PhD by Distance Learning - Evidence of Compliance with the University’s Framework

This form closely mirrors the University’s [PhD by Distance Learning Framework](https://www.southampton.ac.uk/~assets/doc/quality-handbook/PhD%20by%20Distance%20Learning%20Framework.pdf). The form is intended to enable Schools to demonstrate how they will meet the requirements of the Framework if they wish to offer a PhD by Distance Learning.

Schools should ensure they read the Framework before completing this form, taking note in particular of the following:

* The principles set out in section 1
* The approval process set out in section 2
* The University’s [Regulations for Research Degrees](https://www.southampton.ac.uk/about/governance/regulations-policies/research-students/general/regulations) and the [Code of Practice for Research Degree Candidature and Supervision](https://www.southampton.ac.uk/about/governance/regulations-policies/research-students/general/candidature-supervision) by which the PhD by Distance Learning is governed.

**Variations to the University’s Framework**

***If the proposal contains any elements that are outside of the PhD by Distance Learning Framework additional approval must be obtained from the Academic Quality and Standards Subcommittee (AQSS)***. In the box below, please give a brief overview of the points of non-compliance referring to the appropriate section in this form:

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**School and proposal initiation details**

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| 1 | Name of School |
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| 2 | Name and role of the member of staff proposing the PhD by Distance Learning |
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| 3 | Academic discipline area wishing to offer this type of PhD i.e. it will be known as:  PhD by Distance Learning in …………………………………….(add discipline) |
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| 4 | State where formal discussions on the development of this type of PhD are recorded, for example in committee minutes or notes of other meetings etc., including discussions with Finance, the Library and iSolutions: |
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| 5 | Confirm that this proposal has been discussed with the Faculty Graduate School directorate (including the Faculty Graduate School Office): |
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| 6 | Provide full details of the costings and projected income backing up this proposal should be included in a written business case and submitted to School Programmes Committee as an attachment to this form (this should refer particularly, but not exclusively, to sections 10, 15 and 17 below): |
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**Background information that supports the principles of the Framework**

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| 7 | **Market Identification, Planning, Marketing and Recruitment**   * Please explain below how the development of this type of PhD fits with the School’s overall strategic plan and the shape of its education provision. * What is the proposed market, and what market evidence is there to support this development? * Where and how is the PhD by Distance Learning being promoted to prospective research students? * What is the anticipated number of research students expected in the first year, and how many are expected in future years? * When is the estimated start date for the first intake of research student(s)? |
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| 8 | **Location of the research student(s)**  *It is expected that research students recruited to a PhD by Distance Learning will be based in an environment conducive to their research (Framework paragraph 1.3)*.   * How will the School satisfy itself that the location of the research student(s) is appropriate (see also ‘Research Environment’ and ‘Facilities’ below)? * How will the School ensure that appropriate written confirmation is received from the employer stating support for the research student in undertaking part-time study before an offer is made to the research student? (see also under ‘Facilities’ below) |
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| 9 | It is expected that the PhD by Distance Learning will be offered on a part-time basis. If it is to be offered full-time, please state the reasons why, together with supporting evidence for these reasons (Framework paragraph 1.4). |
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| 10 | **Set-up effort, time and costs (Framework paragraph 1.5)**   * What are the projected financial costs for setting up the proposed PhD by Distance Learning? These should include any development of IT infrastructure, on-line learning resources, and remote IT support (see section 4 above regarding evidence of discussions with the Library and with iSolutions) * Have these costs been fully discussed with the Head of Faculty Finance? (see section 4 above regarding evidence of these discussions) * What are the estimated time and resources involved for both academic and administrative staff? |
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| 11 | What mechanisms and timescales are proposed by the School for monitoring, evaluating and reviewing the success of the PhD by Distance Learning?  *As a minimum, the University’s QME Framework for postgraduate research degrees should be followed, but Schools may consider that in the early stages a PhD by Distance Learning should be monitored and reviewed on a more regular basis as determined by the School Programmes Committee.* |
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**Information and Evidence to support the Framework paragraphs 4 – 13**

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| 12 | **‘Individual Arrangements’ document for the research student**  **All arrangements covered by the sections below should be fully discussed with the research student and confirmed in writing in an ‘Individual Arrangements’ document.** A copy of the ‘Individual Arrangements’ document should be signed by the research student, the main supervisor, and the Faculty Director of the Graduate School and recorded in the research student’s file. If arrangements are modified during the research student’s candidature, both parties should sign to confirm the amendments.   * What mechanisms will the School have in place to ensure a signed document is produced for each research student on the PhD by Distance Learning programme? |
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| 13 | **Registration and Enrolment (Framework section 4)**   * Has Student and Education Services (SES) Registry been contacted and the necessary paperwork completed regarding the setting up of a new Banner code for this PhD by Distance Learning (a different programme code will be required for each academic subject area)? |
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| 14 | **Residency requirements and periods to be spent at Southampton (Framework paragraph 5):**   * What periods and stages of residency will be required for this PhD by Distance Learning, taking into account the minimum residency requirements of the Framework? * What action will be taken by the School if the research student fails to meet the stipulated periods of residency in Southampton (also see bullet point 5 in this section)? * How will it be made clear to the research student that they are responsible for the arrangements and costs of the periods of residency in Southampton? * Has the School contacted the SAA Registry and made itself fully conversant with the visa implications for any international research student who may be offered a place on the PhD by Distance Learning? * Has the School fully considered how any visa implications may affect the research student’s ability to fulfil the residency requirements? |
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| 15 | **Fees** **(Framework paragraph 6)**   * What is the proposed fee structure for the PhD by Distance Learning? * How has this fee been arrived at and how does it take into account set-up and running costs (e.g. for IT) as well as the other factors mentioned in the Framework paragraph 1.5? * Has the Fees Office been informed? |
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| 16 | **Research Environment (Framework paragraph 7)**   * How will the School ensure that a research student on the PhD by Distance Learning will receive a comparable experience to that of a research student on a ‘standard’ PhD? * Will the research students be based at a research institute or place of work that can help contribute to a suitable research environment? If so, in what ways will it contribute? * In what other ways will a suitable research environment be created – for example what on-line resources for interaction and for learning will be made available? * If the research students are not based at a research institute or place of work, how will the School ensure that a robust and suitable research environment will be made available, including opportunities to interact with, and discuss research with, their peers? |
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| 17 | **Facilities (Framework paragraph 8)**   * How will the School determine what facilities are required by the research student, and how will it ensure these are provided? * If a research student is based at a research institute or place of work suited to the research project, how will the School ensure that these facilities are at the research student’s disposal and that arrangements for their use have been agreed? * How will the School ensure and confirm that all research students have access to PGR Tracker, wherever they are located? * How will IT training and support for the use of on-line resources be made available to research students who may be located in a variety of different countries? * How and when will comprehensive information about IT helplines, support, and training be given to research students? (for example, this may be part of the induction process) * How will the School ensure that research students are aware of what IT equipment and facilities they will need to purchase and/or have access to in order to study for a PhD by Distance Learning? * Will research students have electronic access to the University Library? How will their information needs be met? * Are there any constraints on accessing electronic information systems (including the Library)? * How will research students be informed of how their information needs are to be met, and if there are any constraints on these? * How will the School ensure that research students have access to appropriate workspace and equipment during their periods of residency in Southampton? |
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| 18 | **Research Training and Transferable Skills Training (Framework paragraph 9)**   * How and when will research students’ academic needs analysis take place? * How will research students receive appropriate research skills training? * How will research students receive the appropriate generic/transferable skills training, including any compulsory training? * If research and generic/transferable skills are normally assessed, how will this assessment be carried out? * How will any identified additional learning needs, including English language support, be delivered? * What opportunities will be available for research students to practise skills learnt, for example presenting their research to staff or peers? |
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| 19 | **Supervision (Framework paragraph 10)**   * What is the estimated additional workload for supervisors involved in the PhD by Distance Learning, and how will this be taken into account for individual supervisors? * Has the School fully considered what constitutes ‘reasonable’ access and access times if a research student requires advice and input outside pre-arranged supervisory meetings (see the *Responsibilities of the Supervisory Team: Ongoing responsibilities* section of the [Code of Practice for Research Degree Candidature and Supervision](https://www.southampton.ac.uk/about/governance/regulations-policies/research-students/general/candidature-supervision)), and the bearing this might have on supervisors’ workload? * What training and support will members of supervisory teams involved in the PhD by Distance Learning receive? * Where an informal local support contact at the research student’s location is to be made available, how will that contact’s role and responsibilities be formally communicated to the contact and to the research student? * What methods will be used for supervision and informal progress monitoring, and how will the mode/type of interaction and the frequency of interactions be determined? * How often will face-to-face meetings take place (this should be a minimum of once in any 12-month period)? * How will records be kept of supervisory team/research student interactions? (for example, PGR Tracker can be used for this purpose), and how will the School ensure that these are fully documented? * How will the School ensure that the co-ordinating supervisor (usually the main supervisor), has considered, in conjunction with the Faculty Graduate School directorate, whether any specific administrative arrangements or adjustments are required (for example, this may include greater frequency and type of communication with the research student – see also bullet 2 above) * Is there an expectation that the main supervisor, or other member of the supervisory team, will visit the research student during their candidature? |
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| 20 | **Monitoring and Review (Framework paragraph 11)**   * How will research student progress be monitored throughout candidature, both formally and informally (including supervisory meetings – see above), bearing in mind the nature of distance learning and the importance of monitoring the progress and direction of research students’ studies? * How will the School ensure that formal progress reviews take place at the agreed intervals (at least annually), and that the research student is in attendance at Southampton for each formal progress review whenever possible?\* * How will the School ensure that all progress reviews, both formal and informal, are fully recorded and documented (using PGR Tracker)?   \**Where it is not possible due to exceptional circumstances, such reviews may be carried out via other means, for example videoconference – this must be agreed well in advance and communicated to the research student. If it is known at the outset, for example, it may be communicated in the ‘Individual Arrangements’ document (section 12 above).* |
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| 21 | **Confirmation (Framework paragraph 12)**   * How will the School ensure that the confirmation stage of the PhD takes place in Southampton (Framework paragraph 5 – Residency Requirements), and that this is communicated to any potential applicants as well as to research students\*, including that it is their responsibility to bear the costs of attendance?   *\*For research students, this will be included in the ‘Individual Arrangements’ document – see section 12 above* |
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| 22 | **The PhD Examination (Framework paragraph 13)**   * How will the School ensure that research students are made aware of all relevant training, information and guidance on the preparation of a thesis? * By what means will research students be expected to submit the three soft-bound copies of their thesis for the examination? * Has the School (supervisory teams and the Faculty Graduate School Office) confirmed the process and practical arrangements for submission of the three soft-bound copies of the thesis for examination purposes? * How will research students receive training for the *viva voce* should this be requested? * How will the School ensure that the final examination and *viva voce* takes place in Southampton\* (Framework paragraph 5 – Residency Requirements), and that this is communicated to any potential applicants as well as to research students\*\*, including that it is their responsibility to bear the costs of attendance? * Has the School (the supervisory team and the Doctoral College (Faculty) Team) confirmed the process and practical arrangements for submission of the final version of the thesis after the examination and following approval of any amendments made at the request of the examiners? (This will be the final soft-bound version, the *Permission to deposit thesis form*, and the electronic version of the thesis for ePrints)   *\* Subject to obtaining agreement from all parties, the viva voce may take place by videoconference*  *\*\*For research students, this will be included in the ‘Individual Arrangements’ document (section 12 above)* |
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**Submission, Approval and Reporting**

*Complete Step 1 below*

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| 1 | **Form submitted and completed by (Programme Proposer)** | |
| Name |  |
| Role |  |
| Signature |  |
| Date |  |

*Complete Step 2 below*

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| 2 | **Support for the proposal (Faculty Director of the Graduate School)** | |
| Name |  |
| Role |  |
| Signature |  |

*Complete Step 3 below*

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| 3 | **Discussion and consideration (School Programmes Committee (SPC))** | |
| Date of SPC meeting |  |
| Name: |  |
| Role | Chair of School Programmes Committee (SPC) |
| Signature |  |
| Date of SPC meeting |  |

*Complete Step 4a* ***or*** *4b below*

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| 4a | **Approval by PGR QME Subcommittee (if the proposal is compliant with the Framework and has been approved by SPC)** | |
| Date of PGR QME Subcommittee meeting |  |
| Name |  |
| Role |  |
| Signature |  |

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| 4b | **Approval from AQSS (AQSS’s approval is required if the proposal contains any elements that are outside of the Framework)** | |
| Date proposal submitted to AQSS |  |
| Date of AQSS meeting |  |
| Approval granted | Yes/No |
| Name |  |
| Role |  |
| Signature |  |