

Policy on split-site arrangements for postgraduate research students domiciled outside of the UK

1. Preamble

1.1 Candidates for research degree programmes (MPhil, PhD and professional doctorate) who are resident overseas may not always be able to commit themselves to extended periods of attendance at UEL or a partner institution. The split-site arrangements set out in this paper are intended to address the needs of such candidates while maintaining the quality and academic standards of the University's research degree programmes.

1.2 Part 9 of the *Manual of General Regulations (The Manual)* and our *Code of Practice for Postgraduate Research Programmes (The Code of Practice)* apply to students registered under split-site arrangements.

2. Definition of Split-site

2.1 An individual enrolled and registered for a split-site postgraduate research programme at UEL or a partner institution will be a student who typically intends to undertake the majority of their research at a higher education or research institution abroad. Unlike other postgraduate research students their application for admittance as a student of the university will be considered by the relevant school Research Degrees Sub-Committee (RDSC).

The RDSC will be responsible for assessing the appropriateness of the academic facilities overseas, the adequacy of the arrangements for access to those facilities, the potential partnership benefits to the School or partner institution from entering into such an arrangement and the evidence required from the candidate before deciding whether to accept a student on a split-site basis. A report identifying the suitability of these aspects of the application will be attached to the request for admittance considered by RDSC.

In exercising a judgement regarding the suitability of the arrangements for the candidate the Chair of the RDSC may wish to seek the opinion of colleagues in the Graduate School and Quality Assurance and Enhancement.

3. Eligibility and entry requirements

3.1 School RDSC have the discretion to specify the eligibility and entry requirements for candidates applying under the split-site arrangements, subject to the minimum requirements set out in Part 9 of *The Manual* relating to academic qualifications and English language competence.

See <http://www.uel.ac.uk/qa/manual/index.htm>

4. Full-time and part-time study

4.1 Students will be enrolled on a full-time or part-time basis, in line with normal procedures. Students may change enrolment status in accordance with the provisions contained in Part 9 of *The Manual*.

5. Periods of study

5.1 Students will be subject to the registration periods specified in Part 9 of *The Manual* or, in the case of a professional doctorate, in the programme specification.

6. Periods of attendance at UEL or a partner institution (study visits)

6.1 The total period of visits to UEL or a partner institution will normally be between 4 and 12 months over the course of the postgraduate research degree programme. The precise attendance requirements will be determined by the School RDSC and indicated to the candidate at the time of acceptance for the degree.

In deciding on these requirements, School RDSC will have regard to the responsibilities of the Director of Studies and other supervisors for the supervision, support and training of the candidate as set out in our *Code of Practice*. School RDSC will have discretion in deciding how best to carry out these responsibilities, which will include by attendance at UEL or a partner institution, by electronic means (e.g., email or video conference), by attendance at some other location agreed with the candidate or by visits by School or partner institution staff to the candidate's country of residence (but see 10.1 below).

6.2 Students will be required to make an initial visit of 3-4 weeks on first enrolling in order to attend induction and subject specific skills training.

6.3 Students will be required to engage with such university procedures as may be determined from time to time for skills training and development.

The timing and length of other periods of attendance will be decided by School RDSC, following discussion between the student and the Director of Studies, and will be set out in a written agreement signed by the Director of Studies and the student forming part of the registration document. Any subsequent changes to the schedule of visits must be agreed with the student and recorded in a signed agreement.

7. Transfer from MPhil to PhD

7.1 For those students initially registered for an MPhil, the process for transfer of registration from MPhil to PhD should be conducted in accordance with the regulations contained in Part 9 of *The Manual*.

8. Annual Review

8.1 Students will be required to undertake and pass an annual review in order to continue as an enrolled student of UEL.

9. Arrangements for research supervision

9.1 The School RDSC will be responsible for nominating supervisor(s) in accordance with the regulations contained in Part 9 of *The Manual*.

The Director of Studies will be a member of staff at UEL or a partner institution.

9.2 The Director of Studies will recommend to the School RDSC appropriate arrangements for supervision, including nature and frequency of contact, consistent with the provisions of our *Code of Practice*.

The School RDSC will wish to pay particular attention to the demands placed on candidates while not in attendance at UEL or a partner institution, and ensure that adequate supervision and support is available.

9.3 Supervision of candidates while not in attendance at UEL or a partner institution will be conducted by email, fax, telephone or video conference as appropriate.

9.4 The arrangements for supervision and in particular the level and frequency of contact should be recorded in a written agreement signed by the Director of Studies and the student.

9.5 Normally the student will have an advisor, appointed by UEL, based in their country of domicile.

10. Overseas visits

10.1 Supervisors are required to visit students resident overseas to provide supervision, support and training. This requirement must be indicated to the candidate at the offer stage. The Director of Studies will recommend to the relevant school RDSC the frequency of such overseas visits.

Where the School requires the cost of any such overseas visits to be borne by the candidate or their sponsor, this must also be indicated at the offer stage.

11. Arrangements for provision of skills training

11.1 Schools will need to ensure that candidates are able to receive all necessary research skills training at the appropriate time. It is expected that the preliminary training needs analysis will take place during an initial visit to UEL, or a partner institution, at the start of enrolment. Subsequent training needs analyses will be conducted either face-to-face or by electronic means, depending on the schedule of visits to UEL, or a partner institution, agreed with the student.

11.2 The outcome of initial and subsequent training needs analyses should be recorded in a written agreement signed by the Director of Studies and the student. The Director of Studies should monitor the provision of agreed training and discuss the outcomes with the student.

11.3 Generic research and transferable skills training may be delivered through distance learning. However, where training requires physical attendance in the UK, Schools or partner institutions will need to ensure that it is delivered during the agreed periods of attendance.

12. Access to appropriate academic facilities

12.1 Schools will need to be satisfied that candidates will have adequate access to appropriate academic and other facilities while not in attendance at UEL or a partner institution. Schools will need to exercise academic judgement in deciding what constitutes adequate access and what are appropriate academic and other facilities for the research; taking into account the student's discipline and the particular research topic.

Normally, access will require students to be employed by or registered with a local institution providing academic or other facilities e.g. a university, research centre or company.

Normally appropriate academic or other facilities will include, but not be limited to, libraries, labs, computers and desk space.

12.2 Candidates will need to provide a letter from an appropriate person in authority at the local institution confirming the right of access to appropriate academic or other facilities and to whom the University may make any necessary further enquiries.

13. Partnerships

13.1 Schools may accept individual candidates applying independently.

13.2 Schools, working through Quality Assurance and Enhancement, may establish formal links with overseas institutions in order to provide a bespoke service for a group of candidates associated with or employed by those institutions. Bespoke client services could involve fee discounts or tailor made training events in the UK or overseas.

Schools must consult Quality Assurance and Enhancement, UEL International and Financial Services **prior** to entering into any partnership agreements with overseas institutions.

Before a partnership can commence there will need to be:

- A process of institutional approval
- A signed Memorandum of Cooperation setting out the contractual details of the partnership

14. Fees

14.1 Tuition fees for candidates registered under split-site arrangements will be published in the Fees Schedule and on our website or be as determined by a partner institution after due negotiation with the appropriate officer at UEL.

14.2 Schools, or partner institutions after due negotiation with the appropriate officer at UEL, may set a bench fee to cover the additional costs of a specific research project that cannot be met by the tuition fee, e.g. special equipment, materials or fieldwork. Any such bench fee should be indicated to the candidate at the offer stage.

15. Research Degrees Subcommittee

15.1 The Research Degrees Subcommittee will receive for approval recommendations from School RDSC regarding split-site students.