to be developed in the thesis. The written sample presented for examination

should demonstrate a clear integration between the empirical findings and the conceptual apparatus used for the research. The candidate should be able to identify the original contribution to knowledge developed through the research project.

### **Timings of reviews**

The annual review for both full time and part time students should not take place any earlier or later than month 9 of the year of study.

If a resubmission is required, a student will normally be given one opportunity to resubmit for a further review. Resubmissions should normally be submitted within 10 weeks of the first annual review meeting.

Normally, if a student provides notice to submit before the final year annual review is due, the review should still take place unless the student submits the thesis before the review.

### **Feedback**

Feedback on the student's submitted work and oral presentation should be completed on eProg. Supervisors should clearly identify areas and topics for development. Independent reviewers should complete the allocated section on the year-review eProg form. Feedback should reflect how the student has met the expected milestones. If amendments or corrections are

required, reviewers should clearly identify the sections for development and itemise the expected revisions.

### **Unsatisfactory progress**

Where a student's progress is unsatisfactory, they may be required to have their progress assessed more than twice a year. This must be clearly communicated to students at the start of their degree and thereafter.

Exit awards are not applicable for PGR students.

### **Possible outcomes**

#### ***Doctoral degrees***

Students initially registered on a doctoral degree:

1. Continuation - The student has met the required doctoral standards and the recommendation is made for the student to continue registration on the doctoral degree
2. Resubmit - (remedial work) The student has almost met the required doctoral standards but further work must be done to continue registration. Following the first attempt at a formal review, students will normally be given one opportunity to resubmit work for a formal review and will normally be given up to 10 weeks after the first panel meeting to complete the remedial work and submit it to the panel for consideration. The resubmission and review of the submitted work should, where possible, take place before the end of the student's current year of study.

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3. Transfer - The student has not met the required doctoral standards and a recommendation is made for the student to be transferred from the doctoral degree to MPhil
4. Withdrawal - The student has not met the required standard for doctoral degrees or MPhil and the recommendation is made for the student's registration to be terminated

## MPhil degrees

Students initially registered on an MPhil degree:

1. Transfer - The student has met the required doctoral standards and a recommendation is made for the student to be transferred from MPhil to the relevant doctoral degree.
2. Continuation - The student has not met the required standard for transfer to doctoral level and the recommendation is made for the student to register for the MPhil submission pending period.
3. Resubmit - (remedial work) The student has almost met the required doctoral standards but further work must be done to continue registration. Following the first attempt at a formal review, students will normally be given one opportunity to resubmit work for a formal review and will normally be given up to 10 weeks after the first panel meeting to complete the remedial work and submit it to the panel for consideration. The resubmission and review of the submitted work should, where possible, take place before the end of the student's current year of study.

4. Withdrawal - The student has not met the required standard for the MPhil and the recommendation is made for the student's registration to be terminated.

It is a requirement of registration that all students successfully progress via the Annual Review process each year.

## Registrations

Students will not be permitted to re-register until the Humanities Doctoral Academy has received confirmation from the Review Panel that their academic progress is satisfactory.

## Resubmissions and re-registrations

All resubmissions must be considered and an outcome agreed and communicated before the deadline for re-registration.

Where resubmission work is recommended and a 'second attempt' annual year review is required, the student will be permitted an extra 4 weeks to complete the registration process and *will not be charged a late registration fee during this 4-week period*. The student should liaise with the Humanities Doctoral Academy to contacting the Fees team to confirm that the student has been assigned remedial work and to notify them when the remedial work has been completed in order to assess whether a late registration fee is due.

Full-time PhD programme	Panel composition	Written Work	Expected progress and assessment
Year 1	Member of supervisory team, Independent Reviewer, and if required the PGR Department Coordinator	<p>8,000 - <u>12,000 word</u> submission: Research design, literature review, methodological chapter.</p> <p>For PGRs undertaking a Journal Format Thesis, a draft paper can be submitted.</p> <p>A timetable for completion.</p>	Identified research problem, critical analysis of relevant literature, suitable methodological strategy, feasible timetable for completion.
Year 2	Member of supervisory team, Independent Reviewer, and if required the PGR Department Coordinator	<p>Written description of results from data gathering stage/progress made with existing datasets; suitability of the methodological strategy; analysis of the empirical data; updates to the literature review chapter.</p> <p>Written commentary on how their original research design has changed along with a renewed timetable to completion.</p> <p>An outline of the thesis.</p>	Analysis of the contribution to knowledge in <u>light of</u> empirical material collected. Quality, robustness and quantity of the gathered empirical data. Capacity of the student to mobilise conceptual apparatus to analyse empirical data.
Year 3	Member of supervisory team, Independent Reviewer, and if required the PGR Department Coordinator	Submission of revised literature review and methodological chapter. Sample of empirical chapters. Presentation of chapter structure.	Ability to demonstrate, in writing, the logical articulation of the main argument presented in the thesis. Capacity to critically engage with both conceptual and empirical material.

Flowchart of process to be followed in all years. Review should be held by the end of month 9 of the academic year



