

## UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

## QUALITY ASSURANCE COMMITTEE

**READMISSION PROCESS FOR POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH STUDENTS****1. PURPOSE OF THE PAPER**

The purpose of this paper is to seek the **approval** for the introduction of formal procedure for the readmission of Postgraduate Research Students.

**2. PREVIOUS CONSIDERATION BY /FURTHER APPROVAL REQUIRED**

	<b>Board/Committee</b>	<b>Date</b>
Previously considered/ approved by:	Postgraduate Research Committee	4 December 2024
Further consideration/ approval required by:	Quality Assurance Committee (QAC)	11 December 2024
	University Education Committee (UEC)	14 January 2025
	Senate	TBC
	Court	TBC

**3. RECOMMENDED ACTION**

The QAC is asked to **approve** the proposed procedures and policy for the readmission of PGR students.

**4. DISCUSSION**

4.1 At Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught levels, there is a formal procedure for students looking to resume study after withdrawal, but not for PGR students. Currently, PGR students can suspend their study if they need to take a break and resume at a later date, but there is no clear guidance on what should happen if students who have previously withdrawn from study decide that they wish to come back.

4.2 Students may feel unable to continue with their study and unable to commit to a resumption date, so may feel that withdrawal is the best option for them. Other students, who have previously decided they do not wish to continue with study, may find that their circumstances change and they are able to resume at a later date.

**4.3 READMISSION FORM**

The Committee are asked to discuss the proposed form and policy for readmission applications and what information applicants should be asked to provide to demonstrate they are able to resume study. Please note that the form takes some questions from the Undergraduate and PGT versions of the form, such as whether the applicant has criminal convictions, to ensure that there is consistency between what the different students are asked to provide.

**5. FURTHER INFORMATION**

Further information is available from Robert Findlay, Assistant Registrar (Postgraduate) ([r.j.findlay@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:r.j.findlay@abdn.ac.uk)).

28 November 2024

**Freedom of Information/Confidentiality Status:** *Open*

## APPENDIX A

### PGR Readmission policy

The University of Aberdeen recognises that individual circumstances can impact a student's ability to engage fully in their studies and this may cause them to withdraw from study or may result in their studies being discontinued. After a period away from the University, students may wish to recommence their studies and can apply for readmission.

Please note that readmission to study is not an automatic right nor guaranteed. Outlined below is our policy for readmission to study for all research degrees.

1. The following are examples of when a student might be eligible to apply for readmission:
  - a) When a student has previously withdrawn from study by submitting a formal request to withdraw.
  - b) When a student has been withdrawn by the University due to failure to complete annual registration.
  - c) When a student has been withdrawn by the University through student attendance monitoring procedures due to failure to engage with their studies
  - d) When a student has exceeded the maximum study for their degree but is seeking special permission in order to resubmit their thesis for examination.
2. The following are examples of when a student is not eligible to apply for readmission:
  - a) When a student has had a suspension of study approved. Students in this circumstance do not need to apply for readmission in order to resume their studies.
  - b) When a student's studies have been discontinued by the University due to academic failure, for example unsuccessful completing of the annual progression exercise.
  - c) When a student has been expelled by the University under the Code of Practice on Student Discipline (academic or non-academic)
3. A student wishing to apply for readmission must complete a readmission application form. This form must be approved by the student's proposed supervisor, the Head of School and the Dean of Postgraduate Research. The decision may take into account the student's full background with the University. This will include, but is not limited to, their academic background, non-academic background, immigration status, debt and previous findings of academic or non-academic misconduct. When reaching a decision on the readmission of a student, the following nonexhaustive list of general principles will be considered.
4. A student who withdrew from their studies for health reasons or because of other mitigating circumstances may be asked to provide some assurance that they are now fit and able to resume their studies. This could be in the form of a doctor's note or some reflective analysis of the issues faced and a plan for their resolution.

5. A student who has had their studies discontinued by the University will not normally be eligible for readmission. Readmission will only be considered if i. there is support from the School where the student last studied, ii. there is well documented evidence of the reasons for the student's discontinuation, iii. there is evidence that the issues involved have been resolved sufficiently to allow the student to resume their studies, iv. the Dean of Postgraduate Research is satisfied that the student can still make progress through their degree.
6. Applications for readmission will not normally be considered for any student who has been away from University study for 5 or more years.
7. Readmission can only be sought to the same research topic as before. A brand new topic would require a new application for admission.
8. In order for readmission to be approved, the School in which the student would be based must be able to provide supervision and must be able to confirm that the research conducted prior to withdrawal remains relevant and competitive to fulfil the requirements of a PGR degree.
9. Applications for readmission must normally be submitted no later than 3 months before the intended date of return to study.
10. Students who are seeking special permission to submit their thesis having exceeded the maximum study period for their degree, must have their thesis ready to submit before approval for readmission can be given.
10. Readmission may be granted to a different degree than previously, i.e. a previous PhD student might be approved for readmission to an MSc by research only. In all cases the research topic will be the same as previously, albeit adapted to the requirements of the degree.
11. The period of study that a student was registered for prior to withdrawal/discontinuation will count towards the period of study post-readmission. For instance, if a student is resuming study on a 36 month full time PhD, and was registered for 12 months previously, they will have 24 months of study left upon readmission.
12. The academic regulations and programme prescriptions in place at the time of readmission will normally apply.
13. Funding cannot be guaranteed for students whose studies were previously funded through the University. Students must discuss with the relevant School whether funding will be in place and, if not, find an alternative source of funding or be prepared to meet the costs of their study themselves. Students who were funded by external sources, must check with their previous whether funding will be in place should they be permitted to resume studies.

14. Students who are looking to resume study and complete either further supervised study time or an extension period, will be required to pay the standard tuition/continuation fees.
15. Students who are given special permission to submit their thesis for examination having exceed the maximum study period for their PhD, will be required to pay a reinstatement fee equal to 1/3 of the full time Home fee rate upon submission of their thesis.
16. Where a Student Visa is required for on campus study, approval of readmission from the Dean of Postgraduate Research does not guarantee that a CAS can be issued for study under a Student Visa. Student Immigration Compliance will be consulted on any application for readmission that requires a Student Visa. Furthermore, in order to allow enough time for an application for a Student Visa to be approved and the Visa issued, the date of return must be 3 months after the date that the request for readmission is submitted.

## APPENDIX B



## RESEARCH POSTGRADUATE APPLICATION FOR READMISSION

This form should be completed by students who wish are currently withdrawn and wish to return to study, or students who have exceeded the maximum study period of their degree and are seeking special permission to submit their thesis for examination. Students on an approved suspension, do not need to complete this form.

This form should read alongside the [Postgraduate Research Student Readmission Policy \(link to policy\)](#) and must be approved by a supervisor. Normally, this would be the previous lead supervisor, but, in the event that they are not able to provide supervision, you must approach the relevant School to discuss potential supervisory options and to confirm whether a new lead supervisor can be identified.

If approved, email confirmation will be sent to yourself and copied to the School Office. The email to yourself will be sent to the address given below and will include instructions on how to re-register. Please note that those seeking special permission to submit their thesis having exceed the maximum study period for their degree, will be required to pay a reinstatement fee equal to 1/3 of the full time Home research student fee.

**Please ensure that you read the notes at the end of this form.**

<b>Section 1: Your Details</b>	
Name:	
Student ID Number:	
E-mail address for correspondence regarding application:	
Degree title (e.g. PhD in Engineering):	
Date when degree was initially started	
Date of withdrawal:	
Will you require a Student Visa for on campus study:	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Section 2: Application Details</b>	
Proposed date of return:	
Physical or other disabilities that might necessitate special arrangements or facilities:	
Do you have any criminal convictions? (excluding motoring offences for which a fine and/or up to three penalty points were imposed) – <b>see note 1 below</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Please state the degree you wish to be readmitted to –	

<b>for those who require a Student Visa, see Note 3 below:</b>	
Please state whether you wish to resume as full time or part time:	Full time <input type="checkbox"/> Part time <input type="checkbox"/>
Are you intending to study on campus or at a distance:	On campus <input type="checkbox"/> Distance <input type="checkbox"/>
Will you require a Student Visa for on campus study – <b>see note 3 below</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Please state the full reasons for your application (expand as necessary):	
Please state how you intend to fund your study upon resumption (see the Readmission Policy for further details of fees that might be applicable):	

<b>Section 3: Thesis Plan and Student Confirmation</b>
--

Please provide detail on what work is required to be done in order for the thesis to be ready to submit. Please include detail of research required, writing up to be done and any target dates that have been set for completion of chapters etc. If you are seeking special permission to submit your thesis having exceeded the maximum study period for your degree, please confirm that the thesis is ready to submit.

--

Applicant's signature		Date	
-----------------------	--	------	--

<b>Section 4: Lead Supervisor Confirmation</b>			
Please to include any comments or extra information that may support this application:			
Please confirm date student should resume studies by:			
Please confirm the names of the supervisory team, including percentage supervision that each will provide:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ By signing this form, I confirm that I am aware of how long the applicant will have to submit their thesis for examination, and the work that is required in order for the thesis to be ready for submission.</li> <li>➤ I also confirm that the research previously conducted remains relevant and novel to satisfy the requirements of PGR study. .</li> </ul>			
Signed		Date	

<b>Section 5: Head of School Approval</b>			
Signed		Date	

**Please return form to:**

[Postgraduate Research School](#) at [pgrs-engagement@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:pgrs-engagement@abdn.ac.uk) copying in your [School PGR Administrator](#).

<b>Section 6: Dean of Postgraduate Research Approval</b>			
Signed		Date	

<b>Section 7: Registry Use</b>	
Supervised study end date:	
Submission date:	
Date changes made in SRS:	
By:	



## NOTES

### 1. Criminal Convictions

Courses in teaching, health, social work and courses involving work with children or vulnerable adults	All other courses
For these courses, you must indicate Yes if any of the following statements apply to you.	For these courses, you must indicate Yes if either of the following statements apply to you.
<p><b>a</b> I have a criminal conviction</p> <p><b>b</b> I have a spent criminal conviction</p> <p><b>c</b> I have a caution (including a verbal caution)</p> <p><b>d</b> I have a bind-over order</p> <p><b>e</b> I am serving a prison sentence for a criminal conviction</p> <p>If statement <b>e</b> applies to you, you must also give the prison address as your postal address on page 1 of your application and a senior prison officer must support your application.</p>	<p><b>a</b> I have a relevant criminal conviction that is not spent</p> <p><b>b</b> I am serving a prison sentence for a relevant criminal conviction</p> <p>If statement <b>b</b> applies to you, you must also give the prison address as your postal address on page 1 of your application and a senior prison officer must support your application.</p> <p>Convictions that are spent (as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974) are not considered to be relevant and you should not reveal them.</p>

### 2. Fees notes

- Tuition fees will then be charged for the remainder of study when studies recommence.
- If you owe the University money your application for readmission will be refused.

### 3. Immigration notes

- Please note that a CAS number is required for a student to be able to apply for a new Student Visa, as any previous Student Visa would have been invalidated at the point of withdrawal. Approval for readmission from the Dean of Postgraduate Research Approval does not guarantee that a CAS can be issued for you to study under a Student Visa. You should discuss with the Student Immigration Compliance team prior to submitting your application for readmission as to whether sponsorship under a Student Visa might be possible and what you might be required to provide in order to support your request for a CAS. Student Immigration Compliance will be consulted on any application for readmission that requires a Student Visa.
- In order to allow enough time for an application for a Student Visa to be approved and the Visa issued, the date of return must be 3 months after the date you submit the form for approval. If it is not, the final date of return that is approved will be adjusted accordingly.
- If you require an ATAS certificate, you must have this in place before a CAS can be issued. An ATAS certificate can take a month to come through to you after you have applied ([www.atas.fco.gov.uk](http://www.atas.fco.gov.uk)).