

PGR Upgrade Requirements for students registered prior to Sep 2019

Department of Sport and Health Sciences

The guidelines outlined below represent an edited version of those that can be found in the Teaching Quality Assurance Manual - Postgraduate Research Handbook (<http://as.exeter.ac.uk/academic-policy-standards/tqa-manual/pgr/periodsofregistration/#upgrade>)

1. The Regulations for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy provide that: "Candidates registered for a degree of Master of Philosophy, Master of Arts by Research or Master of Science by Research may be allowed to transfer their registration to the degree of Doctor of Philosophy and to have all or part of the period of study already completed under the original registration counted towards the period under the new regulation"
2. A candidate registered for the degree of Master of Philosophy who wishes to upgrade to an appropriate doctoral programme shall submit a formal application.
3. The candidate shall apply to upgrade via MyPGR and shall upload documents as required by their College. These must include as a minimum:
 - a) An introduction that provides an outline description of the research problem, its background and its relationship to existing literature, with brief definitions and discussion of central concepts. A statement of how the candidate expects the final thesis to "form a distinct contribution to knowledge of the subject".
 - b) A literature review.
 - c) Aims and objectives including a research question and hypothesis.
 - d) An outline of the proposed methods (referenced) of data collection and analysis with any key methodological issues (such as ethics) highlighted.
 - e) A contents page for the thesis displaying the chapter plan, with a brief paragraph of information on each chapter. This is to show where the pieces of work already completed and proposed work fit into the structure of the thesis as a whole.
 - f) Submission of one substantial piece of written work towards the thesis objectives (informed by a discussion with supervisors).
 - g) A draft timetable for completion of the thesis within the candidate's period of study.
 - h) A bibliography.
 - i) A transcript detailing the research training undertaken to date.

4. Criteria for upgrade

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- a) Ability to formulate a viable hypothesis or research question that could be completed within the normal time frame of the PhD programme and contributes to identified existing bodies of work.
- b) Satisfactory progress in the work so far.
- c) Proposed methods for data can be collected with the resources available and will address the research question identified.
- d) The student has acquired the skills to undertake the research and has the ability to write up the thesis to the standards required.

- e) Formulation of a viable plan for the work.
- f) Consideration of the research ethics dimensions of the project, and application for ethics approval from the relevant Research Ethics Committee if appropriate.
- g) Completion of the appropriate sections of MyPGR.

5. The upgrade Viva

- a) Upgrade requests should be considered by a Discipline Upgrade Committee comprising the Director of PGR for the discipline (or his or her nominee) and at least one other member of staff, none of whom should be (or have been) a supervisor, PGR Pastoral Tutor or mentor of the student.
- b) The Committee shall viva the student.
- c) The student's lead supervisor should attend the Committee's meeting as an observer. To allow the student to make any comments they wish to the Committee without their supervisor being present, the student shall always be invited to talk with the Committee after the supervisor is asked to leave.
- d) Final requests for transfer should normally be made not later than after 18 months of full-time registration, or 36 months of part-time registration.

6. Presentation of work

Students will be expected to give a 10-minute presentation of their work, followed by 5 minutes of questions at the annual student conference undertaken in January each year. For full-time students this will be approximately 15 months after registration and part-time students 27 months. Students registering at other times of the year will need to organise for their work to be presented to the discipline at a time in keeping with timings of the requirement for upgrade outlined in 5) above.