

A2: Regulations for research degrees:

Master of Philosophy (MPhil)

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

Doctor of Medicine (MD)

Doctor of Engineering (EngD)

Doctor of Psychology (PsychD)

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) by Prior Publication

Academic Year 2026/27

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1. These *Regulations* should be read in conjunction with the University's [Code of practice for research degrees](#).

Admission

2. An applicant holding an appropriate degree may be admitted to a research programme leading to the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) with probationary status (with registration subject to confirmation). The minimum requirement for registration for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy with probationary status will normally be that of an honour's degree (Second Class, First Division) from a UK University or other qualification deemed by the Senate to be equivalent.
3. An applicant holding an appropriate degree may be admitted solely to a research programme leading to the degree of Master of Philosophy (MPhil). Should the student subsequently wish to transfer their registration to the Doctor of Philosophy then they would need to apply to register and undertake the confirmation.
4. An applicant who is registered with the General Medical Council and working within the NHS or an approved institution may be admitted to a programme of study and research leading to the degree of Doctor of Medicine (MD).
5. An applicant holding an appropriate degree may be admitted to a programme of study, research and, as appropriate, practice, leading to one of the following Practitioner Doctorate awards:
 - Doctor of Engineering (EngD)
 - Doctor of Psychology (PsychD)
6. An applicant who is not a graduate may be admitted provided that the applicant holds professional or other qualifications and/or work experience as deemed appropriate by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Executive Dean of Faculty.
7. An applicant may not be admitted to a research degree unless the applicant has first been accepted by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Executive Dean of Faculty in which the applicant proposes to study through the admissions procedures specified in the [Code of practice for research degrees](#). The admission of an applicant may be subject to conditions specified by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Executive Dean of Faculty.

English language requirements

8. Applicants will be required to satisfy the admissions panel of an ability to understand and communicate in both written and spoken English consistent with the University's current threshold level in IELTS or equivalent. IELTS scores, or equivalent, must be current and have been obtained no earlier than two years of the start date of the programme. It may be appropriate to ask for more than the minimum level in certain disciplines.

Registration

9. A research student must register at the start of the programme and shall undertake to comply with the Charter, Statutes, Ordinances and Regulations of the University. Research students will normally be able to register in October, January, April and July. A student must re-enrol by the specified date for each year the programme is pursued, and until award. The registration of a student who fails to re-enrol by the specified date may be deemed to have lapsed and will be terminated. No student is entitled to register or re-enrol unless the prescribed fees, if appropriate, have been paid.

Simultaneous registration

10. A student pursuing a research degree may not simultaneously register for another award of the University, or any other university, except that:

- if a student has completed a programme of study for another award but the award has not been made, the student may register provisionally for a period not exceeding three months
- if a student is studying for a dual award as approved in accordance with the [Code of practice for academic partnerships](#). In such a case, the PhD viva may be conducted at the partner institution with recommendations made in accordance with the partner institution's regulations, which would take precedence over regulations 123-143 of these *A2 Regulations for research degrees*¹
- if a student is registered to the Postgraduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching at this University or another Higher Education Institution

Subsidiary awards

11. Where the taught component of a research degree is credit-bearing, students who exit the programme early, having accumulated sufficient credit, will be entitled to a subsidiary award of a Postgraduate Certificate or a Postgraduate Diploma. Any credit-based subsidiary award offered as a part of a research degree must be approved through the validation and/or periodic programme review procedures.
12. No student may receive more than one award for a given programme of study. Exceptionally, a student who has received a subsidiary award may be permitted by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Executive Dean of Faculty to re-enrol for the next part of the programme, but may receive the more advanced award only upon surrendering the first award.

Transfer from another institution

13. The University may permit a student who has started a research degree at another institution to complete it as a registered student of the University of Surrey. The University shall specify the minimum and maximum periods of study and research in each case and the student will be required to apply to the University through the standard admissions procedure.

Mode of study

14. A research degree may be pursued:
 - on a full-time or part-time basis at the University
 - on a full-time or part-time basis by distance-learning (on approved programmes)
 - on a full-time or part-time basis with a collaborative organisation including placement providers
 - on a full-time or part-time basis where the research student's time is divided between the University and a collaborative organisation

Study on a collaborative basis

15. Where an application to study on a collaborative basis is being considered, a formal, written, collaborative agreement between the University and the collaborating organisation is required in accordance with the [Code of practice for academic partnerships](#).

Transfer between modes of study

16. A student may be permitted by the Admission, Progression and Examination Sub-

¹ In accordance with regulation 10 of these *Regulations*, the viva of a dual PhD student may be conducted at the partner institution with recommendations made in accordance with the partner institution's regulations, which would take precedence over regulations 123-143. In such cases the exam panel will still be appointed in accordance with paragraphs 113-122 of these regulations, as well as those of the partner.

committee (APESC) to transfer between full-time and part-time registration. The minimum and maximum periods of registration shall be determined in each case according to the periods in which the student was registered under each mode.

Doctoral programmes

17. A programme of research for doctoral degrees must include all of the following:

- original research leading to a contribution to new knowledge
- sufficient study in discipline-specific matters as to permit a graduate to contribute at the forefront of the relevant profession or research
- training in elements that allow the student to develop discipline-specific and transferable and generic skills

PhD

18. In accordance with the level 8 of the QAA [Framework for Higher Education Qualifications \(FHEQ\)](#), the thesis will demonstrate:

- the creation and interpretation of new knowledge, through original research or other advanced scholarship, of a quality to satisfy peer review, extend the forefront of the discipline, and merit publication
- a systematic acquisition and understanding of a substantial body of knowledge which is at the forefront of an academic discipline or area of professional practice
- the general ability to conceptualise, design and implement a project for the generation of new knowledge, applications or understanding at the forefront of the discipline, and to adjust the project design in the light of unforeseen problems
- a detailed understanding of applicable techniques for research and advanced academic enquiry

MD

19. The thesis submitted for Doctor of Medicine will have the characteristics listed above but the research is likely to draw on clinical or laboratory work and may involve clinical trials or other work with patients in the practical/clinical setting².

MPhil

20. A thesis submitted for the degree of Master of Philosophy will be informed by the forefront of an academic or professional discipline, will show originality in the application of knowledge, and will understand how the boundaries of knowledge are advanced through research³. The student will have an in-depth knowledge and understanding of the discipline informed by current scholarship and research, including a critical awareness of current issues and developments in the subject; the ability to study independently in the subject; the ability to use a range of techniques and research methods applicable to advanced scholarship in the subject⁴.

Practitioner doctorates

21. Theses or portfolios submitted for a practitioner doctorate will demonstrate the same characteristics listed in regulation 17 above, but the research will normally be rooted in a professional field as well as in an academic discipline.

² [Doctoral degree characteristics statement](#)

³ [The revised UK Quality Code for Higher Education](#)

⁴ [Master's degree characteristics statement](#)

Minimum and maximum periods of study

22. The minimum and maximum periods of study and, where applicable, expected period of study, for the awards covered by these *Regulations* are as listed below.

Programme	Minimum period of registration	Expected period of registration	Maximum period of registration
MPhil Full-time	20 months	N/A	36 months
MPhil Part-time	40 months	N/A	72 months
PhD Full-time	30 months	36 months or within the duration of research funding if longer	48 months
PhD Part-time	48 months	72 months or within the duration of research funding if longer	96 months
MD Full-time	24 months	N/A	36 months
MD Part-time	48 months	N/A	72 months
DBA Part-time	48 months	N/A	72 months
DClinPrac Part-time	48 months	N/A	60 months
EngD Full-time	45 months	N/A	54 months
EngD Part-time	54 months	N/A	108 months
PsychD Full-time	36 months	N/A	48 months
PsychD Part-time	60 months	N/A	72 months

23. The minimum period of registration can be reduced further on the condition that the case for reduction is supported by the student, supervisors and Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Executive Dean of Faculty and is approved by the Admission, Progression and Examination Sub-committee.

Extensions and withdrawal

24. A student retains the right to permanently withdraw from a research degree.

Extension of time

25. The Admission, Progression and Examination Sub-committee (APESC) will consider requests for extension where there has been:
- failure or unavailability of specialist equipment or resources required for research that causes significant delay to progress that cannot be managed by

temporary withdrawal;

- a gap in supervision where a supervisor leaves or is absent for more than a month and cover has not been put in place that cannot be managed by temporary withdrawal. There will need to be a demonstrable impact on the progress of the project;
 - where a supervisor has not adhered to their responsibilities under the [Code of practice for research degrees](#), resulting in a material impact on the progress of the project that cannot be managed by temporary withdrawal;
 - where the Disability and Neurodiversity team recommend a learning adjustment that necessitates extension of registration that cannot be managed by temporary withdrawal;
 - physical or mental health-related circumstances that cannot be managed by temporary withdrawal.
26. A student may apply for an extension to the maximum period of registration or resubmission period by submitting a request to the Admission, Progression and Examination Sub-committee. The maximum extension to a period of registration is 12 months aggregate. If a student is not granted an extension and has reached the maximum period of registration, then their registration will be terminated on the grounds that it has lapsed.
27. All requests for extension will be made by the student and accompanied by supporting evidence. Requests for extension without supporting evidence will not be considered by the Admission, Progression and Examination Sub-committee. Students are required to provide a timeline for submission with interim, testable milestones.
28. A request for extension requires the support of the supervisors and Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Executive Dean of Faculty. If the supervisors or Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Executive Dean of Faculty do not support the extension request, the student is at liberty to submit the request directly to the Admission, Progression and Examination Sub-committee for consideration. All requests for extension are subject to approval by the Admission, Progression and Examination Sub-committee.
29. Students in receipt of funding are advised to check the terms of their scholarship. Students holding visas are also advised to check their visa status before making a request for extension.⁵
30. Retrospective applications for extensions will not be considered without valid extenuating circumstances.

Temporary withdrawal

31. It is expected that registration for a research degree will be continuously pursued. However, the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Executive Dean of Faculty may recommend to the Admission, Progression and Examination Sub-committee that a student be granted a period of temporary withdrawal. Normally, students will not be permitted a period of temporary withdrawal in excess of 12 months aggregate over the period of registration, excluding parental leave. Should an application be made for temporary withdrawal, which exceeds 12 months aggregate over the period of registration, supporting evidence, including medical evidence, where appropriate, will be required. Temporary withdrawal cannot be indefinite, and a student will not normally be able to withdraw

⁵ Students holding visas are subject to Home Office regulations that may determine matters such as maximum length of study and opportunities to change a programme or extend registration. In such cases those regulations supersede the University's regulations. The current regulations for visa extensions can be viewed in the Immigration Control Policy at visas.surrey.ac.uk or further information can be sought by contacting International Student Advice (based in MySurrey Hive) by submitting an enquiry via [Surrey Support](#).

their registration for longer than two academic years. Any application must be initiated within one month of the start of the requested period, apart from exceptional cases where this is not possible such as emergency hospitalisation or bereavement.

32. The Admission, Progression and Examination Sub-committee will consider requests for temporary withdrawal where there has been:
 - (i) bereavement through the death of a close relative or significant other that in employment would lead to a reasonable employer to grant compassionate leave. In such cases the Admission, Progression and Examination Sub-committee will require independent evidence of the nature of the relationship;
 - (ii) serious short-term illness or accident of a nature that, in employment, would lead a reasonable employer to agree absence on sick leave;
 - (iii) a long-term (chronic) health problem suddenly worsening;
 - (iv) for part-time students in full-time employment only, a significant increase in their workload due to circumstances beyond their control;
 - (v) parental leave;
 - (vi) a request to undertake a short-term work placement, provided that the total aggregate of temporary withdrawal (excluding parental leave) will not exceed 12 months
 - (vii) a gap in supervision where a supervisor leaves or is absent for more than a month and cover has not been put in place;
 - (viii) where the supervisor has not adhered to their responsibilities under the [Code of practice for research degrees](#) resulting in a material impact on the progress of the project;
 - (ix) where Disability and Neuroinclusion recommend a learning adjustment that necessitates a temporary withdrawal;
 - (x) difficulties in research beyond the student's control;
 - (xi) failure or unavailability of specialist equipment or resources required for research that causes significant delay to progress;
 - (xii) other exceptional circumstances.
33. All requests for temporary withdrawal will be made by the student and accompanied by supporting evidence. Requests for temporary withdrawal without supporting evidence will not be considered by the Admission, Progression and Examination Sub-committee. A request for temporary withdrawal requires the support of the supervisors and Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Executive Dean of Faculty. If the supervisors or Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Executive Dean of Faculty do not support the request for temporary withdrawal, the student is at liberty to submit the request directly to the Admission, Progression and Examination Sub-committee for consideration. All requests for temporary withdrawal are subject to approval by the Admission, Progression and Examination Sub-committee.
34. Where a period of temporary withdrawal is approved, the student's registration will be extended by the same period of time.
35. Retrospective applications for temporary withdrawal will not be considered except in exceptional circumstances, and a compelling evidence-based case will need to be made that the delay was beyond the control of the Postgraduate Researcher.
36. Students in receipt of funding are advised to check the terms of their scholarship. Students holding visas are also advised to check their visa status before making a

request for temporary withdrawal.⁶

Supervisors

37. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Executive Dean of Faculty shall appoint at least two supervisors for each student. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Executive Dean of Faculty may appoint a replacement or additional supervisor at any time if necessary or desirable. In all cases, at least one of the supervisors shall have supervised, solely or as a team member, at least one research student through to successful completion of a doctoral degree. The Principal Supervisor will be the main point of contact between the student and the University.
38. In addition to the University supervisors, a collaborative student will be allocated a Collaborative Supervisor in accordance with the [Code of practice for academic partnerships](#).
39. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Executive Dean of Faculty shall inform the Admission, Progression and Examination Sub-committee of any changes to supervision.

Principal Supervisor

40. At least one supervisor, the Principal Supervisor, shall be a member of the University's staff holding an appointment as Professor, Reader / Associate Professor, Senior Lecturer, Lecturer, Professorial Research Fellow, Principal Research Fellow, Senior Research Fellow, Research Fellow or Professor in Practice.
41. The Principal Supervisor will:
 - be an active researcher in an area relevant to the student's field of research
 - have completed the relevant training as set out in the [Code of practice for research degrees](#) if new to supervision
 - have an expectation of holding the appointment with the University for at least the minimum period of the student's registration

Co-supervisor

42. The Co-supervisor should be appointed from among the following:
 - a member of the University's staff holding an appointment as Professor, Reader / Associate Professor, Senior Lecturer, Lecturer, Professorial Research Fellow, Principal Research Fellow, Senior Research Fellow, Research Fellow, Research Officer / Research Assistant, Emeritus/a staff, Honorary NHS Appointments and Professor in Practice, and, at the discretion of the Dean of the Doctoral College, Professorial Teaching Fellow, Principal Teaching Fellow, Senior Teaching Fellow and Teaching Fellow
43. Where there are exceptional changes to the supervisory arrangements for registered students, it is permissible for staff holding appointments other than those specified in regulation 42 to serve as Co-supervisor. Such appointments include, but are not limited to, Visiting Staff, subject to approval by the Dean of the Doctoral College and ratification by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Research & Innovation.
44. A Co-supervisor will:

⁶ Students holding visas are subject to Home Office regulations that determine whether the University can continue to sponsor a student through a period of absence, or whether sponsorship of the current visa will need to be withdrawn. In such cases those regulations supersede the University's regulations. The current regulations for absences whilst studying on a student visa can be viewed in the Immigration Control Policy at visas.surrey.ac.uk, or further information can be sought by contacting International Student Advice (based in MySurrey Hive) by submitting an enquiry via [Surrey Support](#).

- have appropriate knowledge and normally be an active researcher
- have an expectation of holding the appointment with the University for at least the minimum period of the student's registration
- have completed the relevant training as set out in the [Code of practice for research degrees](#) if new to supervision

Collaborative Supervisor

45. A Collaborative Supervisor may be appointed in situations where: i) a research student spends a part or all of their research degree in another organisation; ii) where additional external expertise is required which would be of benefit to the research student and project. A Collaborative Supervisor is typically drawn from industry, clinical organisations, a research institution, or other university.
46. A Collaborative Supervisor will:
- have specialist knowledge or expertise in order to support the student's research and/or manage the student's day-to-day performance in the collaborative organisation
 - normally have experience of successfully supervising research students at doctoral level. Collaborative Supervisors will be offered guidance and training opportunities to enable them to fulfil their responsibilities

Supervisor responsibilities

47. The responsibilities of supervisors are set out in the [Code of practice for research degrees](#). If supervisors are found not to be fulfilling their responsibilities under the Code then they will not be permitted to supervise new students.

Reports to supervisors and reviews

48. As a minimum, all research students will have at least one supervisory session per month. Withdrawal of sponsorship will take place if regular engagement throughout the registration period and during the examination period has not been logged on the student's online record. Where research is being conducted at a distance, an effective method of regular contact shall be agreed between the student and the principal supervisor (e.g., telephone, email, videocall).
49. Student progress will be formally monitored at six month intervals through the interim review and end of year review procedures. An end of year or interim review is not required if the deadline for the review is one month either side of the confirmation examination.
50. Students registered for the degrees of PhD, MD and MPhil are required to undergo a second year progress review in place of the standard interim review or end of year review. This will take place either at 24 months for full-time students or at 48 months for part-time students, or the nearest review point thereafter. Students are required to submit the following for the review:
- the standard review form
 - a copy of the examiners' report from the confirmation examination
 - a Gantt chart plan for completion
 - a draft table of contents for the thesis
51. The second year progress review will involve at least one of the original confirmation examiners, or the Postgraduate Research (PGR) Director, who can provide a helpful external perspective on work. The confirmation examiner/PGR Director may either attend the review meeting in person or review the paperwork and send their findings to

the supervisory team.

52. An unsatisfactory outcome of a review or refusal by a student to complete a review will result in the initiation of unsatisfactory academic progress procedures.

Programme structure and training

53. Students and supervisors will agree at the outset on a programme of discipline-specific and skills courses, ensuring that the compulsory elements are included. Students and supervisors will keep this under review and formally report on progress every six months.
54. Practitioner doctorates and structured PhD programmes will include a series of credit bearing modules at FHEQ Level 7 or non-credit bearing taught units which students shall be required to pass before progressing to the research stage of their programme.

Board of Examiners

55. The assessment of components of the programme other than the thesis or portfolio shall be the responsibility of a Board of Examiners which will operate in accordance with the terms of reference for Boards of Examiners as set out in the [Senate governance](#).

Repetition of assessment

56. In the case of non-credit bearing taught units, the Board of Examiners may allow a student who has failed a unit of assessment other than the thesis or portfolio to repeat the assessment on one subsequent occasion, normally within one year of the first attempt.
57. The programme of a student who has not been permitted to repeat an assessment or who has failed an assessment a second time shall be terminated by the Admission, Progression and Examination Sub-committee.
58. In the case of credit bearing modules, repetition of an assessment and progression to the next stage of the programme will be managed in accordance with the [Regulations for taught programmes](#).

Extenuating circumstances

59. During the course of their research programme, students may need to make a claim for the recognition of extenuating circumstances affecting: i) assessment for a credit-bearing module or taught unit; ii) progress monitoring and/or confirmation; iii) unsatisfactory academic progress procedures. Research students wishing to make a claim for the recognition of extenuating circumstances shall follow the procedures as set out in the [Regulations for extenuating circumstances](#).

Unsatisfactory academic progress

60. A student's registration may be terminated on the grounds of unsatisfactory academic progress. If the Principal Supervisor judges a student's progress to be unsatisfactory, they will first consult the Associate Dean (Doctoral College) for the Faculty⁷. The details of this consultation will be documented and both parties must be in agreement that the student's progress is unsatisfactory. If there is a disagreement between the parties then the case will be referred to the Admission, Progression and Examination Sub-committee for a decision.
61. The student will be sent written notification that their progress has been deemed unsatisfactory and offered the opportunity to remedy this. The student will be offered at least three months to meet specified targets. Advice is available to students from

⁷ If the Associate Dean (Doctoral College) is a supervisor to the student in question, then they will consult the Faculty Associate Dean (Research and Innovation).

different areas of the University, including:

- Supervisors and Postgraduate Research Directors
- Student service teams (Wellbeing, Disability and Neurodiversity, visas and immigration, money)
- Students' Union Academic Advice Service

62. Following the specified period, the student's case will be reviewed by a panel consisting of an Associate Dean (Doctoral College) and an academic member of staff not involved with the supervision of the student. Prior to the panel meeting both the student and their supervisor will be asked to submit a written statement to the panel and/or attend the panel in person. Students may be accompanied at the panel by a friend, who may be a member of the Students' Union. If the panel members agree that the student has failed to meet the targets to the required standard, then a recommendation for programme termination will be made to the Admission, Progression and Examination Sub-committee. If there is a disagreement between the parties, then the case will be referred to the Admission, Progression and Examination Sub-committee for adjudication. In exceptional circumstances the student's case may be reviewed by the panel prior to the completion of the three month period. This will only apply when the student has failed interim targets and/or it is the unanimous academic judgement of the Supervisors that there is no prospect of the targets being successfully completed.

Loss of contact

63. In cases where the student appears to have withdrawn from the research degree and failed to make meaningful contact with the Faculty (e.g., having missed more than two scheduled supervisory meetings, repeatedly failing to respond to supervisor communications, or failing to return from an approved period of temporary withdrawal), a loss of engagement letter will be issued to the student's university email address. Failure to either re-engage in the research programme, or submit a request for temporary withdrawal, within 10 University working days of the loss of engagement letter being sent, will be sufficient grounds for a recommendation of termination to be made to the Admission, Progression and Examination Sub-committee based on loss of engagement.

Fitness to practise and study

64. The [Regulations for support for study](#) and [Regulations for fitness to practise](#) apply to postgraduate research students and should be consulted where there are concerns about a student's fitness to study and/or practise.

Confirmation of registration

65. Research students on the following programmes are required to undergo a confirmation of registration examination:
- PhD
 - MD
 - EngD
66. Subject to regulation 60 above, for students registered on a traditional PhD or MD degree, the confirmation viva will normally take place nine to 15 months after initial registration for full-time students and 18 to 30 months for part-time students. Students may be placed on unsatisfactory academic progress if the confirmation exceeds this timeframe. With the agreement of the Admission, Progression and Examination Sub-committee, students may undergo the confirmation viva earlier. The confirmation report must be submitted at least ten working days prior to the viva.

67. In the cases of an EngD or a PhD programme that contains a structured taught element, the confirmation viva must take place no later than 24 months for full-time students and no later than 48 months for part-time students.
68. The Principal Supervisor shall take responsibility for making arrangements for the confirmation of registration viva examination. The examination will involve the student and the appointed examiners. In addition, at least one member of the supervisory team is required to attend the examination, although they do not form part of the examination panel. If a student has reservations about a member of their supervisory team attending the examination, then this must be discussed with the relevant PGR Director or Dean of the Doctoral College, who may grant an exemption.
69. The student will be examined by two examiners (normally, internal). The examiners will:
 - have expertise in an area relevant to the student's research
 - have completed the relevant confirmation examiner training if they have no prior experience of examining a confirmation
 - not have had any involvement with the project that could give rise to a conflict of interest
 - have no personal relationship with the student that could give rise to a conflict of interest
 - any external will have examined at least one confirmation, or equivalent, at another institution
70. Where the candidate is also a member of staff of the University, at least one examiner will be external to the University.
71. Where an external examiner is used, the internal examiner will perform the dual role of examiner and Chair.
72. The appointment of the examiners is subject to the approval of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Executive Dean of Faculty.
73. At the end of the examination, the supervisors will be asked to remove themselves from the proceedings and the student will be offered the opportunity to raise any matters with the examiners.
74. Following the confirmation examination, the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Executive Dean of Faculty shall consider the recommendation of the examination panel that:
 - the student be permitted to continue registration on the degree
 - the student's registration should not be confirmed but that the student may resubmit for confirmation of registration on a single occasion only, normally three months later for full-time students or six months later for part-time students, with or without further oral examination. One of the examiners will supply the candidate with a written statement within five University working days after the meeting of the action to be taken in order to satisfy the criteria for confirmation of registration.
75. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Executive Dean of Faculty may require other evidence, for example fitness to practise or fitness to study, before reaching a decision.
76. Following the second examination, the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Executive Dean of Faculty shall consider the recommendation of the examination panel that:
 - the student be permitted to continue registration on the degree or
 - in the case of PhD and MD students, the student should be registered for the degree of Master of Philosophy or

- the student's registration be terminated
77. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Executive Dean of Faculty may require other evidence, for example fitness to practise or fitness to study, before reaching a decision.

Completing status

78. A student may apply to register as completing status while writing-up the thesis or portfolio. The following criteria must be fulfilled for a student to transfer to completing status:
- that the supervisor will be required to confirm that they are satisfied that submission of the thesis within twelve months is feasible
 - that the student will no longer be using specialist resources for research
79. In order for the request to be considered, the following must be provided:
- a detailed plan covering both student and supervisor responsibilities for submission within the first twelve months of completing status or by the end of registration if completing status will last for fewer than twelve months
 - a draft table of contents for the thesis
 - the examination entry form

If the thesis is not submitted within the initial twelve-month period of completing status, then an updated plan for submission within the remaining period of registration will be required in order to continue on completing status.

80. Retrospective applications for completing status will not be considered without valid extenuating circumstances.

Thesis or portfolio

81. A student shall present a thesis or portfolio for examination⁸.

References to work of others and previous work

82. A student shall indicate by means of explicit references the citation of the work of others or work by the student which is not part of the submission for the degree. Work submitted for another degree may not comprise part of the submission.

Joint or group project

83. A student who has submitted work forming part of a joint or group research project shall be required to satisfy the examiners that the student's share of the work is sufficient to justify the award of the degree. In such cases the thesis must contain an introductory note stating the student's own claims to their contributions. A copy of such a note should be countersigned by the co-researchers.

Performing arts and creative writing

84. A student registered for an MPhil or PhD award in the fields of performing arts and creative writing may submit, in lieu of a thesis, a portfolio of original works that the student has undertaken while registered for the degree. The portfolio shall include notes on each item within it and either an extended analysis of one item or a dissertation on a related theme.

MD and PhD by Publication Format

85. Students registered for the degrees of PhD or MD are permitted to submit a thesis that includes chapters prepared in publication format. It is not a requirement that those

⁸ For the purposes of these *Regulations* the term "thesis" hereafter shall be taken to imply also "portfolio".

chapters have been submitted to a publisher or accepted for publication at the point the thesis is submitted, although this is encouraged.

86. The decision to submit a thesis by publication format must be endorsed by the student and all members of the supervisory team, including the co-supervisor(s) and any collaborative supervisor(s). This is to ensure that expectations are clear and that suitable planning of the research project can be facilitated.
87. Students are permitted to switch between the 'thesis by publication format' and the 'monograph format' throughout their registration. The decision to follow either route must be recorded in a progress review or confirmation examination at the earliest opportunity.
88. Students should not be obligated to pursue the publication format route, and nor should this option be unreasonably withheld. If there is a disagreement between the student and the supervisory team about the most suitable thesis option for the project, then it should be raised with the Postgraduate Research Director, in the first instance, for arbitration.
89. A thesis presented in the publication format must meet the requirements set out in regulation 18 to merit the award of a PhD degree. To that end, the thesis itself will comprise of the relevant inter-connected chapters in publication format, contextualised by a coherent narrative, and will demonstrate the student's original contribution to knowledge.
90. The precise structure of a thesis by publication will vary based on the nature of the research project and the discipline(s) in which it is based. The thesis would also normally include: i) an introductory chapter to provide a literature review setting the research in context; ii) a discussion chapter to state the contributions of the research, areas for future research, and implications of the research for academia and/or practice; and iii) a stand-alone methodology chapter may also be included if not covered in enough detail in the publications. In some cases, a publication may be used instead of points i), ii) or iii).
91. These regulations do not specify the form a publication should take. What counts as a publication is a matter best determined by practitioners in the discipline. The most common examples of a publication include journal articles, peer-reviewed conference proceedings, book chapters and technical reports.
92. There is no minimum requirement for the number of publications to be included in a thesis, and neither is there a minimum journal quality requirement.
93. In cases where the student has included a co-authored publication, the student is required to include a statement in the thesis to specify their relative contribution to the research and publication.
94. Regulations 85–94 of these regulations do not apply to projects using the thesis format prescribed in regulation 84.

Examination entry form

95. A student shall be required to complete an examination entry form not earlier than six months nor later than two months before the thesis is presented; the proposed title of the thesis will be stated on the form. The title of the thesis must be approved by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Executive Dean of Faculty. No change in the approved title may be made except with the consent of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Executive Dean of Faculty.

Time limits

96. The thesis shall be submitted no earlier than the end of the minimum period of

registration and no later than the end of the student's period of registration. In exceptional circumstances, the Admission, Progression and Examination Sub-committee may permit the student to submit the thesis at an earlier date.

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) by Prior Publication

Eligibility

97. The PhD by Prior Publication is open to i) a member of staff⁹ of the University of Surrey or ii) members of staff or organisations with an established teaching and/or research collaboration with the University of Surrey.
98. There is no minimum requirement for the number of publications to be included in a thesis, and neither is there a minimum journal quality requirement. All publications on which the application is based must have been accepted for publication or published.
99. These regulations do not specify the form a publication should take. What counts as a publication is a matter best determined by practitioners in the discipline. The most common examples of a publication include journal articles, peer reviewed conference proceedings, book chapters and technical reports.

Application for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy by Prior Publication

100. The applicant will submit an application via the University's admissions system. It will include:
 - (i) a list of the publications on which the application is based;
 - (ii) a cover letter of no more than 500 words outlining:
 - the area(s) in which the applicant has been working
 - a brief description of the research undertaken
 - a statement as to when and where the research was undertaken
 - for any co-authored works, a statement as to the contribution the applicant made to the publication
 - the applicant will also declare if any of the works on which the application is based have formed part of the submission for any other degree awarded to the candidate. Works submitted for another degree awarded to the candidate will not be accepted in the submission;
 - (iii) an academic reference for the application from a referee who knows the applicant professionally.

Supervisors

101. Upon approval of candidature for the degree, the candidate will be allocated to a Faculty and the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Executive Dean of Faculty will appoint two supervisors (as described in regulations 37-44, 47 above). In all cases, at least one of the supervisors shall have supervised, solely or as a team member, at least one research student through to successful completion of a doctoral degree.

Submission of published works

102. Within 12 months of confirmation of candidature, a candidate is required to submit to

⁹ Staff is defined as persons holding the appointment of: Professor, Reader / Associate Professor, Senior Lecturer, Lecturer, Professorial Research Fellow, Principal Research Fellow, Senior Research Fellow, Research Fellow, Research Officer / Research Assistant, Professorial Teaching Fellow, Principal Teaching Fellow, Senior Teaching Fellow, Teaching Fellow, Emeritus/a, Visiting Academic, Honorary NHS Appointments, Associate Tutors, Professor in Practice. The Admission, Progression and Examination Sub-committee may extend this provision to other members of current or retired staff as appropriate.

the Doctoral College an electronic copy of the submission for examiners.

103. The precise structure of a thesis by publication will vary based on the nature of the research project and the discipline(s) in which it is based. It is a requirement that the thesis includes the publications on which the submission is based. Any co-authored papers will be accompanied by a statement declaring the contribution of the candidate. Normally, this statement should be reviewed and signed by the other authors.
104. The thesis would also normally include: i) an introductory chapter to provide a literature review setting the research in context; ii) a discussion chapter to state the contributions of the research, areas for future research, and implications of the research for academia and/or practice; and iii) a stand-alone methodology chapter may also be included if not covered in enough detail in the publications. In some cases, a publication may be used instead of points i), ii) or iii). The submission may also have appendices including, for example, a full CV and any additional publications which do not form a part of the submission but which may help the examiners to see how the candidate's research has developed over time.

Lapsed registration

105. The registration of a candidate who fails to submit the thesis within 12 months of confirmation candidature will be deemed to have lapsed and will be terminated.

Requirements for the award of PhD

106. In accordance with the level 8 of the [QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications \(FHEQ\)](#), the thesis will demonstrate:
 - the creation and interpretation of new knowledge, through original research or other advanced scholarship, of a quality to satisfy peer review, extend the forefront of the discipline, and merit publication;
 - a systematic acquisition and understanding of a substantial body of knowledge which is at the forefront of an academic discipline or area of professional practice;
 - the general ability to conceptualise, design and implement a project for the generation of new knowledge, applications or understanding at the forefront of the discipline, and to adjust the project design in the light of unforeseen problems;
 - a detailed understanding of applicable techniques for research and advanced academic enquiry.

Entry form for examination for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) by Prior Publication

107. The candidate will submit the Entry Form for Examination no later than two months before submission of the thesis. The examiners will be nominated by the supervisory team and endorsed by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Executive Dean of Faculty. The appointment of the examination panel is subject to the approval of the Admission, Progression and Examination Sub-committee.

Format of thesis

108. The thesis shall be submitted in an electronic format to the Doctoral College Research Degrees team. The thesis may be temporarily bound before it is examined but this is not a requirement of submission. Examiners should contact the Doctoral College Research Degrees team for advice on obtaining a printed copy.
109. All pages should be numbered. The title page shall bear the approved title, and

student's name, the degree for which the student is registered and the year in which the thesis is presented. A summary of the work, not exceeding 300 words in length and a signed Statement of Originality must be included following the title page. Whenever possible, any other material should form part of the thesis, but a student is at liberty to submit such material separately for consideration by the examiners.

110. The thesis shall be written in English except when the Admission, Progression and Examination Sub-committee has given permission for another language to be used owing to the nature of the subject. The summary should always be written in English.
111. Following recommendation by the examiners that an award be made, the final version of record of the thesis will be uploaded by the student to the University's digital repository.
112. No alterations or additions may be made to a thesis after it has been submitted except with the agreement of the examiners.

Examiners

113. The examination shall be conducted by at least two examiners, at least one of whom must be external to the University.
114. Normally, there should be one internal and one external examiner. The internal examiner will have the dual role of examining and chairing¹⁰ the *viva voce* examination unless an independent chair is appointed.
115. The examiners must have expertise in examining at the appropriate level so that they are familiar with the standards expected and the achievement likely to be attained. The appointed examiners should, between them, normally have examined a minimum of six candidates at the appropriate level; an external examiner must have experience of at least one relevant examination.

Selection and appointment of examiners

116. The examiners shall be appointed by the Admission, Progression and Examination Sub-committee on the recommendation of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Executive Dean of Faculty.

External examiner nominations

117. Nominees for consideration for appointment as external examiners should normally:
 - (i) have expertise in the area relevant to the student's field of research and be demonstrably research active;
 - (ii) hold an academic appointment (a curriculum vitae should accompany any nomination to the Admission, Progression and Examination Sub-committee);
 - (iii) have experience of examining at doctoral level;
 - (iv) not have, nor have previously had, a personal relationship with the student or member of the supervisory team;
 - (v) not have had any professional relationship with the student which may give rise to a conflict of interest (for example supervisory, collaborative research, co-authoring of papers);
 - (vi) not have had a significant research relationship (for example, co-authoring of numerous research outputs such as papers and conferences) with any member

¹⁰ In this role the internal examiner will be responsible for ensuring the proper and fair conduct of the meeting, including conformity with the *Regulations*. They will sign the final joint examination report to confirm that the examination took place according to the *Regulations*, resulting in one of the permitted outcomes by the *Regulations*.

of the supervisory team within the last five years;

- (vii) not hold (or have held) any appointment of the University, other than that of external examiner, during the period in which the student has been registered for the degree.

118. Normally, an external examiner would not examine more than three candidates of the University in any five-year period without permission from the Admission, Progression and Examination Sub-committee, except for external examiners for the Clinical Psychology PsychD, where it is permissible for more than three candidates to be examined within any five-year period.

Internal examiner nominations

119. Nominations for appointment of internal examiners should normally:

- have expertise in the area relevant to the student's field of research and be demonstrably research active
- hold appointments as Professor, Reader / Associate Professor, Senior Lecturer, Lecturer, Professorial Research Fellow, Principal Research Fellow, Senior Research Fellow, Research Fellow, Research Officer / Research Assistant, Professorial Teaching Fellow, Principal Teaching Fellow, Senior Teaching Fellow, Teaching Fellow, Emeritus/a staff, Honorary NHS Appointments or Professor in Practice
- not have, nor have previously had, a personal relationship with the student
- not have had any professional relationship with the student which may give rise to a conflict of interest (e.g., supervisory, collaborative research, co-authoring of papers)
- internal examiners with no previous experience of examining or chairing *viva voce* examinations at the University will have undergone appropriate training prior to appointment

Independent Chairs

120. Independent Chairs will be appointed by the Admission, Progression and Examination Sub-committee in the following circumstances:

- (i) where a student is being re-assessed upon appeal;
- (ii) where all examiners on the panel are external, for instance:
 - where the candidate is a member of the staff of the University. This would normally apply to candidates holding permanent lectureships or research positions but not to candidates on short-term research contracts such as Research Officers / Research Assistants;
 - where the University is unable to provide an internal examiner with the appropriate subject matter expertise and a second external examiner is appointed;
- (iii) where the internal examiner has no previous experience of doctoral-level *viva voce* examinations in the UK;
- (iv) where the external examiner has no previous experience of the doctoral-level *viva voce* examinations in the UK;
- (v) where the internal examiner holds an Emeritus/a Honorary Appointment;
- (vi) in any other special case as determined by the Admission, Progression and Examination Sub-committee.

Criteria for the appointment of an Independent Chair

121. The Chair will be appointed by the Admission, Progression and Examination Sub-committee on the recommendation of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Executive Dean of Faculty.
122. The Independent Chair will:
- be an experienced academic staff member of the University of Surrey
 - not have, nor have previously had, a personal relationship with the student
 - not have had any professional relationship with the student which may give rise to a conflict of interest (e.g., supervisory, collaborative research, co-authoring of papers)
 - have experience of examining at doctoral level at the University of Surrey
 - not be Emeritus/a honorary staff

Examiners' reports

123. Each examiner shall submit via the student's Faculty an independent report on the content and style of the thesis prior to the *viva voce* examination.

Viva voce examination¹¹

124. The *viva voce* examination should normally be held not less than 30 days and not more than 90 days after submission of the thesis. The *viva voce* examination may exceptionally be held outside of this period with the agreement of the principal supervisor, student and examiners. A memorandum (Late Viva, Early Viva) will need to be completed and approved by the relevant Associate Dean of the Doctoral College. This will be noted by the Admission, Progression and Examination Sub-committee.
125. The content of the thesis, the conduct of the examination of a student and matters related thereto shall be regarded as confidential to those taking part in the examination and to appropriate officers of the University until such time as the outcomes of the examination are agreed by the Admission, Progression and Examination Sub-committee.
126. Each appointed examiner will receive an electronic copy of the thesis to be examined in advance of the *viva voce* examination and will prepare an independent, written report on the content and style of the thesis in advance of the examination. The examiners should ensure they have a copy of their report for discussion at the pre-viva meeting.
127. The *viva voce* examination is concerned with the content of the thesis and any related matters which the examiners consider appropriate. The student should expect to be questioned by the examiners on matters including: the focus of the research, the existing literature, the methodology used, the conduct of the research, the outcomes and conclusions.
128. The *viva voce* examination shall be conducted in the presence of the examiners at the University in Guildford. Exceptionally, and subject to the approval of the Admission, Progression and Examination Sub-committee, the examination may be arranged at another venue, provided all parties, including the student, agree. *Viva voce* examinations are conducted in person. Exceptionally, on a case-by-case basis and in agreement with all parties, the *viva voce* examination may be conducted in

¹¹ As detailed in regulation 10, where a student is studying for a dual award as approved in accordance with the [Code of practice for academic partnerships](#), in such a case, the PhD viva may be conducted at the partner institution with recommendations made in accordance with the partner institution's regulations, which would take precedence over regulations 123-143 of these *A2 Regulations for research degrees*. The examination team will be appointed in accordance with both the University's and the partner institution's regulations.

hybrid/online mode. The following protocol should be followed for a remote viva:

- (i) all examiners, the Chair and the student arrange a time to test their chosen video conferencing platform and internet connection reliability in advance of the viva and in time to remedy any technical issues;
 - (ii) the internal examiner/chair may recommend terminating and rescheduling the viva in exceptional cases such as technical failure;
 - (iii) all examiners and the Chair arrange a time to discuss the pre-viva reports and plan the question format in advance of the viva;
 - (iv) pre and post viva reports are submitted to the Doctoral College Research Degrees team within the required timeframes as set out in these regulations.
129. Supervisors are not expected to be present at the closed *viva voce* examination but should endeavour to make themselves available for the conclusion of the examination when the verdict is given and any required corrections to the thesis are explained. In exceptional circumstances, students may make a written case to the Faculty Associate Dean (Doctoral College) to request that their supervisors attend the *viva voce* examination. The case must explain why the presence of the supervisors is necessary to ensure the effective and proper conduct of the examination. On the rare occasion that a supervisor is present at the examination they must not participate in the examination and may only speak at the behest of the chair.
130. No persons other than the above shall be present at or otherwise take part in the *viva voce* examination.

Examiners' recommendation

131. Where there are no confirmed extenuating circumstances, non-attendance of the *viva voce* examination will result in an academic failure and lead to programme termination and discontinuation of programme registration.
132. After the examination, the examiners shall report on the *viva voce* examination, together with any reports that may have been submitted by the supervisors in response to a request by the examiners, to the Doctoral College Research Degrees team within 10 University working days. They shall preferably present a joint report but are at liberty to present separate ones if they so wish.
133. They shall jointly make one of the following recommendations, as appropriate:
- (i) that the degree be awarded;
 - (ii) that the degree be awarded, subject to specified minor corrections¹² being made to the thesis or portfolio to the satisfaction of the internal examiner within a period not exceeding one month;
 - (iii) that the degree be awarded, subject to specified, minor revisions¹³ being made to the thesis or portfolio to the satisfaction of the internal examiner within a period not exceeding six months;
 - (iv) that the degree not be awarded, but that the student be permitted to submit a revised thesis, by a specified date, normally 12 months, with or without further research, and be examined with or without a further *viva voce* examination;

¹² The phrase "specified, minor corrections" shall be taken to include the correction of minor corrections, minor errors of fact, typography, grammar, style, syntax and/or layout of graphs/tables etc., which would enhance the readers' understanding of the author's argument but which does not alter the intellectual content and reasoning of the thesis.

¹³ "Minor revisions" are those which do not involve further supervision or any further original research. Such additions might include, for example, additional sentences, tables, paragraphs or pages but not normally additional chapters. They may additionally include specified minor corrections.

- (v) that for those students registered for the PhD, MD or EngD, that the degree not be awarded but that the degree of Master of Philosophy be awarded, if appropriate, after specified minor corrections or minor revisions have been made to the thesis or portfolio, and if the student submits the thesis for that degree within one month in the case of minor corrections or six months in the case of minor revisions;
 - (vi) that for those students registered for the PhD, MD or EngD, that degree not be awarded but the student be permitted to submit a revised thesis, for the degree of Master of Philosophy, by a specified date, (normally 12 months), with or without further research, and be examined with or without a further *viva voce* examination;
 - (vii) that the degree not be awarded and with no recommendation regarding a re-submission of the thesis.
134. If specified minor corrections or revisions are required to the thesis, the internal examiner shall inform the student of the nature of the corrections, within 10 University working days of the *viva voce*, in the form of a written list¹⁴.
135. Any corrections required to the thesis shall be completed and the thesis submitted to the internal examiner within one month of receipt of the corrections and minor revisions shall be completed and the thesis submitted to the internal examiner within six months of receipt of the corrections, unless the Admission, Progression and Examination Sub-committee allows a longer time. During the revision period the student is not required to be based at the University.
136. The internal examiner shall, within 20 University working days of submission of the corrected thesis, certify that any specified, minor corrections or minor revisions have been carried out satisfactorily. Where there is no internal examiner on the panel, the Chair will ask the panel to agree who will assume responsibility for certifying completion of the specified, minor corrections or revisions. The thesis must then be uploaded to the online repository in order for the award to be made.
137. In the case of any resubmission, the student will be liable for re-examination fees and, in cases where additional research is required, may be liable for additional bench fees. At its discretion the Admission, Progression and Examination Sub-committee can extend the student's registration during the resubmission period if the examiners have recommended further research. A registration fee may apply.
138. The recommendation of the examiners shall be considered by the Senate Progression and Conferment Executive (SPACE). If a recommendation that the degree be not awarded is approved, the student's programme shall be terminated.

Submission of revised thesis

139. A student may submit a revised thesis once only, on the recommendation of the examiners and with the approval of the Senate Progression and Conferment Executive (SPACE).
140. A student shall be informed in writing within 10 University working days after the *viva voce* of the reasons for the examiners' rejection of the original thesis, normally by being sent by the Doctoral College a Statement of Requirements prepared by the examiners listing the principal aspects of the thesis which require improvement, a copy of which will be appended to the Examination Entry Form.
141. A student may submit a revised thesis once only. The examiners shall determine the date by which the revised thesis shall be submitted, normally 12 months from the date

¹⁴ The examiners may indicate in general terms a need to correct grammar and/or spelling, and, in addition, may return to the student an annotated copy of the thesis or portfolio.

that the Statement of Requirements is sent to the student. Just as during their programme, the student will avail themselves of supervisory support in the form of monthly meetings during the resubmission period.

142. The procedure for submitting a revised thesis shall be the same as that for submitting the original one.
143. A revised thesis shall normally be examined by the original examiners, but the Admission, Progression and Examination Sub-committee may appoint different examiners in exceptional cases. Examiners may not recommend re-submission for a second time but may make one of the following recommendations, as appropriate, and should do so within 90 days of receipt of the revised thesis:
 - (i) that the degree be awarded;
 - (ii) that the degree be awarded, subject to specified minor corrections¹⁵ being made to the thesis or portfolio to the satisfaction of the internal examiner within a period not exceeding one month;
 - (iii) that the degree be awarded, subject to specified, minor revisions¹⁶ being made to the thesis or portfolio to the satisfaction of the internal examiner within a period not exceeding six months;
 - (iv) that for those students registered for the degree of PhD, MD or EngD that the degree not be awarded but that the degree of Master of Philosophy be awarded, if appropriate, after specified minor corrections or minor revisions have been made to the thesis or portfolio, and if the student submits the thesis for that degree within one month in the case of minor corrections or six months in the case of minor revisions;
 - (v) that the degree not be awarded.

Disagreement between examiners

144. If the examiners are unable to agree on a recommendation, the Admission, Progression and Examination Sub-committee shall appoint an additional external examiner to review the thesis and the original examiners' reports which will be anonymised. The additional examiner may require the student to undergo one further viva voce examination. The Senate Progression and Conferment Executive (SPACE) shall consider the reports of all examiners before reaching a decision.

Copyright and access to dissertations

145. Dissemination of knowledge is one of the objectives of the University. Copies of theses accepted for research degrees are stored in an online repository and are available for anyone to consult. A student is therefore advised to mark the thesis as copyright.
146. Under special circumstances it is possible to restrict access to a thesis.

Intellectual property

147. Postgraduate research students are required to adhere to the University's [Intellectual Property Code](#).

¹⁵ The phrase "specified, minor corrections" shall be taken to include the correction of minor corrections, minor errors of fact, typography, grammar, style, syntax and/or layout of graphs/tables etc., which would enhance the readers' understanding of the author's argument but which does not alter the intellectual content and reasoning of the thesis.

¹⁶ "Minor revisions" are those which do not involve further supervision or any further original research. Such additions might include, for example, additional sentences, tables, paragraphs or pages but not normally additional chapters. They may additionally include specified minor corrections.

Award

148. The degree shall be awarded to a successful student by the Senate Progression and Conferment Executive (SPACE) on behalf of Senate. The date of the award shall be the date on which the relevant Sub-committee approves the award.

Students in debt

149. No student shall be entitled to the award of a degree unless all fees for tuition have been paid.

Formal conferment

150. Degrees shall be formally conferred at a congregation held for the purpose.

Degree certificate

151. After the formal conferment, each graduate shall be given a degree certificate. The certificate shall either be handed to the graduate or sent through the ordinary post to the student's address as listed in the University records. A replacement certificate can be issued only on receipt of a written request from the graduate and on payment of the appropriate fee.

Appeals and complaints

152. The grounds for and procedures for appeals are set out in the [Regulations for academic appeals](#) and the grounds and procedures for complaints are set out in the [Procedure for complaints](#).