UNIVERSITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON

Research Student Charter: A Partnership for Success

A productive student-supervisor relationship is vital for a successful MPhil or Doctoral programme. A positive relationship can be achieved through setting out clear and mutually agreed expectations and being open to reciprocal feedback and challenge.

This charter outlines how the University can help to shape a student's experience, and how students can engage and contribute to make the most of their research.

To deliver a high-quality experience that develops students' ability to deliver transformative research, the University of Wolverhampton's Research Student Offer aims to provide you with the expertise, training, research environment, support and resources to ensure a timely and successful doctoral completion, and employability skills for life after.

Our commitment to you

- We will foster an inclusive, supportive and welcoming research culture, with opportunities for you to meet researchers from across the University.
- We will provide you with an excellent learning environment and opportunities to develop and enhance your career.
- We will advise on the suitability of your research topic and allow you to enrol only if appropriate academic support and facilities can be provided for your chosen area of research.
- We will provide a team of appropriately qualified supervisors, in your field of research.
- We will provide access to training related to research methods, personal and professional skills, and other roles and responsibilities you may undertake at the University including teaching roles.
- We will provide guidance on ethical issues in relation to your research and on University procedures for seeking ethical review.
- We will communicate, listen and engage with you on a regular basis, as part of the 'Student Voice'.

- We will prioritise your health and safety and work hard to support your wellbeing and mental health.
- We will provide advice in relation to non-academic issues, including fees and studentships, student wellbeing and visa issues.
- We will advise on appropriate steps to be taken to protect intellectual property arising from your research.
- We will foster a respectful and professional working environment to celebrate your successes and provide support where you are experiencing difficulties.
- We will offer an impartial and independent appeals and complaints procedure.

Your commitment to us

Conduct

- You will undertake research in a professional and scholarly manner, demonstrating appropriate standards of research integrity and ethics.
- You will actively participate in your studies and embrace the University experience, respecting everybody in our diverse community.
- You will engage with the 'Student Voice,' and actively feed back on your experiences and participate in the co-development of programme improvements.
- You will play an active role in ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of yourself and others who relate to your area of research, or any teaching assistance undertaken, and should be familiar with relevant health and safety policies.

Engagement and personal development

- You will attend the University in person as reasonably required by your supervisors or Faculty and in line with any programme, partnership, funding, or visa requirements (unless registered on a Distance Learning Programme).
- You will, as a minimum, attend monthly formal supervisory meetings, which are normally held in person.
- You will prepare adequately for and attend meetings and activities, meet deadlines, openly and constructively receive and act on feedback provided.
- You will maintain a record of key discussion points and agreed actions arising from supervisory meetings and share these with your supervisory team to ensure accuracy, transparency, and continuity of communication.

- You will be responsible for managing your time. A full-time research student must devote an average of 35 hours per week to their research project. A part-time research student must devote at least 15-18 hours per week.
- You will take responsibility for your personal and professional development, by actively participating in your research programme and undertake appropriate professional skills training.
- You will engage with the wider research community, proactively network with internal and external communities and partners, and participate in Faculty and University researcher conferences, or other events to gain experience in presenting your research to expert and lay audiences.
- You will take responsibility for designing and completing your research, within the expected timeframe, under the guidance of your supervisory team. The thesis is your work.
- You will maintain regular contact with your supervisors, including when you are away from the University or are addressing any amendments required by the examiners.
- You will make your supervisors aware of any specific needs or circumstances that affect your ability to conduct your research efficiently and effectively.
- You will take responsibility for the progress of your research and the submission of Annual Progress Review and Progression Stage assessments.
- You will take responsibility for presenting work for assessment in a timely manner including your thesis and preparation for its defence.

Research Integrity & Ethics

- You will give proper acknowledgement to all sources of information included in your research and the contributions of your research colleagues and collaborators.
- You will take steps to understand and reduce the risk of plagiarism, by adopting correct and precise reference management and record keeping practices while reading information sources and applying consistent and accurate referencing in your research.
- You will stay up to date with and adhere to the University's evolving guidance on the ethical use of AI in research.
- You will maintain awareness of the ethical issues arising from your work, seek advice when needed, apply for ethical review and submit your end of study report.

- You will take adequate measures to protect any intellectual property generated by your research.

Administration

- You will be responsible for knowing the dates of important milestones in your programme, and when and how to submit work.
- You will ensure that you are well informed and that you abide by the regulations for your programme and policies, procedures and guidelines for research www.wlv.ac.uk/researchpolicies
- You will use your university email account, check it regularly and respond to communications from the University.
- You will become familiar with the sources of information and support available to you, which include:
    - Your supervisory team.
    - Research Degree Student Services.
    - The Head of Doctoral Studies in your Faculty.
    - Training resources (including online materials).
    - The Directorate of Student Support
    - Students' Union Advice Centre.

Enrolment and fees

- You will enrol with the University at the beginning of your studies and in each academic year.
- You will pay any tuition fees and other related costs, such as research support fees.

Your supervisors' commitments

- Your supervisor will monitor the progress of your research programme.
- Your supervisor will maintain regular contact with you, ensuring their accessibility to you to provide advice. This will normally involve in person contact at least monthly.
- Your supervisor will record appropriate records of supervisory meetings on e:Vision and maintain interim correspondence.

- Your supervisor will have input into the assessment of your development needs, to plan a programme of training to support your development as an independent researcher.
- Your supervisor will provide timely, constructive and effective feedback on your work, including your overall progress within the programme.
- Your supervisor will provide academic guidance on all areas of research including reviewing literature, planning the research, data collection and analysis, interpretation of findings, writing the thesis, research integrity (including academic integrity and ethics), preparing for key milestones such as ethical review, APR and progression, and final examination.
- Your supervisor will ensure that you are aware of institutional-level sources of information and advice.
- Your supervisor will provide effective pastoral support, referring you where appropriate to other sources of such support.
- Your supervisor will help you to interact with others working in the field of research, for example, encouraging you to attend relevant conferences and supporting you in seeking funding for such events.
- Your supervisor will, where appropriate, provide encouragement and advice to submit conference papers and articles to refereed journals.
- Your supervisor will identify suitable examiners and submit a nomination for approval at least three months prior to the expected date of submission of the thesis.
- Your supervisor will advise on whether the thesis is at a suitable standard for submission (though ultimately the responsibility for submission is yours).
- Your supervisor will maintain their supervisory expertise, including the appropriate skills to perform the role satisfactorily, supported by relevant continuing professional development opportunities.
- Your supervisor will be sensitive to the diverse needs of individual students and the associated support that may be required in different circumstances. An awareness of the range of advice and support available to students, and knowledge of how students can access it, is an important part of the supervision process.
- Your supervisor will inform you and their Head of Doctoral Studies if they are going to be away for an extended period – for example, if they are going on sabbatical or maternity leave, etc – so that arrangements can be made for continued supervision in their absence.