2016 PGR Quality Assurance Questionnaire

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Introduction

Quality Assurance (QA) is defined as the effective working of policies and procedures to ensure that the standards achieved by students, and the teaching provided for them, are of an appropriate quality. The Quality Assurance Questionnaire exercise enables faculties and departments, divisions and the University to reflect on the required QA procedures. Through this process, we can confirm that the basic elements of QA are in place and functioning effectively; identify where action might be required to maintain or improve essential QA procedures; and facilitate Quality Enhancement, which is the dissemination of good practice across the collegiate University.

The questionnaire runs on a three-year cycle. This year's questionnaire focuses on QA arrangements to support the standards and quality of provision for **Postgraduate Research (PGR) students**.

The questions are based upon various University policies and guidance relating to educational provision which reflect the requirements of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education, and in particular, the University's Policy on Research Degrees (PRD).

Page 2: Guidance for Completion

1. It is hoped that an administrative contact could complete the bulk of the survey, allowing an academic contact with expertise in, or responsibility for the oversight of, the department's taught courses to focus on the questions relating to enhancement.

2. Should a faculty/department wish to discuss any aspect of this exercise prior to completing the survey, divisional quality assurance officers are the appropriate contacts.

3. There are 46 questions in total, divided into 10 sections. A PDF version of the survey is available for reference, but please submit responses using this electronic survey.

4. Please click the [*Continue*] button to start completing the questionnaire. **Please do not click the [*Continue*] button at the very end of the main page of the survey until you are ready to make your final submission.**

5. If the survey is inactive for 30 minutes the system may time out and data will be lost. **You are therefore advised to save the questionnaire regularly using the [*Finish Later*] button.**

6. To save the survey, or to exit and return to the survey at a later point to review or complete, **click [*Finish Later*].** You will then receive a URL which will return you to the appropriate point in the survey. Please note that once you have clicked [*Continue*] at the end of the survey, i.e. after the last question, the questionnaire will be submitted and **you will not be able to return to the survey**. It is possible to email this link to yourself/to another person at this stage.

7. The survey closing date is **Friday 18 November 2016**. Submitting this survey is equivalent to making a return, to which divisional and Education Committee quality assurance officers will have access in order to analyse the results.

8. You are advised to print a hard copy of your responses to the survey for your own records, but this does not need to be submitted to divisional officers. Please note that there is only a short window of time **(15 minutes)** in which the print option is available after the completion of the survey. An electronic copy of your return can be made available on request.

9. The information that you supply in response to this survey will be treated in accordance with the University's Data Protection policy.

Page 3: A: Faculty/Department Information

1. Select your UAB: ✱ *Required*

1.a. If you have selected DTC/DTP, please specify here:

2. This questionnaire is being completed by the: ✱ *Required*

2.a. If you selected Other, please specify:

B: Admissions and Induction

See: sections 1 and 3 of the PRD

3. Please confirm that information for applicants to PGR programmes is clear, accurate and sufficiently detailed and includes the minimum information set out in the PRD ✱ *Required*

- ○ Yes
- ◉ No

3.a. If 'no', please explain why not:

4. Please confirm that prospective students holding offers are made aware of any significant changes to supervisory arrangements or the programme and the options available in such circumstances ✱ *Required*

- Yes
- No

4.a. If 'no', please explain why not:

5. Please confirm that prospective students are made aware of pre-registration information which should be studied or courses undertaken prior to arrival ✱ *Required*

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable

5.a. If 'no', please explain why not

6. Please confirm that admissions panels or committees include at least one member of academic staff who has undertaken appropriate training (e.g. the Graduate Admissions Assessors and Admissions Staff Guidance online course) ✱ *Required*

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

6.a. If 'no', please explain why not

7. Please confirm that an appropriate programme of induction is provided for new PGR students (see: section 3.2 of the PRD) ✱ *Required*

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

7.a. If 'no', please explain why

8. Please confirm that students are made aware of their responsibilities as research students (see: section 5 of the PRD) ✱ *Required*

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

8.a. If 'no', please explain why

9. Please confirm that the effectiveness of the induction is monitored ✱ *Required*

- Yes
- No

9.a. If 'no', please explain why

10. Is your induction programme coordinated with the induction activities provided by colleges? (see: section 3 of the PRD) ✱ *Required*

- Yes
- No

11. By whom are the results of the PGR admissions round (e.g. the number and quality of applications) reviewed? [Please select all that apply]. ✱ *Required*

- ☐ Director of Graduate Studies (or equivalent)
- ☐ Director of Graduate Admissions (or equivalent)
- ☐ Admissions Committee (or equivalent)
- ☐ Teaching/Academic Committee (or equivalent)
- ☐ Graduate Studies Committee (or equivalent)
- ☐ Other

11.a. If 'other', please specify who

12. Have any specific actions been taken recently to enhance admissions or induction for PGR students? ✱ *Required*

- Yes
- No

12.a. If 'yes'. please describe

C: Supervision

See: section 4 of the PRD

13. Please confirm that supervisors are appropriately qualified and appointed in accordance with stated criteria (set out in divisional codes of practice) ✱ *Required*

- Yes
- No

13.a. If 'no', please explain why not

14. Please confirm that PGR students are aware of the contact details for their supervisor; the Director of Graduate Studies; and their academic advisers or equivalent ✱ *Required*

- Yes
- No

14.a. If 'no', please explain why not

15. Please confirm that an alternative supervisor is appointed in the event of extended absence of the main supervisor (e.g. sabbatical leave) ✱ *Required*

- Yes
- No

15.a. If 'no', please explain why not

16. Please confirm that termly supervision reports are submitted and any that are outstanding after an appropriate time are pursued ✱ *Required*

- Yes
- No

16.a. If 'no', please explain why not

17. Which officer in the faculty/department monitors the termly submission of supervision reports and pursues incomplete reports? ✱ *Required*

18. Does the DGS investigate the concerns flagged by either the student or supervisor? ✱ *Required*

19. Do you specify to students and supervisors a minimum frequency for formal supervisory contact? ✱ *Required*

- Yes
- No

19.a. If 'yes', please confirm what

20. Is it your department's current policy to appoint a supervisory team for each student i.e. the primary supervisor plus an additional (co)supervisor or academic adviser? ✱ *Required*

- Yes
- No

20.a. If 'yes', please provide further details

21. What mechanism is used to review the performance of supervisors? *
Required

21.a. Who is responsible for this?

22. Please describe any recent or planned enhancements to supervision of PGR students.

D: Monitoring of supervision and teaching

23. The supervision and teaching provided for PGR students is monitored by:

✱ *Required*

- ☐ Student feedback questionnaire
- ☐ GSS
- ☐ Peer review of teaching staff
- ☐ Annual appraisal of teaching staff
- ☐ No systematic monitoring in place
- ☐ Other

23.a. If 'other', please describe

24. Are formal mechanisms in place for addressing any issues identified with supervision and teaching provision for PGR students? ✱ *Required*

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

24.a. If 'yes', please explain what

25. What support or training is provided for staff who undertake PGR supervision and teaching? ✱ *Required*

26. Please give details of any recent enhancements made or planned to monitoring of supervision and teaching provided to PGR students.

E: Researcher development

See: section 6 of the PRD

27. Do you monitor the provision and effectiveness of skills training (to include subject-specific skills, general research training skills and personal and professional skills)? ✱ *Required*

- Yes
- No

28. What mechanisms are used to advertise and engage students in skills training opportunities (whether offered by the faculty/department, division or University)? ✱ *Required*

29. Please describe any changes made or planned to your provision for PGR research and transferable skills for this or the coming year?

F: Teaching opportunities for PGR students

See: section 2.4 of the PRD

30. Are you able to provide teaching opportunities to your PGR students? ✱ *Required*

- Yes
- No

30.a. If 'yes', please describe

31. How are teaching opportunities advertised to ensure fairness to all PGR students? ✱ *Required*

32. What training does the faculty/department require PGR students to undertake prior to carrying out teaching? [Please select all that apply]. ✱ *Required*

- ☐ Preparation for Learning and Teaching at Oxford (PLTO)
- ☐ Developing Learning and Teaching (DTL)
- ☐ Bespoke training provided by the faculty/department
- ☐ Mentoring from established teaching staff
- ☐ Other
- ☐ None

32.a. If 'other', please describe

G. Student Feedback

33. Please describe what feedback is collected from PGR students, and the mechanism used. ✱ *Required*

34. Who is responsible for considering and acting upon this feedback? [Please select all that apply]. ✱ *Required*

- ☐ Director of Graduate Studies (or equivalent)
- ☐ Graduate Studies Committee (or equivalent)
- ☐ Teaching/Academic Committee (or equivalent)
- ☐ Divisional officer
- ☐ Divisional committee
- ☐ Other

34.a. If 'other', please specify who

35. Who considers the relevant information from the results of the annual Student Barometer Survey relating to PGR students? [Please select all that apply]. ✱ *Required*

- ☐ Director of Graduate Studies (or equivalent)
- ☐ Graduate Studies Committee (or equivalent)
- ☐ Teaching/Academic Committee (or equivalent)
- ☐ GJCC or equivalent
- ☐ Other

35.a. If you selected Other, please specify:

36. Is there a formal mechanism to ensure that PGR students are kept informed of action taken (or after consideration, not taken) in response to any feedback they, or other students, have submitted? ✱ *Required*

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

36.a. If 'yes', please confirm what mechanism is used

37. Does the faculty/department regularly consider the scope for improving the quantity and quality of student feedback (methods of collection, formal vs informal etc.)? ✱ *Required*

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

38. Please describe any ways in which PGR student feedback procedures have been enhanced during the current academic year, and/or are planned for the next year.

H: Examination

39. By whom are the nominations for internal and external research degree examiners approved? [Please select all that apply]. ✱ *Required*

- ☐ Faculty Board Chair/Head of Department
- ☐ Teaching/Academic Committee or its chair
- ☐ Graduate Studies Committee or its chair
- ☐ Director of Graduate Studies
- ☐ Divisional Academic Officers e.g. Dean of Graduates

☐ Other

39.a. If 'other', please specify who

40. How do you achieve an overview of the quality of the theses submitted for research degrees during the course of the year? ✱ *Required*

41. Please describe any improvements/enhancements made to research examination procedures during this year, or planned for the next academic year.

I: Student concerns

42. Please describe the mechanism(s) in place for students to raise concerns. ✱ *Required*

43. What mechanism is in place for colleges to communicate concerns about PGR provision raised by students? ✱ *Required*

44. Please describe any ways in which PGR student concerns, complaints and appeals procedures have been enhanced during this academic year, and/or are planned to be enhanced for the next academic year.

J: Employment

45. Has the faculty/department appointed a point of contact to work with their named Careers Advisor on careers activities in the department? ✱ *Required*

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

46. Please give one example of a recent enhancement made or planned with regarding to the employability support available to PGR students.

Page 4: Thank you for completing the survey.

Key for selection options

1 - Select your UAB:

Anthropology and Museum Ethnography
Archaeology
Biochemistry
Blavatnik School of Government
Chemistry
Classics
Clinical Medicine
Clinical Neurosciences
Computer Science
Criminology
Earth Sciences
Economics
Education
Engineering Science
English Literature and Language
Experimental Psychology
Geography and the Environment
History
History of Art
International Development
Law
Linguistics, Philology and Phonetics
Materials
Mathematics
Medieval and Modern Languages
Music
Neuroscience
Obstetrics
Oncology
Oriental Studies
Orthopaedics, Rheumatology and Musculoskeletal Sciences
Oxford Internet Institute
Paediatrics

Pathology
Pharmacology
Philosophy
Physics
Physiology, Anatomy and Genetics
Plant Sciences
Politics and International Relations
Population Health
Primary Care Health Sciences
Psychiatry
Radcliffe Department of Medicine
Ruskin School of Art
Said Business School
Social Policy and Intervention
Sociology
Statistics
Surgical Sciences
Theology and Religion
Zoology
DTC/DTP (please specify)
Department for Continuing Education

2 - This questionnaire is being completed by the:

Faculty Board Chair/Head of Department
Chair of the department committee responsible for research degrees (or equivalent)
Chair of Course Committee (or equivalent)
Director of Graduate Studies (or equivalent)
Administrator
Other

18 - Does the DGS investigate the concerns flagged by either the student or supervisor?

Student
Supervisor
Both
Neither