

Summary of changes to Research Student Policies for 2015/2016

In light of consumer legislation, the University has conducted a review of its rules, regulations and procedures that apply to research students and made various changes to these documents which are now all referred to as policies. Most of the changes are minor in nature and have been made to clarify/explain existing rules and procedures.

Changes that are more substantial have been summarised/signposted below. It is important to note that the vast majority of these changes have been made in students' favour. Where the University considers that certain changes may not be deemed to be in students' favour or are changes the University considers students will be particularly interested in, the changes have been highlighted in bold. It should be noted that many of these changes have been highlighted in bold were already University practice but were not necessarily set out or made clear in the policy.

The policies listed below apply solely to students studying for the following awards:

- Doctor of Philosophy – PhD
- Doctor of Medicine – MD (Res)
- Master of Philosophy – MPhil
- MA (by Research)
- MSc (by Research)
- LLM (by Research)
- PhD (by Published Work)

This summary of changes is to be read in conjunction with the "**Summary of changes to Student Policies for 2015/2016**" which apply to all students at the University (including those listed above) unless otherwise stated in that document

Please note that this document provides a summary of the main changes and does not include all of the detail from the 2015/16 policies. Accordingly, this document should be read as an introduction to the 2015/16 policies and should not replace reading the policies themselves which can be found at https://www.uclan.ac.uk/students/life/rules_regs.php . For an overview of the most important provisions in the policies (rather than the specific changes), see the 'Summary of Research Student Polices' available via the link above.

Code of Practice for the Supervision, Examination, and Administration of Research Students

- Unsuccessful applicants will now be notified of a decision within 15 days
- With regard to previous qualifications, original certificates must be provided for verification on enrolment, failure to prove prior qualifications will result in withdrawal of the offer;
- With regard to applications for off campus research degree programmes, clear criteria have been set out relating to access to appropriate research facilities, support and skills training (at 2.5). Please note: an additional mandatory tuition fee will be calculated for this mode of study, this fee can only be calculated once the details of the off campus study has been agreed and finalised;
- Examples of possible pre-sessional courses have been given;
- Details of what items are covered by Bench Fees (at 3.3);
- In relation to timescales, it has been made clear that student's progress will be monitored and where the student does not complete after time is permitted for remedy then a student's programme may be suspended or terminated (4.2);

- Ethical clearance is required in writing (4.3);
- Supervision: (at 6) details of alternate supervisors in certain circumstances has been clarified; supervision records, objectives and responsibilities must now be confirmed in writing by all parties; appropriate written records must now be maintained by the supervisory team;
- Clarification of the circumstances where the University considers it necessary to terminate studies has been provided (7.4 and 7.6) and details of the progression appeals procedure has been inserted;
- Clarification of the mandatory requirement to complete Induction Training within the 1st month has been provided (8.2.1);
- Clarification with regard to the consequences of failure to complete satisfactorily any other mandatory training has been provided (8.2.4);
- Clarification with regard to failure to transfer successfully from MPhil to PhD has been provided (9), and details of the location of the Withdrawal procedure has been provided;

Regulations governing Research Studentships and Bursaries

- Details of where return from absence is to reported to has been provided (A.3);
- Details of when a studentship would be terminated has been provided (B. 5.1)
- Students with disabilities will be assessed by Student and Academic Support Service as soon as possible as assessment of any special needs will be required in order for any reasonable adjustments to be put in place (C.3);
- Clarification of term and vacation periods has been provided (D4);

Accompanying offer conditions/Offer Brochure

- Previous qualifications will need to be provided in their original form;
- It has been made clear that it is the students responsibility to check their offer letters to ensure they pay the required deposit;
- Clarification of when a deposit may be returned has been provided
- Consequences of being unable to meet official start dates has been provided
- It has been made clear that it is the student's responsibility to ensure that information provided in support of their visa application is correct;
- The University will withdraw an offer if students fail to meet the conditions of their offer by the published deadline for meeting the conditions;
- It has been made clear that it is the students responsibility to comply with the terms of their visa;
- The right to cancel has been changed to 14 days (up from 10) to comply with current legislation;
- The disclaimer in relation to changes to the Terms and conditions as follows:;
The University reserves the right to make reasonable changes to these Terms and Conditions where in the opinion of the University this will assist in the proper delivery of education. Changes are usually made for one or more of the following reasons:
 - a. To review and update the Regulations to ensure they are fit for purpose;*
 - b. To reflect changes in the external environment, including legal or regulatory changes, changes to funding or financial arrangements or changes to government policy, requirements or guidance;*
 - c. To incorporate sector guidance or best practice;*
 - d. To incorporate feedback from students; and/or*
 - e. To aid clarity or consistency of approach.*

Any changes will normally come into effect at the start of the next academic year, although may be introduced during the academic year where the University reasonably considers this to be in the interests of students or where this is required by law or other exceptional

circumstances. The University will take all reasonable steps to minimise disruption to students wherever reasonably possible, for example, by giving reasonable notice of changes to these Terms and Conditions before they take effect, or by phasing in the changes, if appropriate.

The updated terms and Conditions will be made available on the University's website and may be publicised by other means so that students are made aware of any changes.

Research Student Handbook

- It has been made clear that discriminatory practices and discrimination are not tolerated;
- Details of the following has been provided:
 - timing and process for the monitoring of progress has been provided and it has been made clear that monitoring of progress is ongoing throughout the academic programme;
 - the consequences of failure to take part in the mandatory skills training programme has been provided (2.2);
 - the consequences of failure to take part in the Induction programme has been provided (2.3.1);
 - who approves the programme of work has been provided (2.3.2);
 - who reviews the progress file has been provided (2.3.4);
 - the approval process operating from MPhil to PhD (2.3.5);
 - who the risk assessments should be submitted to and/or recorded by (2.5.1);

Training Brochure

Clarification on mandatory training and exemption from training.

Guide to PhD (by Published Work)

The procedures for admission and registration for candidature for examination for this award have been completely revised.