

Appendix

Guidelines on Managing Extensions and Suspensions

Extension and Suspension Requests:

Candidates may apply for an extension to their maximum period of study if required. Where a candidate is unable to continue with their research or their performance is adversely affected by exceptional circumstances, they may apply for a suspension of studies.

All extension and suspension requests must be submitted to the Research Degrees Committee (RDC) for consideration, prior to submission to the University of Wales' Special Cases Committee for final consideration and approval.

For further information on the grounds by which the University will grant a request, please consult the University's Guidelines on Extension and Suspension requests:

<http://www.wales.ac.uk/en/Registry/CollaborativeCentres/RegulationsandProtocols/SpecialCasesCopy.aspx>

Role of the Research Degrees Committee

The RDC plays a critical role in elevating the evidence and rationale for extension and suspension requests, and making a recommendation to the University as to whether it supports the request. The RDC also has responsibility for managing the process of extensions and suspensions and ensuring that both candidates and supervisory teams are working effectively towards a timely completion and submission.

Candidates and supervisory teams should note the following:

- The University will receive and consider extension requests sympathetically, but extension requests are not granted automatically and as of right and the case has to be made;
- The University would expect best practice to show that **one** extension or suspension request should suffice in most circumstances and, where multiple and ongoing requests are made, the documentation must be explicit and address the reasons for this;
- Requests must be well considered and be able to demonstrate and convince the RDC and the Special Cases Committee that they are both proportionate and fair;
- All paperwork submitted to the RDC and the Special Cases Committee must be complete, comprehensive, accurate and clear;
- Requests must show clear evidence for the nature of the request and contain appropriate supporting documentation;

- Supervisory teams must explicitly indicate their support or otherwise for a request. With extension requests, the supervisory team should clearly articulate how the period requested is feasible to allow a student to complete and submit their thesis in a timely manner, bearing in mind the evidence of the research completed to date and the research to be completed;

Candidates are also eligible to apply to the RDC and Special Cases Committee for an extension during the continuation or resubmission period.

Resumption of Research following a Suspension:

It is important that candidates' who have been granted a period of suspension are supported back into their programme of research, particularly where the absence has been for a period of time exceeding 6 months. When resuming their programme of research, candidates should follow an action plan which clearly articulates the steps candidates will take to fully re-engage with their research and to ensure that they will complete within a timely manner.

To help this process and drawing upon best practice within the sector, the University requires that **both** the candidate and supervisory team develop an action plan to facilitate the process of re-engagement for an initial period of 6 months. The University has in place in a pro-forma (SC1) specifically for this purpose.

The role of the RDC is to proactively monitor the process of resumption of studies and ensure that both candidates and their supervisory teams are working effectively.