

Statement of Expectations: PGR Supervisors and Postgraduate Researchers

This 'Statement of Expectations' defines responsibilities for the roles of PGR supervisors and Postgraduate Researchers within their supervisory relationships, in order to ensure a positive and productive experience for both parties. There is an expectation that co-supervisors also review this document and deliver supervisory support in line with the agreed principles.

Both supervisors and Postgraduate Researchers have a responsibility to maintain understanding of, and embed within daily practices, their obligations as outlined in the PGR Code of Practice.

Responsibilities of PGR Supervisors

Support provision

- Provide leadership and direction to assist Postgraduate Researchers to progress with and successfully complete their research project.
- Ensure PGRs understand the purposes and expectations of key milestones such as Independent Progress Assessment Panels and recognise the consequences of not making satisfactory progress.
- Maintain awareness of, and signpost to, appropriate sources of support for mental health & wellbeing concerns; it is not the responsibility of the supervisor to **provide** this support.
- Encourage, support and signpost postgraduate researchers to appropriate training & career development provision both internally and externally, exploring their career goals and aspirations with them.
- Facilitate access to and awareness of national and international research opportunities and developments, supporting postgraduate researchers to pursue relevant opportunities.

Engagement & communication

- Meet with the postgraduate researcher regularly, in line with the expectations outlined in the PGR Code of Practice; endeavour to conduct meetings in-person wherever this is possible.
- Recognise PGRs as fellow researchers as well as students, and support their participation as such in departmental activities.
- Ensure that all feedback is provided in a constructive and supportive manner.
- Foster a professional and supportive relationship with the researcher, creating a culture built upon mutual respect and collaboration.

Professional conduct

- Maintain awareness of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion considerations, including unconscious bias, and embed principles in role as supervisor, understanding where to direct students with specific needs.

- Acknowledge that researchers may sometimes raise concerns regarding the supervisory relationship and aim to address these as quickly as possible, referring matters to other members of staff as appropriate.
- Ensure completion of PGR Supervisor training modules housed in Canvas, refreshing at regular intervals.
- Maintain effective communication between primary & secondary supervisors to ensure robust support provision and clarity of role and responsibilities.

Responsibilities of Postgraduate Researchers

Seeking support

- Understand that the research project is the researcher's own responsibility, and that supervisors are in place to provide support and feedback on the academic endeavour, as detailed within the supervisor responsibilities.
- Take responsibility for identifying and participating in development activities that will contribute personal and career development, the local research environment and the discipline.
- Familiarise oneself with appropriate services sources of support outside of the supervisory relationship, through which to seek guidance related to health & wellbeing, finance, disability support and immigration.

Engagement & communications

- Meaningfully engage with the supervisor, maintaining open lines of communication and pro-actively seeking input where required.
- Meet with the supervisor regularly, in line with the expectations outlined in the PGR Code of Practice, attending meetings suitably prepared and developing a pre-agreed agenda.
- Reflect on and respond to feedback and guidance as part of a constructive dialogue, recognising that the role of the supervisor is to provide constructive and sometimes critical feedback.

Professional conduct

- Act in a collegial and ethical manner towards all university staff and fellow researchers, according to the University's broader values.
- Raise concerns regarding the supervisory relationship with the supervisor in the first instance, assuming responsibility for escalation via Director of PGR Studies and/or Student Complaints Procedure as needed.

Faculty/Departmental/School/University Actions

- Ensure that all PGR Supervisors have access to appropriate training & development relevant to their role via the supervisor training module (Canvas).
- Ensure that processes are in place to embed adherence to the principles outlined in this document, and the PGR Code of Practice, and provide appropriate escalation routes should concerns arise [detailed in Appendix 2].

- Provide appropriate guidance for both PGR supervisors and researchers regarding appropriate sources of non-academic support and services [detailed in Appendix 2].

Appendices, supporting documentation and sources of support

1. [Personal Relationships Policy](#)
2. [Postgraduate Research Student Handbook](#)
3. [PGR Code of Practice](#)
4. [Postgraduate Researcher Experience Team](#)
5. [Student Support](#)
6. [Key Contacts for PGR](#)
7. [Liverpool Guild of Students](#)
8. [Research Degree Administration Team](#)
9. [PGR Development Network](#)
10. [Supervisor Network](#)