

Selection and Appointment of School Directors of Research and School Directors of PGR Studies

1. Appointment Process

In the current HE environment, the SDOR and SDPGRS roles contribute substantially to the ongoing success of the School. It is therefore essential that we appoint those best qualified for the roles, ensuring that they have appropriate experience, knowledge, skills and attributes (including leadership). It is also important, given the University's HR strategy, that the appointment process for both positions is fair, transparent, and in line with our Equality and Diversity policy. Furthermore, once appointed, post-holders should be provided with appropriate support and development opportunities.

To achieve this, it is recommended that;

- The relevant Head of School remains responsible for the appointment of the SDOR and SDPGRS;
- Based on the University-wide job descriptions for SDOR and SDPGRS (Annexes 1 & 2), and the leadership behaviours embedded in **Values for Working Together and Professional Behaviours**, the Head of School draws up a job description for the relevant role, specifying any particular aspects of the role as required in their School;
- Where feasible, between 3 and 6 months before the current incumbent is due to step down, the Head of School should invite members of academic staff within the School to submit a formal expression of interest for the role;
- The Head of School should establish a small Appointments Panel, comprising key individuals normally from within their School;
- The Appointments Panel interviews interested (or short-listed where there is significant interest in the post) candidates, and makes a recommendation to the Head of School;
- The selected individual be appointed, normally, for a three-year tenure in the first instance;
- Appointments normally commence from 1 August;

- The Head of School inform the University Secretary, and either the office of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research (for SDOR posts) or the Graduate School (for SDPGRS posts).

2. Remuneration

Appropriate remuneration will be agreed in accordance with agreed policy, as determined by Staffing Committee.

3. Support and Development

Before taking up the post, new appointees should be invited to discuss the role with the relevant Faculty Director of Research (for SDOR posts) or University Director of PGR Studies (for SDPGRS posts).

In taking up the post, the new appointee agrees to attend the relevant termly SDOR / SDPGRS workshops and other related events, as well as the relevant Faculty Committee meetings.

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Annex 1: Responsibilities of School Directors of Research

- 1.1. Each School Director of Research is responsible, via the Head of School, to the Faculty Board for Research through its Chair, for leadership of the School in research. This will involve supporting researchers in the School, and ensuring that the School fulfils the University's requirements for the conduct of research.
- 1.2. The Director of Research is normally expected to fulfil the following responsibilities:
 - 1.2.1. Ensuring that the School plays its full part in fulfilling the research aims of the University as articulated in the University's Research Strategy and its Corporate Plan.
 - 1.2.2. Chairing the School Research Committee
 - 1.2.3. Attending and contributing to Faculty Boards for Research, and feeding back relevant information to School
 - 1.2.4. Providing research leadership and support within the School
 - 1.2.5. Leading the preparation of five-year research plans and annual research reports (although this is to be reviewed)
 - 1.2.6. Advising on the allocation of research funding within School
 - 1.2.7. Ensuring that research carried out within School complies with the University's Quality Assurance and Ethical procedures
- 1.3. The following responsibilities are likely to be carried out by Department Directors of Research or Research Group leaders, in addition to School Directors of Research, in some Schools.
 - 1.3.1. Horizon scanning / developing research strategy.
Encouraging development of forward research planning
 - 1.3.2. Identifying and facilitating appropriate research collaborations / strategic partnerships
 - 1.3.3. Identifying and facilitating access to relevant funding sources
 - 1.3.4. Setting and monitoring research targets
 - 1.3.5. Identifying research infrastructure needs and facilitating bids to meet these
 - 1.3.6. Working with Research and Enterprise to ensure research activity is appropriately supported

1.3.7 Attending and contributing to termly meetings with the relevant Pro-Vice-Chancellor.

1.4 Finally, the following responsibilities may be carried out by Department Directors of Research or Research Group leaders, instead of School Directors of Research, in some Schools, although items 1.4.2, 1.4.3 and 1.4.4 would still need to be monitored or sanctioned at School level:

- 1.4.1 Facilitation / management of individual research performance
- 1.4.2 Ensuring that junior staff (including Contract Research Staff) receive appropriate research mentoring and staff development reviews
- 1.4.3 Advising on applications for study leave within the School
- 1.4.4 Ensuring appropriate internal peer review of grant applications

Annex 2: School (or Department) Director of Postgraduate Research Studies

Generic job description for the post

The following are the proposed generic duties of School (or Department) Directors of Postgraduate Research Studies, from which a formal job description may be drawn up by each School. The exact nature of that job description will depend on the context of the School and its internal structures, and Schools may wish to include additional responsibilities:

Recruitment and Admissions

1. To work proactively with the Head of School, School Director of Research and others to support the recruitment of new students;
2. To receive and review applications for research degrees throughout the academic year and to make decisions on those applications after consulting colleagues, ensuring that colleagues respond speedily to avoid unnecessary delay. To arrange interviews for prospective candidates, as appropriate. To maintain contact with prospective students while decision making taking place and following an offer prior to students starting the programme;
3. To assist in the dissemination of information concerning relevant funding opportunities;
4. To assist in keeping School publicity materials, including relevant web pages, up to date;
5. To ensure that a mechanism exists for maintaining contact with candidates;
6. To raise the profile of PGR related matters across the School and encourage colleagues to seek funding to support future students;

Induction and Training

7. To have oversight of the induction of new Postgraduate Research Students, both in relation to a formal School induction at the start of the Autumn Term, and individual inductions at the start of the Spring and Summer Terms, where appropriate;
8. In conjunction with supervisors, to identify learning needs of new students and help them to decide on appropriate courses. To encourage students to review their changing learning needs during the course of their programme, and participate in appropriate training sessions;
9. To co-ordinate issues relating to Graduate Teaching Assistants, including their additional skills training and progress in relation to teaching duties;

Monitoring of progress

10. To be formally responsible for the monitoring of the progress of Postgraduate Research Students throughout the academic year, to deal with any issues arising, whether academic or personal, and to keep records of any progress meetings;
11. To have oversight of the annual review of all research degree students, and the confirmation of registration process;

12. To arrange annual reports from postgraduate research students and their supervisors on progress and to make an appropriate report to the Doctoral Research Office. As part of this exercise, to encourage students to complete the annual evaluation of supervisory arrangements;
13. In conjunction with annual reviews of progress, to arrange opportunities for postgraduate research students to make an oral presentation of their research (such as through a 'research presentation day' at the end of the academic year) to keep records of the day and to provide feedback to the students;
14. To have oversight of the research programmes of students on a 'working-away' registration;

Other

15. To assist the Head of School in arranging internal and external examiners as appropriate for postgraduate research students;
16. To deal with any issues or problems arising in connection with postgraduate research studentships and to ensure adequate feedback of any outcomes to the individual/s concerned;
17. To prepare the annual programme monitoring report (formerly the Annual Review of the Code of Practice on Research Students) in the Spring Term;
18. To make appropriate reports on postgraduate research student issues to relevant School meetings;
19. To attend relevant Faculty and other committee meetings concerned with postgraduate research student issues and to raise any specific issues that require attention;
20. To attend termly Graduate School workshops for School / Department Directors of PGRS and help to share good practice across the University.