POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH CODE OF PRACTICE

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1. INTRODUCTION

This Code of Practice outlines the framework for postgraduate research students at Lancaster. It is informed by and aligned with Chapter B11 of the QAA's UK Quality Code for Higher Education, published in June 2012. It replaces the 2005 Code of Practice on Postgraduate Research Programmes. The Code of Practice was approved by the Academic Standards and Quality Committee on 10th July 2013, and was effective from October 2013.

Chapter B11 of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education states the Expectation that:

> *Research degrees are awarded in a research environment that provides secure academic standards for doing research and learning about research approaches, methods, procedures and protocols. This environment offers students quality of opportunities and the support they need to achieve successful academic, personal and professional outcomes from their research degrees.*

The chapter comprises eighteen indicators which form the structure of this Code. The indicators are reproduced below, along with commentary on how the principles underpinning each indicator are delivered at Lancaster.

This Code should be viewed alongside the University's policies, available from the **Secretariat website**. These policies include, for example, information about intellectual property, health and safety etc.

2. REGULATIONS FOR RESEARCH DEGREES

> ***Indicator 1****: Higher education providers that are research degree awarding bodies have regulations for research degrees that are clear and readily available to research students and staff, including examiners. Where appropriate, regulations are supplemented by similarly accessible, subject-specific guidance at the level of the faculty, school, department, research centre or research institute.*

The University's regulations for postgraduate research degrees are contained as part of the **Manual of Academic Regulations and Procedures**, and are made available to research students, staff and examiners. The regulations include information about admissions procedures, supervision arrangements, support structures, progression, assessment and complaints and appeals processes.

3. REVIEW OF THE CODE

> ***Indicator 2****: Higher education providers develop, implement and keep under review codes of practice for research degrees, which are widely applicable and help enable the higher education provider meet the Expectation of this Chapter. The codes are readily available to all students and staff involved in research degrees, and written in clear language understood by all users.*

This Code will be kept under review by the Postgraduate Studies Advisory Group (PSAG).

4. MONITORING OF PROVISION

> ***Indicator 3****: Higher education providers monitor their research degree provision against internal and external indicators and targets that reflect the context in which research degrees are being offered.*

Departments and Faculties are asked to review their postgraduate research provision as part of the postgraduate Annual Teaching Review (ATR). These reviews take account of the data available within the institution as well as broader external indicators. The University uses the Key Performance Indicators accepted by HEFCE, the QAA and the Research Councils as a basis for benchmarking and performance measurement, both internally and across the sector.

The Academic Standards and Quality Committee reviews, via ATRs and Faculty reports, overall and departmental submission rates, taking account of individual students' circumstances where these have a material effect, and maintains oversight of research student progress monitoring . PSAG also monitors PRES returns, and considers evidence from other indicators on a periodic basis.

In so doing, the University takes into account equality objectives, feeding into the work of the Equality and Diversity Committee.

5. RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT AND TRAINING

> ***Indicator 4****: Higher education providers accept research students only into an environment that provides support for doing and learning about research, and where excellent research, recognised by the relevant subject community, is occurring.*

High quality research is the norm in every academic department at Lancaster. All supervisors are research-active, and the University has a long-established and successful environment that provides support for doing and learning about research, evidenced by its relatively high completion rates.

The detailed requirement for a programme of work frequently cannot be specified in advance but the department is required to ensure that, in so far as can be predicted; the necessary resources (e.g. library, computing and laboratory facilities, work and storage space, and technical assistance) will be available. Students have access to, and are encouraged to participate in, research events within their department or centre, including research seminar series. Supervisors should be active in research, with knowledge of the student's research area and/or the theoretical approach to be applied.

A comprehensive research training programme, aligned with the Researcher Development Framework, is provided by teams within the faculties. The research training programme provides opportunities for research students to mix across disciplinary boundaries, and encourages the development of peer support networks. Training on ethics is a mandatory component of the research training programme within each faculty.

Advanced training in specialist areas is available, and is strengthened by the University's partnerships with other providers within Doctoral Training Centres and in the form of international

collaborations. Each of these collaborations is governed by a memorandum of agreement which makes clear the nature of the award and the responsibilities of each partner.

6. ADMISSIONS

> ***Indicator 5****: Higher education providers' admissions procedures for research degrees are clear, consistently applied, and demonstrate equality of opportunity.*

The University has an admissions policy which is available on the **University website**.

Students are admitted by the University on the recommendation of the Head of Department or nominee. The proposed supervisor(s) should be specified.

Application for research degrees is by individual application to Lancaster University. Applications are accepted online through the MyLancaster admissions portal. Applications should be accompanied by additional documentation (typically research proposal/abstract, two academic references, transcripts of previous higher education studies, evidence of English language proficiency for students whose first language is not English). All applications for research are handled by Faculty Admissions Offices and are forwarded to the relevant academic department or centre for review by the department's doctoral director or similar. Normally, the director will consult one or more colleagues before making a decision on a candidate. This decision takes the form of a recommendation to the Faculty Admissions Officer, who will review the decision and issue the appropriate letter to the applicant (normally a formal offer of admission or a rejection). In certain circumstances, principally where the department is unable to obtain sufficient additional information on an applicant to make a decision, an application is deemed to have lapsed. Where appropriate – as, for example, with programmes that integrate research with taught provision – admissions may be conducted using alternative arrangements such as a gathered field.

Full details of how to apply are given in the Postgraduate Prospectus (printed and online versions) and on the **online postgraduate application pages** of the University's website.

> ***Indicator 6****: Only appropriately qualified and prepared applicants are admitted to research degree programmes. Admissions decisions involve at least two members of the higher education provider's staff who have received training and guidance for the selection and admission of research degree students. The decision-making process enables the higher education provider to assure itself that balanced and independent admissions decisions have been made in accordance with its admissions policy.*

Candidates for research degrees must be good honours degree graduates of a recognised university in the UK or comparable university overseas, or persons with equivalent qualifications who show evidence of exceptional ability, or who have demonstrated their ability in graduate studies or through relevant work experience.

The department or centre, in consultation with the Faculty Admissions Officer, is required to ensure that the candidate is appropriately qualified for the proposed programme of work including language ability for students whose first language is not English. Prospective supervisors may offer advice to applicants (for example, to inform applicants of how to present evidence of a match of research interests) in advance of the application being made; this advice should not be of a nature that might bias the admission decision.

Details of academic entry requirements and English Language proficiency are contained in the Postgraduate Prospectus (printed and online versions).

All admission decisions involve at least two members of staff of the University, normally including (at least one of) the prospective Head of Department (or nominee) and supervisor, and a senior member of the Faculty Admissions Office.

The Faculty Admissions Office provides detailed advice and guidance to academic selectors and supervisors on all aspects of the selection and admissions process including:

- equal opportunities;
- ensuring fair and consistent decision-making;
- checking applicants' qualifications against entry criteria (including comparability of international qualifications and English language proficiency issues) and advising on non-standard entry (e. g. candidates who do not possess the level of qualifications outlined in the entry criteria but who may be eligible on the basis of professional training and/or relevant work experience);
- funding opportunities (external and internal funding competitions and awards).

Interviews may be used as part of the admissions process, with video or IP conferencing facilities being employed where appropriate to ensure equal access to prospective students who are located far from Lancaster.

The offer letter and other materials sent to incoming students refer to the expected total fee payments (including any 'bench' or other supplementary fees), the minimum and maximum periods of study, requirements placed on the student, and arrangements for enrolment and registration. Incoming students are also provided with information about accommodation and, via the website, travel arrangements. In the case of international students, information is made available online about visa arrangements and special provision for overseas students at Lancaster. Students who bring families with them are likewise provided with information about services that the University provides for these families.

7. STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES AND ENTITLEMENTS

> ***Indicator 7****: Higher education providers define and communicate clearly the responsibilities and entitlements of students undertaking research degree programmes.*

Each research student is entitled to receive an appropriate amount and type of supervision (to give them a realistic prospect of successful completion), to expect an appropriate research environment in which to work (including access to training opportunities, seminars and academic discussions), and to have access to appropriate facilities. The precise nature of each of these varies from department to department.

Departments will ensure that students have a place to work, along with adequate facilities for them to carry out their work effectively. Special arrangements must be made where equipment breakdown or a shortage of specialised equipment causes delay to the student, and the Department should attempt to minimise such disruption.

All students at Lancaster should take note of the expectations within the **Student Charter**. More specifically, research students have responsibilities to ensure that they:

- tackle the research with a positive commitment, taking full advantage of the resources and facilities offered by the academic environment and in particular contact with the supervisor, other staff and research students. A full-time commitment to research, as a research student, involves an input of time that is tantamount to the input that would be expected of someone in full-time employment. As a guide, a year of full-time postgraduate taught study normally carries 180 credits and therefore assumes 1800 learning hours (or 45 weeks at 40 hours per week). Part-time programmes likewise involve an input of time that is sufficient to ensure completion of work at doctoral level over the course of the programme, this time being phased around the students' other commitments;
- discuss with the supervisor the type of guidance and comment believed to be most helpful, the training which might be required, and agree a schedule of meetings. To facilitate this, students are required to complete a development needs analysis shortly after admission to their programme;
- attend and keep records of supervision sessions, sharing records with the supervisor;
- attend meetings, seminars, lectures and laboratory sessions as required by the supervisor or Head of Department;
- aim, by the end of the first year (or 2 years for part-time students), as well as having completed a broad programme of relevant work and training, to have defined the area of research, become acquainted with the background knowledge required and the relevant literature, and have a framework for the future progress of the research with a timetable for the next 2 or 3 years (3 or 4 years in the case of part-time students);
- maintain the progress of the work in accordance with the stages agreed with the supervisor and take note of the guidance and feedback from the supervisor;
- agree with the supervisor(s) any periods of absence from the University;
- discuss any problems, such as those of access, or conflicting advice, with the supervisor(s) at the time – early discussion and resolution of problems can prevent difficulties later on. If the student feels unable to raise the problem with the supervisor(s), he or she should discuss the difficulty with a senior member of the department – normally the Head of Department, doctoral director or equivalent. If for any reason this is not felt to be possible, the student should contact the faculty associate dean for postgraduate studies;
- decide when to submit the thesis, taking account of University regulations on minimum and maximum periods for submission, and the supervisor's opinion.

8. STUDENT INDUCTION AND INFORMATION

> ***Indicator 8****: Research students are provided with sufficient information to enable them to begin their studies with an understanding of the environment in which they will be working.*

The University and faculties provide an induction programme for all new research students, which includes orientation information and details of relevant University procedures and personnel and is designed to clarify expectations on such things as submission time, quality of research, support available to students, and amount and type of supervision. This induction is supported by comprehensive provision of research training opportunities within each faculty, aligned with the **Researcher Development Framework**. The research training programme is supported by extensive online materials, offering access to part-time students and those studying away from Lancaster as well as to students who are studying full-time at Lancaster.

Departments are expected to provide all new research students with written information on:

- current research areas of all staff and students in the department;
- available facilities (e.g. office space; equipment/laboratories; computers; use of telephones, postage, and photocopiers; departmental transport; out-of-hours access, etc.);
- departmental personnel, procedures and services relevant to their study;
- details of the operation of the staff-student committee;
- the departmental procedures for reviewing progress and upgrading to PhD.

Students should also be made aware of the mechanisms for raising concerns or issues.

9. SUPERVISION ARRANGEMENTS

Appointment of supervisors and changes in supervision

> ***Indicator 9****: Higher education providers appoint supervisors with the appropriate skills and subject knowledge to support and encourage research students, and to monitor their progress effectively.*

Supervisors should be active in research, with knowledge of the student's research area and/or the theoretical approach to be applied. Supervisors should hold an academic qualification at least at a level equivalent to that for which the student is registered, or should have considerable experience of research at doctoral level. Members of staff on probation (i.e. with less than two years' experience) should not normally be appointed as a student's sole supervisor, though they might, in the interest of staff training and development, be appointed as a joint supervisor with a more experienced colleague.

The department is expected to ensure that proper supervision can be provided and maintained during any periods of study leave or absence by supervisor(s), or time spent abroad by the student. The University, with assistance from the department, will take steps to safeguard appropriate provision (including, where necessary, providing help in exploring the transfer of the student to another institution) in the event of the supervisor(s) leaving the University and there being no other appropriate supervisor readily available.

If difficulties with the supervisor cannot be resolved through either informal or formal routes, the student may ask the Head of Department (or other appropriate senior member of staff) for a change of supervisor. If the situation cannot be resolved, the department is expected within reasonable limits to provide an appropriate alternative source of supervision.

The Head of Department/doctoral director will ensure that supervisors have the training and support they require to undertake effective supervision. This support might include recommending a supervisor to attend training courses, conferences, etc.; teaching relief or adjustment of other responsibilities. The University provides, through its Organisation and Educational Development (OED) unit, training for doctoral supervisors.

The Head of Department should treat complaints as set out in the student complaints procedures. In some cases it may be necessary to find an alternative supervisor. If the supervisor is the Head of Department, an appropriate senior member of staff should take this responsibility.

Mechanisms for the monitoring of student progress are detailed under indicator 13 below.

Supervisory team

> ***Indicator 10****: Each research student has a supervisory team containing a main supervisor who is the clearly identified point of contact.*

Each research student will have a minimum of one main supervisor, who will be part of a supervisory team. There must always be one clearly identified point of contact for the student, which will normally be the main supervisor. The main supervisor will have primary responsibility for the student. The department must take into account when registering students the need to create a supervisory team with appropriate expertise (although not all members need to be subject specialists) and the need for an internal examiner (who does not need to be a member of the same department).

On programmes with a taught component, supervisory arrangements may be made some time after commencement of the programme. In this case, students will have access to a supervisor for the duration of the research component of their programme, and will have a clearly identified point of contact throughout the entire programme.

Supervisor's responsibilities

> ***Indicator 11****: Higher education providers ensure that the responsibilities of research student supervisors are readily available and clearly communicated to supervisors and students.*

The supervisor(s) is expected to:

- explore fully the student's background at the outset, and identify areas where further training (including language training) is needed;
- give guidance on:
    - the nature of research and the standard expected;
    - research ethics;
    - the planning of the research programme;
    - attendance at appropriate courses;
    - literature and sources;
    - laboratory techniques;
    - sources of information on intellectual property rights.
- be aware of, be sensitive to, and accommodate the particular difficulties faced by diverse students. This includes, for example, many overseas students, who may initially need additional contact and advice on facilities, training courses, language tuition, etc.;
- check on the student's progress at regular intervals;
- allocate a reasonable period of time for supervisory sessions: a full-time student is entitled to the total equivalent of at least an hour a fortnight with the supervisor(s) and a part-time student to a total of at least an hour a month, although the times, frequency and duration of meetings will vary. Supervisors should ensure that as far as possible supervision sessions are uninterrupted by telephone calls, personal callers or departmental business;
- deal with urgent problems as soon as possible, either over the telephone, via e-mail, or through a meeting arranged at short notice;
- read and provide constructive comments on any work submitted by the student within a reasonable time period;
- ensure that the student is made aware if either progress or the standard of work is unsatisfactory, and arrange any necessary supportive action. If the lack of progress is due to a personal problem a suspension of registration may be appropriate, and this possibility

should be discussed with the student;
- carry out, along with other members of the supervisory team, a periodic review of the student's progress, feeding into the University's appraisal system;
- take steps to ensure that the student is given proper guidance on the use of specialist equipment and techniques;
- take an active part in introducing the student to meetings of learned societies, seminars and workshops and to other research workers in the field, and give advice on writing up the research for publication;
- put the student in touch with specialists inside or outside the University if the student's work goes significantly outside the supervisor's field;
- inform the student of any periods of absence from the University, so that the student can plan accordingly;
- make supervision arrangements for students whose normal place of research is somewhere other than Lancaster, and liaise with any external supervisors. It is the responsibility of the Head of Department to ensure that the quality of supervision is not put at risk as a result of an excessive volume and range of responsibilities assigned to individual supervisors;
- keep appropriate records of interactions with the student.

Where the guidance provided by a supervisor amounts to a substantive contribution to the work, the extent and nature of this contribution should be acknowledged in writing within the thesis. Likewise, where the student has received other assistance - including extra tuition, help in preparation of research notes, or (if the student's native language is not English) help in preparation of English text - this should be acknowledged in the thesis.

Supervisor's workload

> ***Indicator 12****: Higher education providers ensure that individual supervisors have sufficient time to carry out their responsibilities effectively.*

Supervisors should not be responsible for more research students than can adequately and equitably be supervised. That number will depend on the supervisor's overall workload and other commitments, but faculties will ensure that the workload allocation model that operates within their constituent departments takes into account the number and type of research students that a supervisor has responsibility for, in a consistent and transparent way.

Alternative supervisor

Where, for reasons of academic leave or otherwise, the main supervisor is unable to undertake supervisory responsibility for a prolonged period, departments will appoint an alternative supervisor, normally from the student's supervisory team.

10. STUDENT PROGRESS

> ***Indicator 13****: Higher education providers put in place clearly defined mechanisms for monitoring and supporting research student progress, including formal and explicit reviews of progress at different stages. Research students, supervisors and other relevant staff are made aware of progress monitoring mechanisms, including the importance of keeping appropriate records of the outcomes of meetings and related activities.*

If the research area has not been agreed prior to admission, it should be established as soon as possible after admission, following consultation between the student and the proposed supervisor(s). The supervisor(s) and student have a joint responsibility to ensure that delay in determining the topic is kept to a minimum.

Departments are responsible for carrying out a periodic assessment of students' progress in line with the completion timetable outlined in the postgraduate assessment regulations. Formal appraisal is conducted 4-6 months after registration, then after 10 months, 16-18 months and every six months thereafter for full-time students (and after corresponding periods for part-time students). The first of these reviews requires students to identify the research question and to propose milestones. Formal appraisal will include a recommendation as to whether the student should be allowed to continue. The student will be told about the outcome of the appraisal. If progress or the standard of work is considered below that generally expected, the student will be given constructive feedback on how matters might be improved. If the progress continues to be unsatisfactory, the student will be given a written warning that unless certain targets are achieved satisfactorily by a specified date the student will be referred to the Postgraduate Review Committee with a recommendation that the student's registration be terminated. Further detail on criteria to be used for making decisions about the extension, suspension or termination of registration are provided in the Postgraduate Regulations.

The department will keep a record for each research student that is adequate to demonstrate that regular appropriate supervision and guidance are being given by supervisors.

The University will make accessible to each research student online Personal Development Planning (PDP) software – or equivalent mechanisms - on which they will be expected to record agreed outcomes of discussions with their supervisors (including key decisions). Students will be expected to draft the text, and supervisors to validate it. The PDP includes material that is confidential to the student and material that is accessible to supervisors, to add to the departmental record. Monitoring that an appropriate record of agreed outcomes is being kept will be part of the student's periodic review of progress.

The Student Registry will advise new research students, and remind supervisors annually, of the need to keep appropriate records of the outcomes of meetings and related activities.

11. STUDENT DEVELOPMENT

> ***Indicator 14****: Research students have appropriate opportunities for developing research, personal and professional skills. Each research student's development needs are identified and agreed jointly by the student and appropriate staff at the start of the degree; these are regularly reviewed and updated as appropriate.*

The University provides a range of opportunities for research students to engage in personal and professional development, which includes both formal and informal activities, and covers both discipline-specific research training and generic skills development. All research students are expected to engage with an appropriate selection of these, chosen in consultation with their supervisor. Faculties provide research training programmes that are aligned with the **Researcher Development Framework**. This covers four domains: knowledge and intellectual abilities; personal effectiveness; research governance and organisation; and engagement, influence and impact. Embedded within these domains are a variety of transferable skills aimed at enhancing employability and the student's professional and career development. Each full-time research student is expected

to undertake an average of two weeks of training and development for each year they are registered.

Departments are expected to ensure that each student's development needs (including research training, discipline-specific training, and broader generic skills) are identified and agreed jointly by the student and supervisor, initially during the student's induction period. The student's development needs will be reviewed at least annually during the research programme (as part of the periodic appraisal process) and amended as appropriate.

Each research student is expected to have completed appropriate training and development activities as a condition of confirmation of PhD registration.

The University makes accessible to each research student online Personal Development Planning (PDP) software on which they are expected to maintain a record of their personal progress, including reference to the development of their research and generic skills. Departments are expected to encourage students to present their work at staff and graduate seminars.

Research students may be given teaching duties. For students performing such duties their Department is expected to require them to undertake appropriate training, and to give them adequate instruction in the use of teaching equipment. The University maintains a **Code of Practice for postgraduate employment** and the rates of pay are provided on the **Human Resources website**. The University's Organisation and Educational Development (OED) unit provides training for postgraduates who teach, and this encourages students to adopt a reflective approach to their learning in this area. Departments must ensure that all students are aware of safe operational procedures when using specialised equipment and techniques.

12. EVALUATION AND FEEDBACK

> ***Indicator 15****: Higher education providers put in place mechanisms to collect, review and respond as appropriate to evaluations from those concerned with research degrees, including individual research students and groups of research students or their representatives. Evaluations are considered openly and constructively and the results are communicated appropriately.*

The University receives feedback from those involved with postgraduate research programmes in a variety of ways. Formal routes include the periodic appraisal process (student and supervisor), through research student representation on department, faculty and university committees, and through the University's routine quality assurance processes, particularly periodic quality review. Informal routes include close working relationships with the Postgraduate Board (PG Board) and the Lancaster University Students' Union (LUSU), and through the network of staff engaged in research training and skills development. LUSU is represented on PSAG . From time to time, this formal and informal feedback is supplemented by special surveys of research student views, collected by the PGBoard, LUSU, as part of the annual student experience survey, or through data gathered by other university service providers (including the Library and the Careers Service). PRES results are also analysed in order to gain feedback on the University's doctoral provision, comparing Lancaster's performance against peer institutions, and – through analysis of returns at faculty level – providing an opportunity to disseminate good practice around the institution. The University's complaints and appeals procedures, and the LUSU Advice Centre also provide useful feedback.

PSAG considers these sources of feedback openly and constructively, and is responsible for appropriate communication of the results. LUSU and the PGBoard are also responsible for considering student feedback and for pursuing generic issues in appropriate ways.

The views of research students are sought and represented within the university in a variety of ways, including through research student representatives on departmental staff:student committees, and on department and faculty postgraduate committees. Elected student union officers represent research student views on many University groups, including PSAG, UMAG and the Senate. The Lancaster University Students Union (LUSU) also has elected postgraduate student members on its Academic Council. LUSU oversees the election appointment, training, induction and operation of the student representative system (https://lancastersu.co.uk/postgraduate-board).

13. ACADEMIC STANDARDS

> ***Indicator 16****: Higher education providers that are research degree awarding bodies use criteria for assessing research degrees that enable them to define their academic standards and the achievements of their graduates. The criteria used to assess research degrees are clear and readily available to research students, staff and examiners.*

Although the student's everyday dealing will be with their departments, the University retains ultimate responsibility for:

- maintaining the regulations for postgraduate students;
- admitting students and ensuring that admissions standards are maintained;
- checking that departments are monitoring students and dealing with complaints and problems;
- approving recommendations confirming students' status as being registered for PhD;
- appointing examiners;
- recording the submission date of theses and sending them to the examiners;
- approving examiners' recommendations and awarding degrees;
- handling reviews and appeals;
- maintaining an overview of all postgraduate activities.

The University fulfils these responsibilities through the activities of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor Education, the Director of Quality Assurance and Enhancement, faculty and departmental postgraduate committees, the Student Registry, the Secretariat, and the Faculty Admissions Offices.

The operation and effectiveness of these systems is monitored at departmental level in three ways. The doctoral director (or equivalent) in each department is expected to appraise the progress of all research students; doctoral directors will provide a summary report annually to the Faculty Postgraduate Committee or Doctoral Directors Committee as appropriate. Faculty Associate Deans for Postgraduate Students have the authority to undertake a spot-audit of this annual appraisal cycle in any of their departments. Departmental procedures for dealing with research students are also monitored through the University's annual and periodic review processes.

14. ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES

> ***Indicator 17****: Research degree final assessment procedures are clear and are operated rigorously, fairly and consistently. They include input from an external examiner and are carried out to a reasonable timescale. Assessment procedures are communicated clearly to research students, supervisors and examiners.*

The Postgraduate Research Assessment Regulations (available as part of the **Manual of Academic Regulations and Procedures**) define the assessment procedures for the award of research degrees, which are operated rigorously, fairly and consistently, include input from at least one external examiner, and are carried out to a reasonable timescale.

Support for students in preparing for the viva is provided through the research training programmes offered by the faculties. Meetings of supervisory teams, linked to the periodic appraisal process, will also prepare students for the experience of the viva.

15. COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

> ***Indicator 18:*** *Higher education providers put in place and promote independent and formal procedures for dealing with complaints and appeals that are fair, clear to all concerned, robust, and applied consistently. The acceptable grounds for complaints and appeals are clearly defined.*

The University's has formal procedures in place for dealing with **student complaints**.

The University's formal procedures for dealing with appeals made by research students (which includes the Postgraduate Review Panel and students' right of appeals under Statute 21), are defined in the Postgraduate Regulations, which are included within the **Manual of Academic Regulations and Procedures**.