

Procedure for appeals against termination of registration resulting from non-submission of a thesis by the Maximum Registration Date

Introduction

1. The purpose of this document is to outline the appropriate procedures to be followed in the event that a research student does not submit their thesis by their Maximum Registration Date.
2. The policy and procedures set out below apply specifically to PhD and MPhil students. They would also normally apply in cases where the research element of a Professional Doctorate programme has not been submitted by the Maximum Registration Date.
3. In following the procedures outlined in this document, staff should at all times ensure that they use the appropriate level of confidentiality.
4. In the event that a research student does not submit their thesis by the Maximum Registration Date, the Doctoral Research Office will write to the student within 14 days following the expiry of the Maximum Registration Date to inform them that their registration is being terminated. The student will be informed that they have the right to appeal against termination of their registration and will be provided with a link to the details of this procedure.

5. Stage 1: Consideration of the case

Two circumstances must be distinguished for the purpose of this procedure:

- (a) A student who **did** submit a request for an extension within the allowable time period set before the maximum registration date, as set out in the Guidelines on Research Students' Suspensions and Extensions¹, but the extension was not granted by the Dean of Postgraduate Research studies, or the student is of the view that the length of the extension granted was insufficient.

OR

- (b) A student who **did not** submit a request for an extension within the allowable period before the end of the maximum registration date.
6. In the case of (a), the student will have the right to appeal against the decision of the Dean of Postgraduate Research Studies under Stage 2 of this procedure.
 7. In the case of (b), at first instance, the student may submit a letter of appeal against the termination of their registration to the Dean of Postgraduate Research Studies. The letter must be received by the Dean within 14 days of the date of the Doctoral Research Office notification. The Dean of Postgraduate Research Studies will consider the case and determine whether:

- i. A final period of extension be sanctioned with a clear final deadline by which the thesis must be submitted or registration will be terminated with immediate effect; or
- ii. The student's registration be terminated with immediate effect.

The Dean will notify the student of the outcome of his or her considerations, within 21 days of receipt of the appeal letter. The outcome letter should include details of any investigations carried out by the Dean, with copies of supporting evidence where this is available.

Where a final period of extension is not granted by the Dean, or the student believes that the period granted is insufficient, the student will have the right to appeal against the decision of the Dean under Stage 2 of this procedure.

Stage 2: Appeal

8. The student whose circumstances fall within (a) or (b) as described above, will have the right to appeal to the Student Appeals Committee.

To submit an appeal, he or she must email the statement of appeal to the Student Appeals and Academic Misconduct Officer at studentappeals@reading.ac.uk within 14 days of receipt of the Dean's letter informing the student of the outcome of his or her considerations

Completion of Procedures

9. The appeal to the Student Appeals Committee concludes the University's procedures, and will normally result in the issue of a Completion of Procedures letter. If a student remains dissatisfied with the outcome of the procedures it may be possible to apply for an external review of the complaint to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) provided that the complaint is eligible under the OIA rules. Such an application must be submitted within 12 months of the date of the University's Completion of Procedures letter.

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ⁱ Requests for extensions will only be considered if they are submitted no earlier than three months prior to the maximum registration date and no later than 28 days prior to the maximum registration date.