

RESEARCH STUDENTSHIPS

UPR RE05 version 03.02

Policies superseded by this document

This document replaces version 03.01 of UPR RE05, with effect from 1 September 2024.

Summary of significant changes to the previous version

Amendments have been made to reflect correct organisational structures, update terminology and website links and clarify processes where necessary.

Glossary

A glossary of approved University terminology can be found in [UPR GV08](#).

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1 Introduction

1.1 This document was approved by the Chair of the Academic Board with effect from 1 September 2010¹ and has been revised with effect from 1 September 2020, on the authority of the Secretary and Registrar.

1.2 This document must be read in conjunction with the following supporting documents published from time-to-time by the Secretary and Registrar which are available from Academic Services (Doctoral College - : <https://herts365.sharepoint.com/sites/UHResearch/SitePages/Recruitment-of-Studentships.aspx>):

2 Definitions

For the purposes of this document the following definitions will apply:

¹ **Research Committee Minutes:** 13, 21 October 2004 and 415, 27 May 2010, refer.

- i **'Research Studentship':**
a Research Studentship at the University of Hertfordshire which may be funded by the University of Hertfordshire or by a Research Council or other external funder
- ii **'Studentship Holder':**
regardless of the source of funding, an individual to whom a Research Studentship has been granted;
- iii **'Agreement':**
the Research Studentship Agreement which applies to Research Studentships;

(Note for guidance:

The type of Agreement that will apply to a Research Studentship will be dependent upon the source of funding for the Research Studentship concerned. Advice on the correct Agreement to be used should be obtained from the Doctoral College, Academic Services. The Agreements are available on request from the Research Degrees Team, Doctoral College.)

iv School and Department':

the University is structured through a number of academic schools; certain Schools are organised into Departments;

- v **'Scholarship':**
funding for tuition fees only;
- vi **'Bursary':**
funding for tuition fees and support, but which does not match the stipend level set for a 'Research Studentship'.
- vii **'Stipend':**
an annual Stipend is paid to the Studentship Holder to cover living and daily travel expenses and the cost of typing and binding their submission.
- viii **'Submission'**
a written document that presents and defines a thesis.
- ix **'Phase'**
A phase of study is 1 year full time, 2 years part time.

3 Scope

This document gives general information concerning Research Studentships and sets out University regulations and procedures relating to the establishment, allocation and administration of Studentships and the appointment of Studentship Holders.

4 General Regulations, procedures and information

4.1 Status of Studentship Holders

Studentship Holders are classified as research students. They are not employees of the University of Hertfordshire.

4.2 Term of Studentship

4.2.1 Full-time Studentships

i Full-time Studentships may be granted for a period of one (1), two (2), three (3) years or longer. Studentships funded by the University of Hertfordshire are normally for a period of three (3) years, whereas externally-funded Studentships may be for a term of three (3) years or more.

ii For the purposes of these regulations, 'full-time' is defined as follows:

number of hours per week: **37.5**

number of weeks per annum: **44.**

4.2.2 One-year Studentships

A one-year Studentship may be offered for part of a research degree programme.

4.2.3 Two-year Studentship

A two-year studentship may be offered for part of a research degree programme.

4.2.4 Part-time Studentships

Part-time Studentships are normally double the time period granted for full-time Studentships, i.e. 50% of the stipend is paid for twice the time period. Part-time study is never less than 50% of the rate of full-time study. In the case of externally-funded Studentships, reference must be made to the terms and conditions of the external funder.

4.3 Research Studentship Agreement

(Note for guidance:

This section must be read in conjunction with section 4.4.)

4.3.1 The Agreement sets out the standard terms and conditions that apply to the Studentship.

4.3.2 The terms and conditions stipulated by external funders may not be varied without the prior written consent of the external funder.

4.3.3 The terms and conditions stipulated by the University in relation to Research Studentships funded by the University of Hertfordshire may be varied only with the prior written consent of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise), acting within the limits of their authority, who will only consider requests which are supported by the relevant Associate Director, Doctoral College, and the Dean of School.

4.3.4 In either case (sections 4.3.2 and 4.3.3), the terms and conditions of an existing Agreement cannot be varied unless all parties have given their written consent.

4.4 Relationship of Studentship agreements with the student contract

- 4.4.1 The student contract, created when the Studentship Holder enrolls as a student of the University is distinct from the relationship that is created between the University and the Holder when they accept an offer of a Studentship.
- 4.4.2 Whilst some of the obligations which these two agreements impose on the parties involved may be the same, the two, nevertheless, remain separate. Regardless of the source of funding for the Research Studentship, the termination of the Agreement by either party will not necessarily have the effect of setting aside the student contract. For example, there may be circumstances in which the University might wish to terminate an Agreement but continue a Studentship Holder's research degree registration.
- 4.4.3 It should be noted that a decision to offer an individual a place as a research student (see UPR SA02²) neither guarantees nor implies that they are eligible for or will be offered a Research Studentship.

(Note for guidance - externally-funded Studentships

In the case of externally-funded Research Studentships, the terms and conditions of the funder will take precedence only insofar as they relate specifically to the Research Studentship. Therefore, the terms and conditions of the funder will not have precedence where they have or might reasonably be expected to have the effect of amending or setting aside the terms and conditions which apply to the Studentship Holder's registration as a research student of the University of Hertfordshire and/or the student contract.)

4.5 What the University will require of a Studentship Holder

- 4.5.1 These requirements are set out in full in the Agreement but are summarised in general terms in sections 4.5 – 4.7.
- 4.5.2 Full-time Studentship

The Studentship Holder will be required:

- i to work, full-time (thirty-seven (**37**) hours per week, forty-four (**44**) weeks per annum), on an agreed research programme for the term of their Studentship;
- ii in the case of a Studentship Holder of a full-time Studentship of three-years' duration or more, to register their research programme, for a Research Degree under the provisions of UPR AS10³ by the deadline stipulated within the Studentship Holder's schedule;
- iii in the case of a Studentship Holder of a Studentship of one-year's duration to study a MA/MSc by Research programme, to register their research programme, for a Research Degree under the provisions of UPR AS10³ by the deadline stipulated within the Studentship Holder's schedule;

² UPR SA02 'Admissions – Research Students'

³ UPR AS10 'Research Degrees - Generic Institutional Regulations'

- iv to progress satisfactorily to the next phase of study at each Progress Assessment.

4.5.3 Part-time Studentship

- i The pro-rata arrangements to apply to a part-time Research Studentship will be as set out in the Agreement.
- ii The Studentship Holder will be required to:
 - a work on an agreed research programme for the term of their Research Studentship in accordance with the pro-rata arrangements set out in the Agreement.
 - b register their research programme, for a Research Degree under the provisions of UPR AS10³ in accordance with the pro-rata arrangements set out in the Agreement.
 - c progress satisfactorily to the next phase of study at each Progress Assessment.

4.5.4 One-year and two-year Studentships

Where a candidate is transferring from another institution, they are required immediately to apply to the Research Degrees Board to register as a candidate on an approved programme of supervised research training, under the provisions of UPR AS10³ and in accordance with the requirements of the relevant Research Degree schedule.

4.6 Inter-relationship of the appointment of Studentship Holders with the University's regulations and procedures for the admission of research students (UPR SA02²)

4.6.1 A Research Studentship will not be offered to any individual unless:

- i they have made an application to the University for admission as a research student, and
- ii that application has been considered in accordance with the requirements of the University's principles, policies, regulations and procedures for the admission of research students (see UPR SA02²), and
- iii it has been agreed that they should be offered a place as a research student.

4.7 Funding

4.7.1 Stipends

- i An annual Stipend is paid to the Studentship Holder to cover living and daily travel expenses and the cost of typing and binding their submission.
- ii The minimum level of the Stipend to be paid for all Research Studentships is approved by the Vice-Chancellor or nominee.

4.7.2 Annual registration fees payable by students

- i Where a Studentship is funded with income derived from the Research England Research Excellence Framework (QR funding or equivalent), the

annual registration fee normally payable to the University by UK/EU research students is waived for the term of the Studentship. Where the annual registration fee for Studentships is met from QR funding (or equivalent) and would have been calculated at the overseas rate, with effect from 1 September 2003 the University may exceptionally and at its sole discretion, reduce the amount of the registration fee payable by 50%. Such action will in all cases be consistent with any relevant standard terms and conditions.

- ii The University may receive a lower annual registration fee for Research Studentships funded by the Research Councils and in these circumstances will not impose an additional charge on the Studentship Holder concerned to take account of the lower payment received from the Research Councils in respect of the annual registration fee.
- iii In the case of Studentships other than those referred to in section 4.7.2, i, the annual registration fee will normally be paid to the University, for the term of the Studentship, by the appointing School.

4.7.3 Parental leave

Students are entitled to 52 weeks of maternity or shared parental leave. The first 26 weeks should be paid at full stipend rate. The following 13 weeks should be paid at a level commensurate with employee entitlements to statutory maternity pay. This is c. 41% of the minimum doctoral stipend. The final 13 weeks are not paid. Partners are entitled to up to 10 days paid Ordinary Paternity Leave on full stipend. Partners may be entitled to up to 50 weeks of Shared Parental Leave; this may include paid and unpaid leave, depending on the individual circumstances.

4.7.4 Certificated absence

- i University funded Studentships
During periods of certificated absence, the University will, in any one twelve (12) month period of the Research Studentship, pay the Stipend to the Studentship Holder for up to 13 weeks. If the illness lasts, or is expected to last, for more than 13 weeks, arrangements should be made to suspend the studentship.
- ii Externally funded Studentships
Refer to the terms and conditions of the external funder.

5 Regulations and Procedures relating to the appointment of studentship holders

5.1 General regulations

- 5.1.1 Having due regard for all current regulations relating to the funding of postgraduate research degrees, Research Studentships will normally be offered only in academic areas that are consistent with the University's current Strategic Programme - Research. The Associate Dean (Research) of the appointing School or the relevant Associate Director, Doctoral College, must also have given their prior approval of the academic area in which a Research Studentship is to be offered.
- 5.1.2 Research Studentships will be offered only to individuals intending to seek registration or already registered with the Research Degrees Board of the

Academic Board for a programme of supervised research training, under the provisions of UPR AS10³.

5.1.3 Research Studentship vacancies must be identified and appointments made in accordance with the documentation referred to in section 1.2.

5.1.4 All Research Studentship vacancies must be advertised. All advertisements will require the prior approval of the relevant Associate Director, Doctoral College.

5.1.5 Schools will normally be responsible for advertising Research Studentships, processing applications, interviewing applicants and checking academic qualifications and references.

5.2 Eligibility for appointment

5.2.1 To be eligible for a studentship, the candidate must meet the requirements of admission to undertake a Research Degree.

5.2.2 Research Studentships should normally be offered only to individuals who meet these criteria (see section 1.2, c). Studentships may be offered to individuals resident in the UK or overseas. However, all full-time Studentship Holders are expected to be resident in the UK for the whole term of their Research Studentship. To be eligible for a Research Council studentship, a student must also satisfy their criteria regarding UK residence.

5.2.3 Any proposal to vary these criteria must be made in writing to the Associate Dean (Research) of the appointing School or the relevant Associate Director, Doctoral College, who will pass the proposal, together with a written recommendation, to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise). All proposed variations either in the operation or application of the criteria require the prior written consent of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise).

5.3 Role and responsibilities of Deans of School

5.3.1 In certain cases the resources required to support a research student will be provided by a Research Centre. In such circumstances, it may be appropriate for the relevant Research Centre to assume the responsibilities assigned within this section (5.3) to Deans of School/Department.

5.3.2 Deans of School or Directors of Research Centres are responsible for the appointment of Studentship Holders. In acknowledging the delegation of authority to Deans of School and Directors of Research Centres, the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise) would be consulted concerning any Research Centre that might be outside of the School structure.

5.3.3 Delegation of authority

Deans of School or Directors of Research Centres are permitted to delegate authority to a nominee to grant Studentships in accordance with the following regulations and procedures:

- i the Dean of School or Director of a Research Centre must notify in writing the person to whom they have delegated authority to grant Studentships and also provide this information in writing to the Director of Academic Services;
- ii having delegated authority, a Dean of School or Director of a Research Centre cannot then grant Studentships until they have withdrawn that

authority in accordance with the requirements of section 5.3.4.

5.3.4 Withdrawal of delegated authority

- i A Dean of School or Director of a Research Centre will not be deemed to have withdrawn delegated authority from a nominee until they have provided that person with written notification that the authority delegated has been withdrawn (see section 5.3.3, ii).
- ii The Dean of School or Director of a Research Centre must also notify the Director of Academic Services in writing of the change.

5.4 Applications

5.4.1 Applicants may apply for Research Studentships with a term of one (1), two (2), three (3) years or more and must complete and return the required application forms (see 5.4.3).

5.4.2 Applications made other than by means of the required application forms will not be considered (see section 5.4.1).

5.4.3 Research Studentships with a term of three (3) years or more

- i Individuals who wish to apply for a Research Studentship with a term of three (3) years or more must be provided with:
 - a a copy of the current version of the University form used for postgraduate applications and full information concerning the format and content of any additional material that applicants are required to submit with their application forms, together with the name of the member of staff to whom applications must be sent (see UPR SA02²) and any deadline for the receipt of applications or full information on how to apply on-line;
 - b a copy of 'Notes of Guidance for Research Studentship' (see section 1.2) or information on how these can be accessed on-line.
- ii At the time that they are provided with the documentation listed in section 5.4.3, i, prospective applicants must also be advised that they will not be deemed to have made an application for admission as a research student until a completed postgraduate application form, together with all of the additional material specified by the relevant School, has been received by the member of staff designated for this purpose (see section 5.4.3, i, a).

5.5 Consideration of applications

5.5.1 A Research Studentship application will not be considered unless the relevant requirements set out in section 5.4 have been met.

5.5.2 The Dean of School or Director of Research Centre will consider each Research Studentship application in accordance with the regulations and procedures set out in this document (UPR RE05); the 'Guidelines on Selection' (see section 1.2).

5.6 Rejection of applications

Where an application for a Research Studentship is rejected, written notification is sent to the candidate on behalf of the Dean's nominee, e.g. the Research Tutor, and must include the rationale for the decision.

5.7 Making an offer

(Note for guidance)

There are **two (2)** offer letter templates:

TEMPLATE A: letter to applicant offering enrolment as a research student of the University and also offering a Research Studentship;

TEMPLATE B: letter to an applicant already enrolled as a research student of the University offering a one or two-year Research Studentship.)

- 5.7.1 An offer of a Research Studentship may be made only by the Dean of the appointing School or Director of Research Centre or nominee. It should be noted that in agreeing to offer an individual applying for a Research Studentship a place as a research student, the Dean of School (Head of Department)/Head of Research Centre (or nominee) will have satisfied themselves that the University is able to provide the necessary resources from the time of the student's admission until the conclusion of their period of registration (see UPR SA02²).
- 5.7.2 All Research Studentship offers must be made in writing. All offer letters will be constructed using the current version of the relevant template published from time-to-time by the Academic Registrar (see section 5.7, Note for guidance) and must be signed by the Dean of School or Director of Research Centre unless they had delegated responsibility to a nominee in which case the letter must be signed by the nominee (see section 5.3.3).
- 5.7.3 A copy of each of the following documents must accompany the offer letter:
- i a copy of the proposed Agreement in which the necessary information has been completed by the appointing School or Research Centre;
 - ii 'Financial Schedule for a Research Studentship at the University of Hertfordshire' (see section 1.2);
 - iii the current version of the 'Doctoral College Handbook'.

(Note for guidance)

There are two types of Agreement:

'Research Studentship Agreement – Externally-Funded Studentship', which includes the terms and conditions of the external funder;

'Research Studentship Agreement – Studentship Funded by the University of Hertfordshire'

The terms and conditions that these Agreements contain differ because of the source of funding and in the case of externally funded Research Studentships, take account of the undertakings given by the University to the external funder when the application for funding was made. It is imperative that the correct Agreement is used.

Advice on the correct Agreement to be used should be obtained from the Doctoral College, Academic Services.

The Agreements are available on request from the Research Degrees team, Doctoral College.)

5.7.4 By signing the offer letter, the Dean of School or Director of Research Centre (or nominee) signifies that they are satisfied that all University requirements have been met and that the necessary resources (including supervision) are available to support the Studentship for its entire term.

5.8 Acceptance of a Studentship

5.8.1 An offer of a Research Studentship at the University of Hertfordshire is conditional on the applicant accepting the offer of a place as a University of Hertfordshire research student. These offers are made together in a single offer letter.

5.8.2 Applicants who wish to accept an offer of a Research Studentship will do so only in writing by signing the Agreement and returning the signed document to the Dean of School or Director of Research Centre (or nominee) by the date and time specified in the offer letter. In doing so the applicant also accepts the offer of a place as a University of Hertfordshire Research Student.

5.8.3 The appointing School will also ensure that the student completes section 1 of the 'Financial Schedule for a Research Studentship at the University of Hertfordshire' (see section 1.2) and that a copy of the completed document is lodged with the appropriate School Finance Manager and the Doctoral College prior to the date on which the Research Studentship commences.

6 Suspension of a Studentship

6.1 The grounds upon which a Studentship may be suspended are set out in the Agreement.

6.2 Suspension of Studentship and registration

6.2.1 Where a Studentship Holder seeks a suspension of their Research Studentship which will be associated with a suspension of their registration, the Studentship Holder must apply to the relevant Associate Director, Doctoral College, to whom, in this regard, the Research Degrees Board of the Academic Board has delegated authority. Where the Associate Director (Doctoral College) agrees a suspension of registration, the Research Studentship will be suspended automatically for an equivalent period. UPR AS10 'Research Degrees – Generic Institutional Regulations' at section 10.3 applies.

6.2.2 The Associate Director, Doctoral College, is required to inform the Director of Academic Services at the earliest opportunity of any suspension of registration that they have approved.

6.2.3 It should be noted that the University will recover any Stipend over-payment which may have been made to the Studentship Holder.

7 Premature Termination of a Studentship

7.1 The University reserves the right to terminate a Research Studentship with immediate effect in the event that the Studentship Holder fails to comply with the Agreement.

7.2 The various grounds upon which a Research Studentship may be terminated are set out in full in the Agreement. Studentship Holders wishing to terminate a

Research Studentship should be advised to refer to the Agreement.

- 7.3** Members of staff wishing to terminate a Research Studentship prematurely must comply with the procedures for the premature termination of a Research Studentship by the University which are set out in the Agreement.
- 7.4** It should be noted that the grounds for the premature termination of a Studentship include but are not limited to:
- i failure by the Studentship Holder to fulfil their obligations under the terms and conditions of the student contract (this would include failure by the Studentship Holder to comply with University regulations);
 - ii failure by the Studentship Holder to comply with the terms and conditions of the Agreement;
 - iii an unsatisfactory outcome in a formal assessment (the First Progress Assessment in phase one and the Second Progress Assessment in phase two);
 - iv unauthorised absence;
 - v where the Studentship Holder has provided false information or has otherwise sought to deceive the University;
 - vi withdrawal of the Studentship Holder's registration either by the Studentship Holder or by the Research Degrees Board of the Academic Board;
 - vii research misconduct;
 - viii exclusion from the University;
 - ix visa suspension/withdrawal by the UKVI or its successor.

8 Monitoring of Studentship Holders

8.1 Once a Research Studentship has commenced, the appointing School is responsible for monitoring, on an ongoing basis, the Studentship Holder 's progress on their programme of research and on their programme of related studies in accordance with the provisions of UPR AS10³ and their Schedule.

8.2 Progress Assessment

8.2.1 Each Studentship Holder's progress will be assessed by means of an Assessment made within the appointing School. The continuation of a Research Studentship is conditional on the Studentship Holder participating in this process and achieving a satisfactory outcome.

8.2.2 Failure to undergo Assessment

A Studentship Holder who has not undergone a Progress Assessment within the time periods specified in the relevant Schedule, UPR AS10³ will be deemed not to have made satisfactory progress and their Research Studentship will be terminated, even though the Studentship Holder may be permitted to remain registered as a research student of the University and submit for a lower award available on the Schedule.

8.2.3 Satisfactory outcome

Where the Associate Director, Doctoral College, is satisfied with the outcome of the Progress Assessment, the Studentship Holder may progress to the next phase

of study and the Studentship will be allowed to continue for a further year, subject to the Studentship Holder's continuing compliance with University regulations and the standard terms and conditions.

8.2.4 Unsatisfactory Outcome

Where the outcome of an Assessment has been unsatisfactory, the Studentship Holder has the right to appeal the decision in accordance with UPR AS20.

9 Administration of Studentships

9.1 Director Doctoral College

The Director Doctoral College, through the Director of Academic Services, will monitor Schools' compliance with the regulations and procedures set out in this document (UPR RE05).

9.2 Role of the Director of Academic Services

9.2.1 The Director of Academic Services (or nominee) is the first point of contact for any queries concerning Research Studentships.

9.2.2 All of the completed Studentship documentation referred to in section 5.8, must be lodged with the Director of Academic Services.

9.3 Role of Doctoral College administration

9.3.1 The Doctoral College is responsible for their administration in accordance with the requirements of this document (UPR RE05).

9.3.2 All completed Studentship documentation, including the Studentship offer letter, signed Studentship Agreement and Financial Schedule, and any amendments to the financial schedule, must be lodged with the Doctoral College Administrator and School Finance Manager.

9.3.3 The School Finance Manager is responsible for checking the Financial Schedule in the first year and updating it annually, adding the appropriate budget code and circulating copies to relevant parties including the Doctoral College in compliance with any payment deadline dates which they may stipulate from time-to-time.

The Studentship Holder must make any changes to their bank details or address on their student record.

9.3.4 Requests for changes to Stipend payments must be made by the appointing School or Research Centre to the School Finance Manager not less than **15** working days prior to the date from which the change is to be effective. To ensure that Stipends are paid promptly, these requests will be processed by the School Finance Manager within seven (**7**) working days of their receipt, and where practicable, prior to any monthly payment deadlines.

9.3.5 Principal Supervisors are required to lodge any doctor's medical certificate received from a Studentship Holder with the Doctoral College Administrator responsible for monitoring the Studentship Holder's sickness absence, who will notify the School Finance Manager of any changes to Studentship payments.

9.3.6 Where a Studentship Holder completes their degree within the term of the Studentship but has not taken all of their holiday leave entitlement, the Principal Supervisor is required to notify the Doctoral College Administrator/School Finance Manager of the total amount of holiday leave which is outstanding.

Sharon Harrison-Barker
Secretary and Registrar
Signed: **1 August 2024**

Alternative format

If you need this document in an alternative format, please email us at governanceservices@herts.ac.uk or telephone us on +44 (0)1707 28 6006.