UCL Student and Registry Services Division
Academic Services Department

Academic Regulations for Students Research Degree Programmes, Section 1: Research Degree Students – Programme of Study

2013-2014 Academic Session

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Links to Recent Changes and/ or Additions to the Published Regulations

2.7   [Upgrade from MPhil Degree to PhD Degree](#)

Introduction to Section 1: Research Degree Students - Programme of Study

The General Regulations apply to all University College London (UCL) MPhil/PhD/EngD/MD(Res) students.

The Academic Regulations for Students for Research Degree students are UCL's overarching regulations and students should read these regulations together with local regulations for the Department and Faculty housing their programme of study. EngD students should also read these together with the Section 3 Specific Programme regulations.

[Doctor in Engineering [EngD]: Section 3, Specific Programme Regulation (PDF)](#)

1   Admission to research degree programmes

1.1   Standard Qualifications for Admission: MPhil/PhD Programmes

The normal minimum entrance qualification for registration for the MPhil degree or the PhD degree is:

   i)   an upper second class honours degree of a UK university or an overseas qualification of an equivalent standard obtained after a programme of study extending over not less than three years in a university (or educational institution of university rank), in a subject appropriate to that of the programme to be followed; or

   ii)   a registrable qualification appropriate to the programme to be followed awarded by a UK university in Medicine, Dentistry or Veterinary Studies; or a qualification of an equivalent standard appropriate to the programme to be followed awarded by a university (or educational institution of university rank) outside the UK; or

   iii) a Master's degree from a UK University in a subject appropriate to the programme to be followed; or

   iv)   a professional or other qualification obtained by written examinations and approved by UCL as an appropriate entrance qualification for the MPhil or PhD degree in question.

Applicants should also consult the relevant Departmental/Divisional admission requirements.

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Link for section 1.1

UCL Departments A-Z

1.2   Standard Qualifications for Admission: EngD Programmes

Other qualifying criteria may also be required for applicants for the EngD, depending on the subject area of the individual programme.

Doctor in Engineering [EngD] Specific Programme Regulations gives details of specific criteria for the following programmes. (See link at the end of this section.)

- EngD in Biochemical Engineering and Bioprocess Leadership
- EngD in Communications
- EngD in Environmental Engineering Science (ENVES)
- EngD in Virtual Environments Imaging and Visualisation (VEIV).

Candidates applying for entry to other specialist doctorate programmes, including DClinPsy, DEdPsy, DPsych and DSLT programmes should refer to the programme literature provided by the Departments for further admissions information.

Links for Section 1.2

All links go to the UCL website, unless stated otherwise:

Doctor in Engineering Specific Programme Regulations (PDF)

UCL Departments A-Z

1.3   MRes Progression to an Associated Research Degree Programme

i)   Students registered on an MRes associated with an EngD or PhD programme should only be required to achieve the award of the MRes in order to progress to the associated research degree programme.

ii)   The length of the MRes programme should be extended to one calendar year and one month to allow Boards of Examiners time to determine awards prior to students registering on the associated EngD or PhD programme.

iii) MRes students who fail the taught components examined in and before June should be offered their resit opportunity before or in August of the same year.

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iv) MRes students who are not awarded the degree after the first attempt and the resit attempt should not progress to the associated EngD or PhD programme and would be required to leave UCL.

v) MRes students who fail the dissertation should not register on the EngD or PhD programme in the following academic year but remain on the MRes and resubmit the dissertation by the end of the first term in the following academic year. The Board would then consider the award for these students in January, when they would be allowed to register on the EngD or PhD if they passed. If, as a result, they missed taught components which formed part of the EngD or PhD registration, these should be followed at the point when they are next available.

Further guidance on MRes Progression to an Associated Research Degree Programme

i) These regulations only apply to students on MRes programmes which form an integral part of an associated doctoral programme.

ii) The previously agreed mark requirements over and above the award of the degree (such as the MRes pass mark of 60) should be dispensed with.

iii) Applicants and students should also consult the relevant Departmental/Divisional admission and MRes progression requirements.

iv) The Regulations for MRes Programmes are set out in The Academic Regulations for Taught Programmes: Postgraduate Students (Masters) Sections 1, 2 and 3 of the Additional Academic Regulations for Students for Masters By Research Programmes (MRes). (See links at the end of this section.)

Links for Section 1.3

All links go to the UCL website, unless stated otherwise:

[Section 1, Academic Regulations: Taught postgraduate programmes (PDF)](#)

[Section 2, Academic Regulations: Taught postgraduate programmes (PDF)](#)

[Section 3, Academic Regulations: Taught postgraduate programmes (PDF)](#)

[Additional Academic Regulations for Students for Masters by Research programmes (MRes) (PDF)](#)

1.4 Standard Qualifications for Admission: MD (Res)

To be eligible for registration for the MD(Res) degree, a candidate must have obtained the MB,BS degree or some other registrable primary qualification in

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Medicine and be eligible for full registration or hold limited registration with the General Medical Council (GMC); or have obtained the BDS degree or hold an equivalent dental qualification.

1.5   Alternative Qualifications for Admission to a Research Degree

Applicants possessing alternative qualifications may also be considered by UCL for registration.

i)   An applicant who possesses a degree or overseas qualification of equivalent standard obtained after a programme of study extending over three years or more in a university (or educational institution of university rank) in an appropriate subject and who, although they do not meet the normal entry standard defined in paragraph 1.1 above, but by evidence of their background and experience satisfy UCL as to their fitness to follow the programme. Where such an applicant cannot present evidence that they possess the necessary background and experience, they may be considered by UCL for registration, provided they meet appropriate qualifying conditions prescribed by UCL.

ii)   Applicants who possesses a qualification obtained by written examination other than those covered above if UCL is satisfied that the candidate's general education, scholarship, training and experience are suitable for the programme which they wish to follow and that they are at least as well qualified as the candidates who are able to satisfy the entrance requirements in one of the ways prescribed above.

UCL may prescribe a qualifying examination for such an applicant prior to admission.

Further guidance on alternative qualifications for admission to a research degree

Departments wishing to admit such an applicant, as described above, must obtain written authorisation from the Dean of Students (Academic), via the UCL Admission Office. An applicant for registration may also be required to pass a qualifying examination (see paragraph 1.4). Applicants are required to meet UCL's English Language proficiency requirements. (See link at the end of this section.)

Link for Section 1.5

UCL's English Language Proficiency Requirement

2   Registration, transfers and courses of study

2.1   Dual Registration

A student is not permitted to be formally registered for one programme of study at UCL at the same time as being formally registered (or re-sitting examinations) for another programme of study at UCL or any other Higher Education Institution.

Further guidance on dual registration

Students can accept an offer of a place from UCL when they are still formally registered with another Higher Education Institution, or if they are re-sitting examinations. However, they may not formally register with UCL until they have completed their registration with another institution.

2.2   Application and Initial Registration

An applicant for a PhD degree will be registered initially for the MPhil degree.

Further guidance on application and initial registration

     i)   All successful applicants, with the exception of the EngD and other specialist doctorate programmes, are initially registered for an MPhil degree, except where the applicant is exceptionally well qualified and UCL has given special permission for initial registration for the PhD degree.

     ii)   Every student must complete enrolment as instructed within two weeks of the start of their research programme and must undertake to comply with the conditions of enrolment.

     iii)   An applicant for registration is required to produce for inspection by UCL the original documentary evidence of their qualifications either before or at registration — i.e. the original diploma or certificate of the awarding body. An applicant for the MD(Res) degree will be registered at UCL in the names under which he/she has been registered with the GMC.

2.3   Exemption from Part of a Programme of Study

UCL may exempt from part of the programme of study of the MPhil/PhD degree, research degree students who have commenced a programme of study for the MPhil or PhD degree (or equivalent degree) of another university in the United Kingdom, provided that the programme of study followed at UCL is not less than one calendar year; or its equivalent in part-time study.

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Further guidance on exemption from part of a programme

    i)   Applications for exemption should be made at the point of admission and are considered on a case by case basis.

    ii)   Backdated registration is not usually permitted by UCL. In exceptional circumstances however, requests for backdating registration may be considered by the Chair of the Research Degrees Committee via the Student Centre (see link at the end of this section), subject to the following conditions:

        a) the statement from the Supervisor and/or the Head of Department gives strong academic reasons for the request and confirms in writing that the student has been undertaking relevant research since this date.

        b) there is evidence that the student has been fully supervised.

        c) there is a good reason provided explaining why the student was not formally registered from the requested start date.

If the backdating is granted, regardless of the time period requested, the student should be aware that he or she is liable for tuition fees from the date of retrospective registration and that the date for submission of the thesis will be calculated from this date.

Link for Section 2.3

UCL Student Centre

2.4   Course of Study: General

All research degree students are required to pursue a course of study prescribed by UCL.

A programme of study for the degree of MPhil, PhD or MD(Res) may require attendance at lectures and coursework as prescribed by UCL. A candidate's registration on a UCL programme will be dependent upon their continued satisfactory progress as determined by UCL.

All research students are required to use the Online Research Student Log. (See link at the end of this section.)

For more information about the Research Student Log and other requirements see the Code of Practice for Graduate Research Degrees. Students on certain Research Council funded PhD programmes may be required to complete a specified amount of research skills training.

Link for Section 2.4

[Online student research log](#)

[Code of Practice for Graduate Research Degrees](#)

2.5 Attendance Requirements

A programme must be pursued continuously except by special permission of UCL. Students must be in a position to meet all the requirements determined for their studies.

i) With the exception of non-resident PhD programmes (see 2.10), students, whether full-time or part-time, are expected to centre their academic studies on UCL. Students should ensure they are able to attend UCL in person for teaching and meetings as required by their supervisors.

ii) Students must obtain approval before they leave to collect or study material remote from UCL or work in remote facilities. (See link at the end of this section.)

Links for Section 2.5

[Changes to your registration status](#)

2.6 Length of Programme: MPhil/PhD and MD(Res) Programmes

The lengths of UCL research degree programmes are as follows:

i) the length of a PhD/MPhil programme is normally 3 years full time and 5 years part-time.

ii) the length of the MD(Res) is normally two calendar years of full-time or part-time study.

Students may not interrupt their period of registration without prior permission from UCL.

Unless prior exemption from a part of the programme has been agreed, a student must be registered for at least 2 calendar years full-time, or 3 calendar years part-time, before he/she will be allowed to submit her/his thesis for examination for the PhD or the MPhil degree.

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A student must be registered for at least 2 calendar years before he/she will be allowed to submit her/his thesis for examination for the MD(Res) degree.

In the case of registration for the PhD and the MPhil degree, unless prior exemption from a part of the programme has been agreed, students must be registered for at least 3 calendar years full-time, or 5 calendar years part-time, before they will be eligible to adopt Completing Research Status.

In the case of registration for the MD(Res) degree, students must be registered for at least two calendar years before they will be eligible to adopt Completing Research Status.

Further guidance on length of programmes

i)   Requests to submit a thesis earlier than the minimum periods of registration specified in the regulation above may be considered by the Chair of the Research Degrees Committee. Requests should be made in writing via the Student Centre (see link at the end of this section) and should include a statement of support from the Supervisor and/or Head of Department. The Research Degrees Committee will monitor the outcome of such requests by scrutiny of examiners' reports on the candidates' theses. Students and staff should note that early submission of a thesis will not be considered as an extenuating circumstance when deciding the outcome of the examination of a thesis.

ii)   Students who submit early would be liable for tuition fees up to the date of the submission of the thesis but would not be liable for tuition fees thereafter.

iii) UCL also runs certain Research Council funded PhD programmes which run for a four year duration (e.g. the MRC Wellcome Trust funded programmes in Neuroscience).

iv)   Interruption of Study

      Interruption of Study may be granted on the authorisation of the Director of Student Services, on behalf of the Research Degrees Committee provided that a statement of support from the Principal Supervisor and/or Head of Department/Division is received. If approved, the period of interruption of study granted will be initially not more than one calendar year and any further period of interruption of study will be considered one year at a time. UCL may, at its discretion, grant an interruption of study to a student on grounds of illness or other adequate reasons. The need to take up or pursue employment during the programme will not normally be considered grounds for interruption of studies.

      Interruption of Study for a period in excess of two calendar years may be granted by the Chair of the Research Degrees Committee subject to the following conditions:

Back to:

a) The period requested will be considered on an annual basis and will not exceed five calendar years from the date when the period of interruption starts.

b) The date when the submission of the thesis falls due following resumption of study falls within ten years of the date of original registration.

c) Written assurances, with supporting documentation, from the Supervisor and/or the Head of Department that the research will still be valid and are provided.

Link for Section 2.6

UCL Student Centre

2.7   Upgrade from MPhil Degree to PhD Degree

Upgrade from MPhil to PhD registration may be made not less than nine months after initial registration for the MPhil degree for full-time students, and not less than fifteen months after initial registration for the MPhil degree for part-time students. In the case of a student who has been granted an exemption of part of the programme of study, upgrade from MPhil Degree to PhD registration may be made not less than eight months, or its part-time equivalent, after initial registration for the MPhil degree.

A student who fails to achieve upgrade to PhD status may, if all other conditions are met, enter for the MPhil examination.

Detailed information on the up-grade process can be found in the Upgrade Guidelines. (See link at the end of this section.)

Link for Section 2.7

Guidelines for upgrade from MPhil to PhD status (PDF)

2.8   Transfer from PhD Degree to MPhil Degree

A student who has been upgraded from MPhil to PhD status may, with the permission of UCL, transfer back to MPhil status and enter for the MPhil examination provided he or she has not entered for the examination of a PhD.

The transferred registration may be dated from the date of original registration for the MPhil/PhD degree.

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2.9 Transfer between MPhil/PhD and MD (Res) Degrees

A student may, with the permission of UCL, transfer from the MD(Res) degree to the MPhil/PhD degree, provided they have not entered for the examination of an MD(Res) degree; or from the MPhil/PhD degree to the MD(Res) degree provided they have not entered for the examination of an MPhil or PhD degree.

Students wishing to transfer from an MPhil/PhD to an MD(Res) degree, or vice versa, should contact the Student Records team (email studentrecords@ucl.ac.uk) in the Student Centre. (See link at the end of this section.)

Link for Section 2.9

UCL Student Centre

2.10 Non-Resident PhD: Registration and Attendance

Students registered on a non-resident MPhil/PhD programme shall attend UCL on at least one occasion; this must be the meeting at which their upgrade to PhD is decided.

In addition a student registered on a non-resident MPhil/PhD programme shall meet his or her Supervisor(s) in person on at least two other occasions, one at the beginning and one at the end of the programme, but not necessarily in the UK.

Students and Supervisors are required to be in regular communication during the whole period of the programme by, for example, telephone, email, Skype etc.

Students on the non-resident MPhil/PhD programme are required to use the Online Research Student Log. (See link at the end of this section.)

Further guidance on non-resident PhD registration and attendance

i) Admission procedures for the non-resident MPhil/PhD programme do not differ from that of other research students who require special permission from UCL before starting their registration. A Department/Division wishing to make an offer to an applicant for a specially approved non-resident MPhil/PhD programme is required to submit a statement of the case for acceptance, via Registry and Academic Services Division, to the Chair of the Research Degrees Committee [RDC]. The statement must include evidence that the overseas institution where the applicant intends to undertake research is of international standing and able to provide adequate facilities for the research. It must also include details of the arrangements for the supervision of the student at the overseas institution.

ii) The Department/Division must also provide the Chair of the RDC with a statement showing that adequate arrangements for communication

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between the Department and the student are in place and that these arrangements comply with UCL requirements for frequency of contact between supervisor and student as set out in the Code of Practice for Graduate Research Degrees. (See link at the end of this section.) The use of the Online Research Student Log is an essential part of these requirements. Such statements should be submitted in writing to the Chair of RDC via the UCL Admissions Office (email admissions@ucl.ac.uk.)

iii) In cases where an approved research programme has been set up with a specific institution or institutions which have formal collaborative agreements with UCL, approval of individual applications, as described above, will not need to be submitted for approval by the Chair of the RDC.

iv) Students on a non-resident MPhil/PhD Programme will be registered as full-time students by UCL if they are carrying out their research on a full-time basis in their countries of residence. Otherwise, they will be registered as part-time students by UCL. A special fee rate applies to the non-resident MPhil/PhD programme.

Links for Section 2.10

All links go to the UCL website, unless stated otherwise:

Online Research Student Log

Code of Practice for Graduate Research Degrees

2.11 Visiting Research Students: Registration

Visiting Research students may register for between 3 to 12 months at UCL to undertake research which is complementary to the Doctoral/PhD project they are undertaking at the university in which they are enrolled. Applications for longer periods of registration can be considered, but require special permission from UCL before students start their registration. A Department/Division wishing to make an offer to an applicant for a period in excess of 12 months is required to submit a statement of the case for acceptance, via Student and Registry Services, to the Chair of the Research Degrees Committee [RDC].

Requests for extensions to the agreed registration period can be considered but require the support of both the UCL host department and the student's home institution. Departments seeking an extension to a student's Visiting Research Student status should contact UCL Student Records confirming their support and including a statement of support from the home institution.

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Arrangements for Supervision

Each Visiting Research Student will work under the guidance of a suitably qualified and approved UCL research Supervisor during their time at UCL (see section 4.1 for supervisor eligibility criteria) and the Supervisor must be recorded against their Portico record in the normal way. Visiting Research Students are not required to have both a Principal and Subsidiary Supervisor as is the case for UCL students; they typically have one Supervisor allocated to oversee their work.

Visiting Research Students are not required to use the Online Research Student Log.

Guidance for UCL Supervisors on supervising visiting research students is available. (See link at the end of this section.)

Link for Section 2.11

[Guidelines for supervising visiting research students (PDF)](#)

3   Completing research status

3.1   PhD, MPhil and EngD: Completing Research Status (CRS)

All research students who have completed their approved period of registration may register as CRS students while they write up their theses. Transfer to CRS status is only permitted with the approval of a student's supervisor or other departmental authority.

CRS is permitted for a maximum period of one calendar year (full-time) or two calendar years (part-time). CRS registration cannot be interrupted; a student who is prevented from submitting a thesis for reasons beyond his or her control may apply for an extension, as detailed in Point 3.5 below.

An MPhil/PhD student must be registered for at least 3 calendar years full-time or 5 calendar years part-time before he or she will be eligible to take up CRS status. EngD students must be registered for 4 calendar years and MD(Res) students for a minimum of two calendar years before being eligible to take up CRS status. A student who changes from full- to part-time during the approved period of registration must have been registered for a minimum of one year part-time before being entitled to two years of part-time CRS status.

In addition to completing the approved period of registration, a student must meet the following conditions before being permitted to take up CRS status:

   i)   have upgraded to PhD status (in the case of the MPhil/PhD programme) or confirmed entry to MPhil only

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ii)   be in a position to submit his or her theses within 12 months (for full-time students) and 24 months (for part-time students)

iii)   have met any other departmental or divisional conditions.

MPhil candidates may also take up CRS under the same conditions as PhD candidates but will be required to confirm that they have not upgraded to PhD.

3.2   Completing Research Student Status (CRS): Entitlements

During the period of CRS registration, a student is entitled to have one draft of all or any part of his or her thesis read and commented on by his or her principal supervisor and/or secondary supervisor before submission.

Further guidance on completing research student status: entitlements

i)   Once enrolled, CRS students will continue to be able to use or will be reissued with a UCL identity card and be entitled to the use of all the general UCL facilities and services.

ii)   A CRS student in laboratory-based research may be admitted to a laboratory and be given use of UCL equipment where such admission and use will materially enhance the quality of the thesis or will expedite its completion. Such admission and use shall, however, be on the condition that this does not significantly interfere with the use of the laboratory or equipment in question by other students or staff of UCL or incur additional expense. The student's Principal Supervisor, with the approval of the Head of Department/Division, shall be responsible for making any arrangements necessary to comply with this condition. In the event that a CRS student is refused admission or use, they shall have the right of appeal to the Faculty Graduate Tutor who shall consult the student's supervisor and Head of Department/Division.

iii) The student's Department/Division may, at its discretion, give any other supervisory assistance during the writing up period. CRS Students will be expected to comply with all the duties and responsibilities of any other research student as set out in the Code of Practice for Graduate Research Degrees. (See link at the end of this section.)

Link for Section 3.2

[Code of Practice for Graduate Research Degrees](#)

3.3   Submission of Thesis

A student must submit a thesis for examination before the end of his or her CRS period. A student will remain registered after the submission of his or her thesis until the award of the degree. He or she will be entitled to a UCL student identity card and will be able to able to use all the general UCL facilities and services while preparing for a viva examination or making minor revisions to a thesis.

3.4   Extensions to the Completing Research Period

A student who cannot submit a thesis for examination before the end of CRS due to circumstances outside his or her control may apply for an extension. *The maximum period of extension is one year, full-time and two years, part-time.*

Further guidance on extensions to the completing research period

Applications for extension to CRS must be made on the application form available from the Registry and Academic Services Division. Applications must be supported by a student's department and may be made on the grounds of illness of student or close relative, maternity leave, bereavement, responsibilities as a primary carer or academic circumstances out of the control of the student. Work commitments or any duties carried out for a department are not considered grounds for extension; submission of a thesis is expected to be a priority. Applications on the grounds of the illness or termination of employment of the principal supervisor may be considered but departments are expected to make arrangements for alternative supervision under such circumstances.

3.5   Submission of a thesis after the end of CRS

A student who submits late will be liable for a late submission penalty fee.

A student who does not submit a thesis before the end of his or her CRS registration will cease to be registered as a student at the end of this CRS period. He or she will not be entitled to access to UCL facilities and services and will not be entitled to supervisory advice. In addition, any student who wishes to submit after the end of his or her CRS registration will require permission to do so; this must be supported by a student's supervisor or other departmental authority. If granted, the student will be permitted to submit but will not be re-registered unless his or her department require this.

Further guidance on the submission of a thesis after the end of CRS

All students who submit after the end of their CRS registration will pay a penalty fee equivalent to the part-time home fee current at the time. This fee will come into effect the day after the end of their CRS registration and will increment after three

months, six months and nine months. For late submission at any time over nine months after the end of CRS, the fee will be equivalent to 12 months home, part-time fees current in the year of submission.

3.6   Resubmission of a Thesis

A student whose thesis is referred by his or her examiners for substantial revision within 18 months will remain registered as a submitted student on the basis of paragraph 3.3 above, provided the original submission was not after the expiry of a period of CRS status. He or she will have access to UCL facilities and will be entitled to have one draft of his or her thesis read and commented on by his or her principal supervisor and/or secondary supervisor before re-submission. If a student's revisions require more supervision or further access to UCL laboratories or other facilities, he or she may be required to re-register as a fee paying student for the period of this supervision or access.

A student who is required to re-submit must re-enter for the examination by completing the exam entry form at available from the Registry and Academic Services Division and will be required to pay a re-submission fee. (See link at the end of this section.)

Links for Section 3.6

Research degrees examination entry

4   Supervisory arrangements

4.1   Supervisors: General

Each UCL student registered for the MPhil, PhD, EngD, MD(Res) or MRes degree shall have appointed one Principal and one Subsidiary Supervisor, who shall be members of staff of UCL or members of staff of an institution with an approved agreement with UCL. All supervisors must be approved by their Faculty Graduate Tutor before they undertake supervision of research students.

Further guidance on general supervision

i)   Principal and Subsidiary Supervisors shall be appointed by the appropriate Departmental/Divisional Postgraduate Committee, or its equivalent body.

i)   Honorary members of staff may be appointed as either Principal or Subsidiary Supervisors. However, approval must be obtained from the appropriate Faculty Graduate Tutor on behalf of the Research Degrees

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Committee. The appointment of an honorary member of staff as a Principal or Subsidiary Supervisor will be subject to consideration of adequate research activity, including publications and grant income. Honorary members of staff appointed as Principal or Subsidiary Supervisors are also governed by eligibility requirements set out in 4.2.

iii)   Retired members of staff shall not normally be appointed as Supervisors except by the specific agreement of the Research Degrees Committee. In instances where a member of staff serving as Principal Supervisor retires, continued supervision by the staff member is only permissible if explicitly agreed by all parties, (the student, the supervisor and department), and this decision recorded by the department. In addition, the following arrangements must also be put in place and reviewed annually by all parties to confirm they are working effectively:

• the existing Subsidiary Supervisor shall be appointed as joint Principal Supervisor with the retired member of staff

• a third supervisor shall be appointed to the supervisory team as Subsidiary Supervisor

iv)   Supervisors can be appointed from institutions with an approved agreement with UCL, e.g. Cancer Research UK (CRUK). Such supervisors must have the status of honorary members of UCL Staff. In all circumstances UCL has an expectation that these Supervisors will undertake their role in accordance with the Graduate School's Code of Practice for Graduate Research Degrees and within the framework of UCL's regulations for Research Degrees (this document).

v)   For more information on the role of the Supervisor see the Code of Practice for Graduate Research Degrees.

Link for Section 4.1

Code of Practice for Graduate Research Degrees

4.2   Supervisors: Eligibility

The list of UCL staff categories eligible to act as Principal and/or Subsidiary Supervisors can be found on the Human Resources website. (See link at the end of this section.)

UCL determines the eligibility of staff in these categories to supervise research degree students using the following criteria:

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A Principal Supervisor should normally:

   i)   have satisfactorily completed any probationary period attached to his/her appointment;

   ii)   have expertise in the area of the proposed research;

   iii)   have had previous experience of at least one successful PhD, EngD, MD(Res) or MRes supervision, as appropriate, within a supervisory team (defined as having taken a student all the way through to a research degree award)

Subsidiary Supervisor should normally:

   i)   have expertise relevant to the area of proposed research

   ii)   be familiar with the standards required for MPhil/PhD/EngD/ MD(Res)/MRes research.

In the case of EngD programmes, the Industrial Supervisor must also satisfy the requirements laid down above for the Subsidiary Supervisor.

A probationary member of academic staff may be appointed as Principal Supervisor, if supervision is undertaken within the context of an experienced supervisory team comprising at least one demonstrably active researcher with experience of at least two successful supervisions.

A Research Associate may be invited to act as a Subsidiary Supervisor but must, in addition to the requirements specified for Subsidiary Supervisors:

   i)   have a research contract lasting at least 3 years from the time the supervised student commences his/her programme of study;

   ii)   be able to provide evidence of good quality publications for which they have had a substantial degree of responsibility.

Further guidance on supervisors' eligibility

   i)   Principal supervisors who are probationary members of staff must also have participated in an appropriate UCL supervisor's workshop.

   ii)   Supervisors who have completed a probationary period but have not previously supervised a research student should also meet the requirements outlined above. New senior members of academic staff with experience of MPhil/PhD/EngD/MD(Res)/MRes supervision at other institutions are expected to attend an appropriate UCL supervisor's workshop.

Link for Section 4.2

PhD Student Supervision Eligibility

4.3 Number of Students per Supervisor

A supervisor, whether Principal or Subsidiary, may supervise up to the equivalent of 6 full-time research students at any one time.

Further guidance on the number of students per supervisor

i) The maximum number of students [head count], whether full- or part-time, that may be supervised by an individual as either Principal or Subsidiary Supervisor will be 9, using the following formula:

   a) 1 Part-Time student = 0.5 for a Principal Supervisor

   b) 1 Full-Time student = 0.5 for a Subsidiary Supervisor

   c) 1 Part-Time student = 0.25 for a Subsidiary Supervisor

ii) Where a supervisor exceeds the maximum number of students under his/her supervision, the supervisor's department must be able to demonstrate that there are mechanisms in place to ensure adequate contact with the student and appropriate support for the supervisor, such as a large supervisory team and/or a reduction in other workloads.

iii) For example, an individual may act as Principal Supervisor to 4 full-time students and 1 part-time student while acting as Subsidiary Supervisor for 2 part-time students. This is the equivalent of 5 full-time students and is within the head count of 9 students. Consideration should be given to the other duties of the member of staff concerned. Departments/Divisions may wish to recommend an upper limit on the number of students supervised by a single member of staff that is lower than that set out above.

iv) Part-time staff appointed as supervisors should supervise no more than 6 full-time research students on a pro-rata basis.

4.4 Declaration of Personal Interest

All members of staff are required to declare any personal relationships with any student they are asked to supervise, or are already supervising.

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Further guidance on declaring personal interest

i) A supervisor who declares such a personal relationship prior to appointment as Supervisor for the student in question shall not be permitted to undertake supervision of that student, whether as Principal or Subsidiary Supervisor.

ii) A supervisor who declares such a relationship after having been appointed as Principal Supervisor for the student in question (unless the declaration is made within six months of appointment, in which case the supervisor shall not be permitted to continue in any supervisory capacity) shall no longer continue as Principal Supervisor but may continue to advise the student in an informal capacity.

iii) The role of Principal Supervisor (including responsibility for all decisions affecting the student's progress and assessment) shall in such instances pass to the Subsidiary Supervisor or the other supervisor nominated by the Department   A supervisor who declares such a relationship after having been appointed as Subsidiary Supervisor for the student in question, subject to the permission of the Departmental Graduate Teaching Committee, may continue as Subsidiary Supervisor, but shall not be responsible for, or be involved in, any decisions affecting the student's progress and/or assessment.

4.5   Transfer of Supervisor to another Institution

Where a Principal Supervisor transfers to another institution, students assigned to that Supervisor shall be assigned to another Principal Supervisor – if they choose to remain registered at UCL – normally by the Departmental/Divisional Graduate Tutor. Should a student wish to continue to work under the supervisor who has transferred, he or she may consider applying to transfer registration to the supervisor's new institution, providing he or she is not in the final year of the programme.

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