



UCL Academic Manual 2023-24

Chapter 5: Research Degrees Framework

Guidance on Eligibility for Supervising Research Students

General terms

To become an approved supervisor at UCL, staff must make an individual application in line with the regulations set out in the [UCL Academic Manual, Chapter 5, Section 3: Supervisory Arrangements](#). The Faculty Graduate Tutor must approve the application and any conditions set out by the Graduate Tutors should be followed. Guidance on the staff eligibility and conditions for supervision are below.

No staff member is automatically eligible to supervise. Appointments are subject to review.

Subsidiary/MRes* Supervisor Approval Criteria

- Should be research active (e.g. have a track record of publications), possess expertise in a relevant area, and be familiar with the standards expected of research degree work

*MRes students should normally have their Programme Director listed as Principal supervisor; if a Faculty/Department would also like to have the project supervisor listed formally as subsidiary in Portico, this protocol should be followed.

Principal Supervisor Approval Criteria (in addition to the above):

- Should have undertaken training further to the mandatory training (see the [Arena Research Supervision programme](#))
- Should have completed their probationary period, or been in post for 9 months where the probationary period is longer, except by approval from the Faculty Graduate Tutor
- Should have previous experience, within a supervisory team, whether at UCL or elsewhere, of successful Doctoral supervision (defined as having taken a student through upgrade and/or completion, as the Faculty Graduate Tutor sees most appropriate; the FGT may require additional criteria to be met, for example restricting appointment to within an experienced and/or larger supervisory team/Thesis Committee).

Training requirements

- All staff wishing to be appointed as research supervisors at UCL, including new members of staff with experience of research supervision at other institutions, must complete the mandatory online supervisor course "[Introduction to Research Supervision](#)".
- Staff with no prior supervisory experience must also attend "[Developing as a Doctoral Supervisor](#)", after completing the online introductory course.
- All staff should also have read and be familiar with the following policies:
 - Code of Practice for Graduate Research Degrees
 - [UCL Statement on Research Integrity](#)
 - [UCL Code of Conduct for Research](#)

Further supervisory CPD is also strongly recommended, particularly for those wishing to become a principal supervisor. Full details from the [Arena Centre](#)

Staff Categories and additional criteria to meet

Staff Category: Academic track staff			
Guidance: This category is for academic track staff only, meaning the staff member has a permanent position, e.g. Lecturer, Associate Professor, Professor.			
Grade	Description	Supervision category: Principal/Subsidiary/MRes	Additional criteria to meet
8-10	Academic track staff	All	None
Staff Category: Research track staff			
Grade	Description- includes all other role titles within the designated track and grade	Supervision category: Principal/Subsidiary/MRes	Additional criteria to meet
6	Research Assistant	None	Not eligible
7	Research Fellow	Subsidiary and MRes	▲
8	Senior Research Fellow	All	▲
9	Principal Research Fellow	All	▲
10	Professorial Research Fellow	All	▲
Staff Category: Teaching track staff			
Grade	Description- includes all other role titles within the designated track and grade	Supervision category: Principal/Subsidiary/MRes	Additional criteria to meet
6	Postgraduate Teaching Assistant	None	Not eligible
7	Associate Lecturer (Teaching) / Teaching Fellow	Subsidiary and MRes	▲ *
8	Lecturer (Teaching)	All	▲ *
9	Associate Professor (Teaching)	All	▲ *
10	Professor (Teaching)	All	▲ *

Staff Category: Honorary appointments			
Grade	Description	Supervision category: Principal/Subsidiary/MRes	Additional criteria to meet
n/a	Honorary Academic associations	All	▲ *
n/a	Honorary Research associations	In line with categories in Research track above as per grade	▲ *
n/a	Emeritus staff	All	*
n/a	Visiting / Affiliate staff	None	Not eligible (apply for honorary appointment to appoint formally)
N.B. When applying for honorary appointment, ensure you request an email/ISD account so that you can be added formally to student's record (in SITS/Portico).			
Staff Category: Professional Services			
Professional services staff are not normally eligible to be supervisors; however, we recognise the subject area expertise of many of our professional services staff (and also the possibility of ongoing research work, despite currently being in a Professional Services role). Where the line manager of the staff member approves the research supervision role outside of the person's normal duties, and where the Faculty Graduate Tutor agrees to the appointment, these staff members could exceptionally be appointed as subsidiary supervisors within an experienced and/or larger supervisory team.			▲ *
Other			
N.B. Current research students cannot supervise research students at their same programme level.			n/a

* Individuals will need to make a case to their Faculty Graduate Tutor (FGT) with the support of their Department. The Department should indicate that they are willing to give the time and resources for the individual to supervise and that, where relevant, it is important for their career development. The FGT will also need individuals to demonstrate their research record and completion of appropriate training. Other specific assurances may be needed on a Faculty basis, such as having multiple supervisors and/or a Thesis Committee in place. Team supervision through one of these mechanisms would be strongly recommended in cases where non-academic staff are involved in supervisory team.

▲ Contract/Funding end date of supervisor should normally be beyond the end date of the student. This is to ensure continuity of experience and support for the student. However, in cases where the staff member's contract is likely to continue despite short-term funding arrangements (e.g. milestone grants, bridging funding, etc...) the Head of Department's assurance should be sought that it is likely the staff member will be in place to the end date of the student and, if relevant, that an Honorary contract would likely be issued were the staff member to leave. End dates and approval notes can be captured in User Management when the Faculty approves the supervisor.

When appointing supervisory teams, also see the Guidance on Appointment of Supervisory Teams

**Agreed by UCL's Research Degree Committee
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