National College of Ireland

Quality Assurance Handbook

Chapter 5

Postgraduate Research Degrees

September 2007

Document History

Version	Updated	Updated by	Updates made
4	6/11/06	Sinead O'Sullivan	Corrected all instances of 'Principle Supervisor/investigator/author to read 'Principal Supervisor/investigator/author '
	29/11/06	Sinead O'Sullivan	Moved proposed PhD programme to an Appendix
4.1	30/6/07	Sinead O'Sullivan	Revised as a result of review by VP Research in advance of PhD submission
4.2	26/9/07	Sinead O'Sullivan	Updated to include Codes of Discipline, Learner Protection, Dignity and Respect policies, Complaints procedure, admissions policy for students with a disability from Cht 6 – Student Life. Added Personal Development plan Brought sections that were previously in appendices to the main part of the document: : Supervisory process, Dissertation Submission process, Examination/Viva process

Table of Contents

5.1 NCI's Research Strategy, 2005-2007

5.1.1 NCI's Vision and Goals for Research

The vision of research at National College of Ireland is to contribute to the realisation of Ireland's full potential as a knowledge-based society through the integration of learning and research.
The research programme sets out to:

- Contribute to the generation of new knowledge that is relevant to the knowledge economy and society.

- Achieve excellence in research output including research results, publications and research training.

- Provide faculty with greater professional fulfilment and develop a balance between teaching and research.

- Encourage innovative research projects that attract high quality graduate learners and visiting scholars.

- Extend public and commercial awareness of NCI through access to research, results and discussion.

- Expand partnerships with other academic institutions that are undertaking similar research into learning and teaching.

- Develop research partnerships with commercial organisations through the development of common research projects.

5.1.2 Research Goals

The goals of research at NCI are to:

- Allow creative enquiry to flourish through engagement in scholarly research.

- Increase the quality and quantity of research outputs.

- Contribute to and inform the broader discourse on lifelong learning and skills development in the context of` EU and national policies.

- Provide excellence in research based graduate education by delivering specialised courses relevant to the needs of a knowledge society.

- Establish and nurture strategic alliances and partnerships with other third level institutional partners.

- Develop and apply new models of access to learning in the workplace, classroom and community.

5.1.3 Research Focus

Research at National College of Ireland is regarded as a core activity embedded in the academic culture and contributes to the overall mission of the College. The College has had a particular interest in undertaking research that focuses on teaching and learning in the workplace, classroom and community, reflecting NCI's historical and current sphere of interest. The College is also committed to ensuring that learners from a diversity of backgrounds have access to education, including postgraduate research opportunities.
A core focus of research at NCI is on examining the **role of technology in supporting and enabling the processes of learning and teaching**. This is commonly referred to as **technology enhanced learning** (i.e. the use of technology to support learning). Technology-enhanced learning (TEL) leverages technology to maximize learning within an environment of good course design that can offer learners the options of time, place, and pace and emphasizes different learning preferences and styles

(user-centred Learning). In the context of research being done in **School of Informatics** this implies that the school is researching to understand the pedagogical principles for TEL and to design, develop and evaluate innovative information and communication technologies (ICT) for learning. In order to support the mission of the College and to enable individual learners to achieve their full potential, there is a special interest in furthering research-based understanding of the learning process. NCI is pioneering new approaches to technology-enhanced learning in the workplace through a number of ongoing FAS funded projects. These projects provide both opportunities for research, as well as supporting up-skilling in the workforce.

Researchers from the **School of Informatics** are exploring new ways for learners to interact through multimedia, on-line and via mobile devices; they design systems that adapt to learner's needs and that can respond intelligently to user inputs. The focus of research in the School is on the use of learning technologies as indicated below:

- The use of intelligent tutoring systems.
- The application of adaptive hypermedia systems.
- The development of dialogue systems.
- The existence of adaptive educational environments.
- The use of intelligent mobile devices for e-Learning.

Research in the **School of Business** explores the changing world of work from a variety of perspectives. Within this context there is also an interest in researching the impacts of new learning technologies on workforce development. The School of Business is engaged in research on wider thematic areas, the research interests of faculty include: human resource management, work and employment relations, financial services, employment law, behaviour in organisations, social and business ethics and accounting and entrepreneurship.

The **overall research focus** in NCI on learning and teaching reflects our mission and current capabilities and represents an area in which the College can make a unique contribution, differentiating NCI from other educational establishments. The focus on learning and teaching was selected for three key reasons:

- Learning and teaching has become an area of primary focus in the education sector in the last ten years reflecting changing educational priorities and government policy. In particular, there is an increasing focus in research on how and under what conditions learning takes place, and in what ways this can be best supported.

- NCI is committed to the fundamental principle that learning enables the development of human potential. Learning processes can be enhanced by understanding the factors that motivate and inhibit individual learning (e.g. motivation, family, environment, etc.).

- Faculty in NCI are currently involved in supervising masters research learners, who are examining and researching different projects around learning and teaching. This focus is also reflected in ongoing funded research projects and the attendance by faculty and learners at professional conferences in their area.

5.1.4   The Context of Learning and Teaching Research

Researchers in the College are involved in research projects that examine teaching and learning in the workplace, community and classroom, reflecting NCI's fundamental mission, which seeks to broaden access to education. These diverse communities provide NCI faculty with an opportunity to focus on different cohorts of learners, providing invaluable research data by which to examine how and under what conditions learning takes place.

Learning in the Workplace

Workplace learning embraces a multiplicity of issues: training and development, organisational learning, the application of technology to deliver learning, investment in learning activities by organisations, learner motivation to learn and the influence of the organisational context on learning processes.

The College has a strong tradition in this area of meeting the needs of employers and employees. Building on our tradition, the specific dimensions of workplace learning research that we have chosen to focus on research questions concerned with the:

- The use of new technology to deliver and support learning activities (including blended learning).
- The motivation of learners and factors that explain participation in learning activities.
- The factors that drive organisations to invest in learning.
- The study of the influence of work systems, production processes and technology on the pace and extent of learning in organisations.

Learning in the Classroom

Learning in the classroom embraces a range of potential avenues including: the effectiveness of the classroom as a learning milieu, the virtual classroom, the use of new technology by learners, the effectiveness of instructional strategies, the development of faculty teaching skills, self-directed learning and the role of learning portfolios and logos in auditing prior learning experiences. A number of initiatives undertaken by the College include:

- Development of an induction programme to assess the learning styles.
- Using learning portfolios to document and codify current practice in learning and teaching.
- Seminar series on learning and teaching including learning style frameworks, reflection and blended learning.
- The securing of Fulbright scholars in the area of learning and teaching.
- The provision of a Learning and Teaching Certificate programme.

Learning in the Community

One stream of research at the NCI is concerned with the analysis of learning at a societal and community level. The College has a strong focus on the community as an important unit of analysis in society. Dimensions of learning that provide scope for investigation under this pillar include:

- The role of learning and knowledge in contributing to Ireland's country competitive advantage.
- The role of societal and community factors in facilitating and inhibiting access to education.
- The role of collaborative networks in facilitating learning in society.
- The development of partnership models of learning in society.

Planning for the future

The College's research strategy is currently being reviewed in the context of the development of a new strategic plan, which is in preparation and will be completed in autumn 2007. The focus of research in the School of Informatics will remain on technology enhanced learning, whereas research in the School of Business is more likely to be clustered around a new theme related to work place change reflecting the traditional strength of the School in industrial relations/human resource management.

5.2 Quality Assurance Framework

5.2.1   Introduction

National College of Ireland aspires to excellence of quality in all aspects of its research work. In order to promote such excellence of quality in its research activities it operates within the following mechanisms:

1. Research management and activities are central to the work of the Schools within the College, supported by the Research Office.

2. All proposals of postgraduate research must have the approval of the Research Committee and the Academic Council.

3. All research projects will be expected to have strong academic support. Only projects for which the College has adequate resources will be undertaken.

Academic Council must approve each application for postgraduate degrees by research, having due regard to the following:

- Academic merit of the project

- The qualifications of the applicant

- The suitability of the supervisory arrangements

- The adequacy of resources

- Sufficient and adequate space

- Time commitment of the student (if part-time)

The Research Office will maintain records for each registered postgraduate postgraduate research student and make those available to the Research Committee as required. A report from the Research Office will be prepared for the Research Committee which will include:

- List of projects, supervisors and postgraduate students including progress reports from supervisors

- List of presentations delivered by postgraduates and training events provided

- List of publications

5.2.2   Research Management Structure in National College of Ireland

5.2.2.1 Academic Council

The Academic Council is responsible for assisting the Governing Body in the planning, co-ordination, development and overseeing of the educational work of the College and to protect, maintain and develop the academic standards of the programmes and activities of the College.

5.2.2.2 Research Committee

The Research Committee is a sub-committee of Academic Council and is responsible for the policies and governance of students enrolled for higher degrees by research. It is responsible for reporting on matters of admission, progress, termination and completion to Academic Council.

The committee is appointed by Academic Council and has general responsibility for the development and monitoring of the College's policy, regulations and procedures for research and advising the Academic Council on matters related to research.

It has particular responsibility for the following:

- Developing and administering the College's regulations for postgraduate study by research and the development of a research ethos within the College.

- Liaising with appropriate external institutions in matters relating to collaborative postgraduate research and development.

- Keeping under review, the procedures for monitoring the standard of postgraduate awards.

- To approve courses developed by academic centres in research techniques and management and to foster a culture of commitment to research & development within National College of Ireland.

- To promote participation in research and postgraduate development as part of staff professional development, particularly with regard to the acquisition of higher degrees through research and shall advise on measures to facilitate access to research & development by staff members

- To assist in the establishment and maintenance of internal standards of research which are consistent with national and international standards and shall review research activities for compliance with College research strategies.

- Facilitate working relationships with other national and international higher education, professional institutes, relevant state bodies, Government departments, and private sector bodies and companies to provide support for Research and Development.

- Encourage, promote and review intra and inter-school/departmental initiatives in research and postgraduate studies.

- Develop and monitor College policy in relation to the intellectual property, patents, copyright and trademarks, technology transfer, campus companies, consultancy and commercial exploitation of research generally.

- Establish sub-committees and working parties. In the case of sub-committees and working parties whose members may be from outside the College, Academic Council should be notified.

- Recommend to Academic Council new students on the basis of application before committee. This should include consideration of funding, resources and supervision.

- The Chairperson, his/her designated nominee, shall be responsible for reporting the decisions/views of the sub-committee to the Academic Council and for transmitting the relevant decisions and views of the Academic Council to the sub-committee.

- The committee shall meet at least twice per semester and at such other times as may be required.

Membership

       Vice President Research and Graduate Studies (Chair)
       Registrar
       Representative of Research Office
       Director of the Centre for Research & Innovation in Learning & Teaching

Heads of Schools
Finance Officer
3 Faculty members, 1 of whom shall sit on Academic Council and 2 others as selected from each School
Librarian
Director of Learner Life
Director of Quality Assurance and Statistical Services
1 full time learner representative
1 part-time learner representative

5.2.2.3 Academic Quality Committee

The Academic Quality Assurance Committee is appointed by Academic Council and shall have general responsibility to Academic Council for developing and monitoring the implementation of the College's overall quality assurance procedures for programmes, postgraduate research and College services.

It will have particular responsibility for:

- Advising the Academic Council on matters related to academic standards having regards to the requirements of FETAC, HETAC and other external validating bodies or organisations with which the College has validating agreements.

- Being responsible to the Academic Council for monitoring all matters relating to the maintenance of standards of taught and distance learning courses, their quality and the academic environment in which they operate.

- Developing a Quality Assurance Handbook for the College and keeping under review all academic quality assurance procedures of the College, as will be described in the handbook.

- Keeping under review procedures for ensuring the appropriateness of various forms of academic association with external organisations, including the franchising of College programmes and the accreditation of courses offered by other organisations.

- Consider External Examiners Reports and Consequent Action Forms.

- Liaising with other committees of the Academic Council in relation to all courses and programmes.

- Carry out such other functions as are considered appropriate, subject to the approval of the Academic Council.

The Academic Quality committee meets at least <u>twice</u> per term and at such other times as may be required

5.2.2.4 Supervisory Committee

The learner's Supervisory Committee comprises a principal supervisor and up to two associate supervisors. The Head of School appoints the principal supervisor with the other members of the committee selected in consultation with the principal supervisor and learner. The principal supervisor is the chairman of the committee and the associate supervisors provide additional advice to the learner in their area of research. A principal supervisor may supervisor up to four research learners, depending on the individual's teaching load.
The associate supervisors may be either NCI faculty members or from another academic institution, industry or appropriate area. All associate supervisors must provide evidence of relevant research experience and the Head of School will decide on whether they have the appropriate background. The supervisory committee is responsible for the quality and rigour of the supervisory process and supporting the intellectual and professional development of the learner

5.2.2.5 Postgraduate Programme Board

A Programme Board is established for each programme offered by National College of Ireland, and it is responsible, in conjunction with the Head of School/Director of Centre, for developing and assisting in the operation of the programme. The programme committee ensures the quality delivery of the academic programme and that learners are well informed that their progress is being monitored, a reasonable balance of work is offered to the learner and that assessments are appropriate, consistent and fair. The committee ensures the relevance and quality of the programme by a process of periodic evaluation

5.2.2.6 Research Office

The Research Office at National College of Ireland, which is led by the Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies, provides support to faculty and postgraduate researchers. The office's core activities are focussed on providing services to researchers, supporting research commercialisation and technology transfer, and graduate learners.

Research Services
- Maintains a catalogue of research granting agencies and their requirements for proposals

- Co-ordinates and prepares major institutional research proposals to national and European funding agencies

- Provides administrative support on research grant applications and maintain a record of funded project applications and awards

- Liaises with the Finance Office and HR to develop procedures for handling research application and post-contract management of research projects

- Liaises with industry and agencies at both national and international level in association with ICELT and Schools

- Maintains high standards of ethical conduct and financial accountability in research

Graduate Studies
- Maintains a record of registered research learners copied to Learner Life including project titles, supervisors, progress reports, supervisor comments, presentations, publications, funding, publications, prizes and awards

- Participates in internal committees as required, including the Research Committee (Academic Council)

- Informs Academic Council and HETAC annually, by 31st October, that candidates are still actively engaged in their research programmes and maintaining adequate contact with their supervisor(s)

- Promotes collaboration between the College and other research organisations

- Represents the College's interest in research policy forums

- Informs faculty and postgraduate learners of research seminars, research training modules, and workshops

- Assists with programmes and events to raise the research profile of NCI and assist in the recruitment of postgraduate learners of an exceptional standard, both in Ireland and internationally

Commercialisation & Technology Transfer

- Provides information on intellectual property and patent applications

- Advises on technology licensing and partnership agreement between the College and industry or other third level institutions (following guidance)

- Promotes the effective commercialisation of research by protecting and exploiting IP generated in the College (Technology Transfer)

Assists the incubation centre (ICELT) and Schools to encourage and facilitate interaction between industry and researchers in the College and encourage companies to engage in R&D projects relevant to the College expertise.

5.2.2.7 Supervisory Process

Supervision at NCI is carried out in accordance with conditions set forth in the NCI quality manual and is designed to ensure that postgraduate research students receive adequate direction to learn advanced research methods and to facilitate the successful completion of their degree. Supervisors may only supervise a maximum of four research students at any one time.

The principal supervisor will normally be a faculty member of the School of Informatics, must hold doctorate in Informatics or a cognate field of study and be an active researcher in the area of the student's research.

The principal supervisor will be primarily responsible for regular supervision. The supervisory committee will comprise two associate supervisors and shall be agreed by Academic Council.

The replacement or substitution of a supervisor on any grounds requires the prior approval of Academic Council, or its nominee, usually the Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies.

There are a number of issues that may arise in the programme of a research study that require expert guidance from the supervisor. The principal supervisor and student should at all times maintain a good working relationship. The relationship requires that the principal supervisor:

- Establish and maintain a relationship of trust in which the responsibilities and expectations of both the principal supervisor and the student are clearly outlined and discussed at the outset of the research
- Implement best practice in the supervisory practice, including the use of the supervisory committee
- Provide monitoring, assessment and written feedback on a regular basis to the student
- Ensure that progress reports are completed with the student and returned at the end of each semester to the Research Office
- The principal supervisor is required to make an annual report on the progress of each student to the Research Office, detailing satisfaction with progress to date, the research plan for the forthcoming year, as agreed by the research student and the supervisor
- Identify with the student his/her training needs and supporting the provision of educational and training programmes
- Help students with networking and providing advice on professional academic development, including encouraging students to attend academic conferences and training workshops
- Brief students on academic rules and regulations
- Ensure that the student is aware of NCI's policies on ethics and intellectual property and is aware of any commercialisation opportunities that may arise out of the research
- Advice in the preparation of the dissertation and preparation for the viva voce examination process
- Advise on issues related to the publication of research results, including authorship, scholarly journals and other associated issues

5.2.3   Managerial Responsibility for Postgraduate Research Students

The main responsibilities for academic aspects of postgraduate studies reside with the principal supervisor, the relevant School and Academic Council.

5.2.3.1 Responsibilities of the College to Postgraduate Researchers

It is the responsibility of the College to provide:

- An appropriate intellectual and social environment for researchers

- An opportunity to develop critical and analytical thinking

- Training in research methods, supervision methods and emerging technologies as they relate to research and research dissemination

- Adequate facilities, including library resources, computing resources and necessary software, postgraduate room, postgraduate research seminar series and use of NCI internet and intranet.

- Academic supervision and support

- Efficient administration

- Fair treatment

- Understandable regulations

- Effective grievance, complaints and appeal procedures as laid out in the current Learner Handbook

- Nationally and internationally accepted qualifications

5.2.3.2 Responsibilities of the Heads of School

- Determine the focussed research areas for the School

- To promote an equal opportunity research culture

- Plan for the provision of and approval to use the school resources for research development

- Ensure supervision guidelines are followed

- Ensure continuity of supervision is provided for in the event of staff changes

- Ensure that general College policies are adhered to by researchers and postgraduate postgraduate research students

- Determine the workload of a staff member and the extent of their involvement in research supervision

- Arrange appropriate staff development for all academic staff in the school to promote best practice in research supervision

- Set up arrangements for the supervision of postgraduate students

- Ensure that proposed research topics are within the supervisor's field of competence

- Recommend the appointment of the research advisor, primary supervisor and the supervisory committee to the Research Committee

- Be fully conversant with the College's Postgraduate Research Policy and Procedures manual

5.2.3.3 Responsibilities of the Principal Supervisor & Chair of the Supervisory Committee

- Arrange regular meetings and seminars/tutorials with the postgraduate research student. The Research Office should be aware of meetings and seminars regarding research

- Provide guidance about standards expected and about requisite techniques and methodologies

- Draw up and agree a list of targets and milestones with the supervisor and postgraduate student. This will be used as a yardstick against which progress is monitored

- Request written work from the student as appropriate and return such work, with constructive criticism, in a reasonable time

- Arrange for the student to have practice in delivering oral presentations about their work within the School framework

- Ensure that the student is made aware of any inadequacy in progress or of failure to reach an acceptable standard of work, as informed by the supervision

- Arrange alternative supervisory arrangement if the principal supervisor is not available for a period of over four weeks or on an occasion where a supervisor leaves the College

- Prepare such reports as required by the Research Committee and the Academic Council

- Actively assist postgraduate students to publish, attend conferences, deliver papers, join professional associations, etc

- Be fully conversant with the College's Research Policy and Procedures manual

- Assist the student in the preparation and submission of the final thesis and in preparing for the viva voce examination

- Advise the student on the development potential of their work, intellectual property, patents, licenses and copyright in conjunction with the Research Office

- Declare that the theses is ready for examination

- Supervisor may manage a maximum of four postgraduate research students at any time

5.2.3.4 Responsibilities of Postgraduate Research Student

- Complete all courses, readings, examinations and submissions as required in the postgraduate research student handbook

- Agree a plan of action with their supervisor. The plan should provide for:

  - A technical report on an annual basis

  - A progress report each semester. Progress report forms are sent by the Research Office direct to the postgraduate research student one month prior to the due date

  - Deliver a seminar on an annual basis

- Ensure the progress of their work in accordance with this plan, alteration to the plan should be agreed with the supervisor

- Arrange for regular meetings with their supervisor

- Take the initiative in raising problems or difficulties with the supervisor

- Take note of and respond to criticism of submitted work made by the supervisor

- Students who feel that their work is not progressing satisfactorily for reasons beyond their control should, in the first instance, bring this to the attention of their supervisor. If they feel that this programme of action is not appropriate or open to them, they should consult the Head of School and Research Office

- Submit final thesis for examination

5.2.3.5 Responsibilities of the Research Office and the Research Committee

- Accept the provisional enrolment of the postgraduate research student.

- Assign primary supervisor and supervisory committee members for the postgraduate research students following recommendation by principal supervisor/school

- Ensure that the conditions for acceptance have been met

- Prepare annual report on current postgraduate research students and submit online RDP applications and proposals and any other reports required to HETAC on all postgraduate research students. Liaise with the Examinations Office.

- Be fully conversant with the College's Postgraduate Research Policy and Procedures manual

- Advertise and provide information about research opportunities to postgraduate applicants

- Ensuring that postgraduate research students and staff partaking in research are fully aware of the College's research code of good practice

- Administer selection, admission, registration and enrolment procedures for postgraduate students with the Director of Student Services

- Keep records of all administrative arrangements for postgraduate students

- Make arrangements for external examiners for viva voce and thesis examinations

- Arrange the conferring of awards with the Director of Student Services

- Lodge a copy of every successful Masters and Doctoral thesis in the College Library

5.2.3.6 Policy and Procedure for Protection of Learners – Cessation of Programmes

It is National College of Ireland's policy that should a programme commence, it will be offered to completion for the specific intake of students.

Non Commencement of an Offered Programme

In cases where an offered programme may not run for reasons such as non-viable numbers, unsuitability of location or unavailability of appropriate teaching staff, learners are offered the following.

- Transfer to the same programme at another NCI location if appropriate
  Or
- Full refund on fees paid for that academic year and appropriate guidance as to other education options.

The decision to not run a programme in such cases as above is made at least 5 working days prior to the proposed start date for programmes at levels 5-6 of the National Qualifications Framework. For all other programmes, the decision is made at least 10 working days prior to the proposed start date.

Refunds are made to those persons or organisations that originally paid the fee.

Prospective Learners are notified in all correspondence and publications that programmes may not commence for reasons such as those outlined above.

Cessation of a Programme that has Commenced

In exceptional cases where a programme is terminated after it has commenced and prior to the normal completion of the programme for reasons such as non viable numbers, unsuitability of location or unavailability of appropriate teaching staff, learners will be offered the following options

- Transfer to the same course at another NCI location if appropriate
  Or
- Endeavour to facilitate transfer to a similar programme with another provider
  Or
- Full refund on fees paid for that academic year and appropriate guidance as to other education options
- Where appropriate, certification will be provided for successful completion of modules.

Refunds are made to those persons or organisations that originally paid the fee.

5.2.3.7 Dignity and Respect Policy

The National College of Ireland is committed to recognising and acknowledging the dignity of all learners and staff, irrespective of their sex, racial or ethnic background, religion, marital or family status, sexual orientation, disabled status or age. Fundamental to the concept of equality and respect for others in the College, all learners and staff have the right to be treated with dignity and respect.

An attitude and atmosphere of mutual respect, cooperation and consideration fosters the best environment. The National College of Ireland supports a policy of equality of opportunity for all.

It is the National College of Ireland's intention to ensure that the College provides all members of its community with freedom from bullying and intimidation. Harassment can be intimidating, offensive and prejudicial to a productive working environment. It can also undermine the person's position and may have an impact upon all aspects of the individual's life.

Harassment which affects the dignity of people at the College undermines them as human beings, is totally unacceptable to the National College of Ireland and will not be tolerated.

Any harassment or bullying may be the basis for a complaint and may be referred for action under the College's Code of Discipline.

Definitions

Harassment

Harassment is any form of unwanted conduct (acts, requests, spoken words, gestures or the production, display or circulation or written words, pictures or other material) related to any of the discriminatory grounds (i.e. gender, age, sexual orientation, religion, race, nationality, ethnic or social origin, disability, marital status, family status or membership of the traveller community), which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the person.

Bullying

Workplace bullying is repeated inappropriate behaviour, direct or indirect, whether verbal, physical or otherwise, conducted by one or more persons against another or others, at the place of work and/or in the course of employment, which could reasonably be regarded as undermining the individual's right to dignity at work.

An isolated incident of the behaviour described in the definition may be an affront to dignity at work, but as a once off incident, it is not considered to be bullying nor is the exercise of legitimate management rights or of legitimate employee rights or responsibilities. Interpersonal differences and conflicts may arise in the workplace for a variety of reasons including the implementation of legitimate management directives.

Examples of bullying are as follows:

- Pushing, shoving, punching

- Interference with personal property, and/or equipment

- Practical jokes, horseplay

- Personal insults and name calling

- Public or private humiliation

- Unfair delegation of duties and responsibilities (this could be used as an alternative to allocating menial jobs)

- Constant put downs, sneering

- Instantaneous rages, often over trivial matters

- Offensive jokes

- Setting impossible deadlines

- "freezing out" or excluding

- Intimidation and threats in general

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct (acts, requests, spoken words, gestures or the production, display or circulation or written words, pictures or other material) of a sexual nature, which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the person.

Racial Harassment

Racial harassment is defined as unwanted or unwelcome conduct based on a person's race which is offensive to the recipient and which might threaten a person's security or create a stressful, hostile or intimidating work or study environment.

Conduct Violations

The following list is intended to serve as examples of behaviours that are considered unacceptable for learners enrolled at NCI. This list is intended, therefore, to be illustrative and not exhaustive.

5.2.3.8 Complaints Procedure

Any problem or complaint should be raised with the appropriate authority as soon as possible. The ability of NCI to effectively deal with a learner issue depends on that complaint being brought forward in a timely manner.

What is a complaint?

A complaint is:

Any question or expression of dissatisfaction about an aspect of the relevant service defined in the Learners Charter of the National College of Ireland and provided to the learners of the College. Complaints can address the behaviour of other learners, faculty or staff, or services provided by NCI.

NCI values learner views in improving services. Before the Learner makes a formal complaint, the Learner should consider other ways of expressing the complaint.

Information Desk

The information desk is situated on the ground floor where learners can get information, clarification, and direction to the appropriate resource and make appointments. Any queries about policies or procedures, or the appropriate person to contact may be addressed by a visit to the Information Desk.

Regular Meetings with Learner Representatives

There are regular scheduled meetings of Class Representatives with Programme Directors and Heads of School. In addition there will be regular meetings and seminars organised within the Student Services Department. These meetings are a place where any questions or complaints may be brought, and is often where these matters are resolved.

Learner Questionnaire

The Learner Questionnaire issued each semester to all learners. These questionnaires are an opportunity for learners to express complaints that may not otherwise have been addressed. The action taken on the results of the Questionnaire is reported back to learners and will be used to continually improve the overall quality of our Service delivery.

The Learner will also see that there are informal procedures to attempt to address the Learner's complaint. It is only where a complaint is put in writing to Head of School or Registrar that it becomes a formal complaint. Senior Managers will report annually to the President on formal complaints they have dealt with. If the Learner are unsure to whom the Learner should express the Learner's complaint, or the Learner need help or further information, please contact the Registrar.

Expressing a complaint

The following process is designed to resolve complaints as speedily and effectively as possible. Most complaints can be addressed successfully in informal means (before writing a formal complaint); however, if informal resolution is unsuccessful, the formal process is available.

If the Learner has a complaint, we expect the Learner to express it, and not someone else. If the Learner names another person in expressing a complaint, they have a right to know what is said about them as soon as possible, and who is raising the issue. Any fear of retaliation as a result of raising a complaint will not be tolerated. Confidentiality will be maintained when appropriate. All complaints are taken seriously. It is assumed they are legitimate. If an expressed complaint is found to be malicious the College may have to consider disciplinary proceedings.

We will respectfully deal with each complaint and deal with it in the context of our policies and resources.

There are five steps in expressing a complaint:

Step 1: approach the person responsible for the Learner's complaint.

The Learner should first address complaints directly to the person responsible to attempt to resolve the matter informally

Step 2: approach the person responsible for the area about which the Learner have the complaint.

This may be the Learner's Course Director, Head of Department/School or Head of relevant Service. Many complaints can be dealt with informally by explanation and discussion. If the Learner need help in expressing the Learner's complaint, or are reluctant to approach the person(s) responsible, the Learner can seek advice from the Learner's Course Director, Learner Services Officer, the Learners' Union Executive or the Registrar.

Step 3: make a formal complaint in writing.

If the Learner are unable to resolve the Learner's complaint informally by discussion and explanation the Learner can lodge a formal complaint with the Registrar. A formal complaint must be in writing. Please give the relevant Service the following details in a letter:

• The Learner's name and where we can contact the Learner
• The nature of the Learner's complaint
• What action, if any, has already been taken by the Learner to attempt to resolve the complaint
• Any prior action by the College in regard to this complaint
• say what the Learner would expect to be done to resolve the Learner's complaint

Please send the Learner's written formal complaint to:

- The appropriate Head of School if the Learner have a complaint about academic matters

- All other formal complaints should be sent to the Registrar

Step 4: acknowledgement of the complaint.

The Learner can expect to receive a written acknowledgement of the Learner's complaint within 20 (Twenty) working days of its receipt. The Learner can expect to be kept informed if there is undue delay in coming to a conclusion on the Learner's complaint. If the person dealing with the Learner's complaint thinks it would be better dealt with by someone else, or that it should be dealt with under some other procedure, the Learner will be informed what is happening.

Step 5: investigation of the complaint and response

The Learner's complaint will be investigated as quickly as possible and the Learner will receive a written response upon completion of that investigation that details what action, if any, is to be taken.

Appeals

If the Learner remains dissatisfied after the conclusion of the investigation described above, the Learner can write to the President who will investigate him/herself or will identify a suitable person (or body), who has not been involved in dealing with the Learner's complaint, to investigate further. Please note that the President cannot be involved in complaints at an earlier stage. The President is the final point of appeal within the College and complaints addressed to him/her which have not previously been investigated by the Registrar normally will be referred to the appropriate person.

Monitoring and feedback

All formal complaints will be monitored. Annual reports on complaints will be made to the President and presented to Academic Council for consideration.

5.2.3.9 Code of Discipline

1. Judicial Authority and Timelines

The Registrar shall, within 20 working days of receipt of notice in writing to her/him, deal summarily with what s/he considers to be a minor offence or refer to the Disciplinary Committee that which s/he considers to be a major offence.
Where a learner admits to having committed a major offence the Registrar, if s/he deems it appropriate may, with the consent of the learner, deal with the case in a summary manner.

In the event of and need for an investigation, the Registrar will appoint a member of the Council to investigate the matter and provide the Registrar with a complete and comprehensive report into the incident. The Registrar will then distribute this report for the attention of the Disciplinary Committee. This role will also include the interviewing of individuals concerned, research material that may be required to conduct the investigation and assist the Disciplinary Committee in reaching conclusions. See appendix 12

5.3 Code of Conduct for Researchers

Introduction

All researchers in National College of Ireland should be committed to high standards of professional conduct. Researchers have a duty to ensure that their work enhances the good name of the College and the profession to which they belong.

Research workers should participate only in work which conforms to accepted ethical standards and which they are competent to perform.

All academic debates or disputes relating to research and publications should be carried out in a respectful manner so that there will be no harm to the reputation of individuals or the College

The College has a responsibility to ensure the health and safety of all those associated with research initiatives.

Any breachs of regulations by students will be dealt with by the Student Disciplinary Process (Appendix 12)

5.3.1 Data

If data of a confidential nature is obtained during the research process, confidentiality must be observed and research workers must not use such information for their own personal advantage or that of a third party.

Data (including all forms of primary research materials) must be recorded or retained in a durable and appropriately referenced form and held for a period of at least five years to protect the researcher and the College in case of an allegation of falsification of data.

5.3.2 Publication and Authorship

Where there is more than one author of a publication, it will be presumed that they are jointly responsible for the content of the publication.

The minimum requirement for joint authorship is participation in conceiving, executing or interpreting the research.

Authors must ensure that the work of research students, research assistants and technicians is acknowledged.

Publication of multiple papers by the same author(s) based on the same materials or set of data is improper unless there is full cross-referencing.

Plagiarism and falsification of research results are regarded as serious disciplinary matters. If such acts occur the student(s) will be invited to attend a Disciplinary Committee as laid out under the Code of Discipline.

5.3.3 Disclosure of potential conflict of interest

Researchers should disclose any affiliation with or financial involvement in, any organisation or entity with a direct interest in the subject matter or the provision of materials for the research. This should be submitted in writing to the Research Office who in turn will forward the information to the Registrar.

5.3.4 Copyright and Intellectual Property Rights

The candidate owns the copyright of the dissertation, as it is the work of the candidate.

Rights associated with any other work in which copyright may subsist, ownership of the intellectual property arising in the programme of the preparation of same, including renewal rights of every nature and patent rights in respect of any relevant products or processes must be agreed between the candidate and the College through the Research Office at the commencement of the research programme, if necessary in the form of a legally binding agreement. This may be modified or extended during the progress of the research work.

The policy on intellectual property is documented in Appendix 5.

5.3.5   Confidentiality

Researchers should be aware of the possible conflict between the researchers desire to publish and data obtained from within or outside the organisation. If considered appropriate a confidentiality agreement should be drawn up before commencement of research contact the Research Office.

5.3.6   Other considerations for researchers

Researchers must be aware and take into consideration particular legal, ethical and confidentiality issues which may arise in the process of undertaking research. Learners should take note of such College policies pertaining to good practice in research and should consult with the Research Office in instances where assistance is required.

All learners involved in postgraduate research are obliged to observe the college's policies and procedures in relation to:

- Plagiarism

- Best practice in the conduct of research

- Equality of opportunity

- Sexual harassment

- Data protection

- Health and safety

- Use of Information technology facilities

All other policies and procedures developed in the future by the College, which will be made available to faculty and research learners on the College web page and learner handbook.

5.4 Admission & Registration

Introduction

This Section outlines the College's policy in relation to postgraduate research degrees, together with procedural requirements (both academic and administrative) and recommended best practice in relation to postgraduate studies leading to the awards of Degree of Master (Research). The entire process is contained in the flowchart – Appendix 1.

The following research degrees are awarded to National College of Ireland postgraduate research graduates by HETAC

5.4.1 Research Degrees

- Master of Arts

- Master of Science

5.4.2 Entry Requirements – for Research Degrees

All students will enrol in a Masters degree by research. Candidates are required to have as entry requirements:

1. Bachelor Degree Honours (2nd class honours), which is at level 8, National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ), in a cognate field (i.e. informatics & computer science, mathematics, educational technology, education, learning sciences, psychology)

2. Bachelor Degree Ordinary Level (equivalent to at least second class honours) which is at level 7 of the NFQ, provided that they have successfully completed an approved conversion programme of education and research training at Level 8 in a cognate field such a programme can be expected to take one academic year.

3. Higher Diploma (second class honours) which is at level 8 in a cognate field to the proposed study area, with the approval of HETAC on a case-by-case basis

4. Hold other formal academic qualifications (national and foreign) deemed to be at least equivalent to the above and checked against the National Academic Recognition Information Centre (NARIC), or a similar database.

5. Recognised professional qualification (requiring professional and work experience) testifying to the possession of the required knowledge, skill and competence.

6. Approved Masters Degree Qualification Certificate through an approved third level institution testifying to the possession of the required knowledge, skill and competence.

7. Candidates with an appropriate Master's degree may be admitted and eligible for exemptions with the approval of Head of School and Academic Council.

All NCI programmes and examinations are conducted through the medium of English and all students whose first language is not English must have an appropriate level of proficiency to undertake Programmes. A list of approved qualifications and levels of appropriate proficiency can be obtained from the admissions office or on website at www.ncirl.ie/Prospective_Students/International_Students
The current entry requirements are as follows

	NCI TELL*	IELTS	TOEFL (PBT*)	TOEFL (CBT*)	UCLES	Irish Leaving Certificate	GCSE (UK)	TOEIC
Postgraduate	T5/S4	6.5	600	220	CPE "C"	Ordinary "C"	N/A	750

TELL -- Test of English Language Level – National College of Ireland

* PBT – Paper-based Test

* CBT – Computer-based Test

The Research Committee will determine whether the student is qualified for entry and recommend to Academic Council.

5.4.3   Students with a disability

A learner may be entitled to flexibility on minimum entry requirements if the College accepts that a learner's disability, learning or health difficulty negatively impacted on the learner's ability to meet formal entry criteria for a particular programme.

Individuals applying for postgraduate programmes apply through the standard National College of Ireland application form. If an individual due to her/his disability, learning or health difficulty, does not satisfy the minimum entry requirements for a particular programme, they are asked to write an accompanying letter requesting flexibility on the entry requirements. The letter should be addressed to the Admissions Officer and should introduce the learner and outline her/his educational history to date. Where appropriate any factors which may have caused an educational disadvantage should be detailed. National College of Ireland requests that all applications for flexibility on entry requirements are accompanied by verification of a learner's disability, learning or health difficulty and two references, one of which must be an academic reference. Please note that National College of Ireland will only accept verification from an Educational Psychologist or a Medical Consultant/Specialist. General Practitioner (G.P.) letters are not accepted as suitable medical evidence. Applications from these learners will be assessed by a Special Admissions Board and learners may be asked to attend for interview. Learners must satisfy College authorities that they are academically able for the programme they wish to pursue.

The Learner Services Officer will meet with all learners with a disability, learning or health difficulty (who accept a place with National College of Ireland) before the commencement of the academic year. The purpose of the meeting is to determine the level of support required and to advise on the availability of services. Learners who gain entry but elect not to disclose their disability on the National College of Ireland application form are encouraged to contact the Learner Services Officer as soon as possible to discuss appropriate supports which can be provided.

5.4.4   Application and Entry Process

To be considered for admission to the postgraduate programme (i.e.) Masters or PhD by research. applicants must
- Fill in the NCI postgraduate application form
- Provide an original transcript of their relevant academic qualifications
- Obtain letters of support from qualified referees

v4.2

- Attend an interview with the Vice President and Postgraduate Committee to confirm suitability for entry onto the postgraduate programme.

Where applicants wish to undertake research involving work in an organisation external to NCI, it is required that such applicants should obtain the written approval of the Chief Executive of that organisation outlining the organisations willingness to participate in the research.

To be accepted for entry to the NCI postgraduate programme, applicants must pay the appropriate fee and register as a student of the College. This is to provide structured support for those with research potential to formulate their research proposal and to ensure that postgraduate students have a clear understanding of the research process at NCI.

Assessment of Eligibility for Entry onto Programme

Learners will be admitted to the research programme at NCI on the basis of an honours degree in the relevant field. Learners will apply to the Research Office, who will obtain all relevant documentation and pass it to the Head of School who will recommend whether the applicant be admitted to the masters/PhD programme.

Further Selection Arrangements

Applicants will be invited for an interview by the Head of School and/or by members of the Postgraduate Research Programme Board, to determine their suitability to undertake the programme of study.

Policies and Procedures with Regard to Allocation of Places

Places will be allocated to learners on the basis of their suitability to undertake an advanced programme of postgraduate study by course work, research and thesis. This will include an assessment by the Research Office and Head of School of the applicant's academic record and professional achievements to date and personal suitability to embark on the programme.

Appeals Procedures

A formal appeal regarding admission must be in writing by letter or e-mail to the College Registrar providing the following information:
  o name and contact details
  o the nature the appeal
  o what action, if any, has already been taken to attempt to resolve the concern
  o any prior action by the College in regard to this appeal

A written acknowledgement of the appeal will be issued within 5 (five) working days of its receipt. The applicant can expect to be kept informed if there is undue delay in coming to a conclusion on the appeal. The appeal will be dealt with as quickly as possible and the applicant will receive a written response once a final decision has been made.

5.4.5 On Entry

All research learners are assigned to the School's Research Advisor, who is responsible for counselling learners on their course of study, their specialised studies, and NCI's postgraduate processes and procedures for the duration of their studies. On entry learners will indicate their general area of research interest, but will not at this stage be required to agree a specific research topic, which will be decided in the second semester.

Learners will undertake an initial semester of course work for those enrolled on a full-time basis, or two semesters on part-time. Courses will include:
- Research methods

- Qualitative methods

- Quantitative methods

- Specialist studies (x 2 courses)

- Generic and transferable skills workshops and seminars

The specialist studies will comprise a set of readings of research papers and appropriate monographs set by the School. Learners will participate in research meetings of the School and in a 'journal club' to review, and comment on, certain contemporary articles in their area of studies.

Learners will also be required as part of their programme of study to participate in a range of generic and transferable skills workshops and seminars which will be led by the Research Office. At the outset of the postgraduate programme each learner will be provided with a Personal Development Plan (see appendix 13), which will enable the learner to identify their particular training needs, and which will also provide a record of training events. Learners are advised to work with their supervisors in determining which courses are most appropriate to their needs as researchers, as well as for their general professional development.

Academic Council has overall responsibility in all matters relating to postgraduate research degrees. The implementation of all regulations relating to such degrees is the responsibility of the Research Committee. Decisions on admission to postgraduate programmes are taken by the Academic Council on the advice of the Research Committee.

Candidates registered for postgraduate programmes are entitled to the same rights and privileges as undergraduate students and are subject to the same 'Code of Discipline'. (see Appendix 12)

A candidate may be registered at any time for one degree only and work to be submitted for a postgraduate degree can not be submitted elsewhere for a degree or similar award.

Candidates must comply with the current NCI regulations governing particular postgraduate degrees.

In situations where research projects may lead to exploitable consequences and/or commercial significance, a clear understanding must be established (possibly including a legally binding agreement) between the candidate, his/her employer and NCI. It is the responsibility of the candidate to negotiate these issues prior to registration. Otherwise, copyright of the thesis and of any other work in which copyright may subsist, ownership of the intellectual property arising in the programme of the preparation of same, including renewal rights of every nature, and patent rights in respect of the relevant product or processes are vested in NCI.

The beginning of the semester following acceptance of enrolment by Academic Council is the formal starting point of the student's research undertaking. The academic year for research students is a full calendar year with provision for four weeks annual leave.

General Examination (Semester Two)

At the beginning of the second semester (or part-time equivalent), learners will propose a more specific topic for research. The learner will be assigned a principal supervisor by the Head of School and with the approval of the Postgraduate Research Programme Board.

The principal supervisor will be responsible for assigning a reading list of contemporary papers and monographs in the field of research. The literature review at this stage should take around 2 months. The learner will also continue to attend regular research seminars within the School and will be expected to actively contribute to the discussion at these events.

As and when the review of literature is complete the learner will present himself or herself for a General Examination. The examination will be based on the review of literature and will also require an understanding of the key concepts and research methods introduced in the initial coursework. The examination will comprise two, four-hour examinations on two major questions, and will be followed by a seminar.

Upon successful acceptance, in writing by HETAC onto the Masters register, a student must pay the remainder of NCI fee plus HETAC registration fee. The candidate will then be registered at NCI as a postgraduate research student.

A student, who gains a Conceded Pass and wishes to continue on the postgraduate programme, may sit the General Examination on one additional occasion.

All postgraduate students are required to re-register on an annual basis. This follows payment of the appropriate fees and is subject to satisfactory progress certified by the supervisors

5.4.6   Transfer to Doctoral Register

5.4.6.1 Research Proposal (Semester Two/Three)

Learners will be required to prepare detailed research proposals (5,000 words), which should include a statement of the study and its significance, research objectives, and how the learner will undertake the research (material and methods). This should be supported by arguments from the current literature (see Appendix 6, Research Proposal). The principal supervisor will be required to read and provide feedback to the learner on the proposal.

The learner will then be required to defend the proposal before the supervisory committee (see 5.2.2.5) and appropriate external examiner. The committee will comment on the proposal and hold an oral examination in order to determine if the learner is sufficiently prepared to undertake the research. The Committee may (a) pass the learner who will proceed to the next stage for entry onto the PhD register, (b) if the learner does not pass the defence, then s/he may be asked to resubmit the proposal after additional work, or (c) may be required to write-up for a masters degree. HETAC will be informed of the outcome of the process to ensure that the register of learners is accurate and up to date.

The process outlined is intended to provide a clear focus for the research learner's research topic. It should ensure that the learner:

- Demonstrates general knowledge of the broad field of research in their specialised area, such as *e-Learning*.

- Appreciates the current work in the field of their focus through the General Examination e.g. *intelligent tutoring systems*.

- Identifies their particular research goal and process clearly through the research proposal defence e.g. *context dependent question/answer technology*.

On successful defence of the research proposal the learner must complete and submit the appropriate HETAC form through the Research Office to HETAC (Appendix 11) , Application to Transfer to PhD Register) and await approval before being formally entered onto the PhD register.

5.4.7   Variations to Candidature

A postgraduate candidate, with the support of their supervisor, may apply to the College's Academic council through the Vice President Research & Graduate Studies to be considered for:

- Extension of time

- Deferment or Leave of absence

This applies for periods longer than a set minimum that are associated with long term sickness, compassionate leave and other circumstances approved by the Research Committee. Forms are available from the Research Office. Deferment or leave of absence will be granted for 'sound' reasons and be no more than one year. A student may not obtain a second such leave.

Transfer from the Doctoral to Masters register (or vice versa), or change of mode of attendance may be approved under certain circumstances, the candidate may apply for transfer to the Academic Council through the Research Committee and the Research Office with the support of the Principal supervisor.

In the case of withdrawal the Research Office must be notified in writing and will inform Academic Council through the Research Committee.

In cases of students who are on research scholarships, the College may request repayment of all, or part of the scholarship, depending on the particular circumstances pertaining to the withdrawal from studies.

5.4.8   Termination of Candidature

On receipt of an unsatisfactory progress report the student will receive a formal warning by the Research Office through the Research Committee, whereby they will be given a probationary period of six months. If a subsequent progress report is deemed unsatisfactory the College will recommend through the Research Committee termination of candidature.

Students are obliged to re-register on an annual basis subject to appropriate fees and satisfactory progress certified by the supervisor. Failure to comply with the College's administration procedures including payment of fees may also result in a probationary period in the first place resulting in termination of candidature.

5.5 Monitoring Progress - Research Supervision

The student will set about the research programme as outlined in the research proposal. The student will meet with the principal supervisor regularly and at least once per month as detailed in the supervisory process above (5.2.2.5)

He/she should meet with the other members of the supervisory committee as required.

Students will provide a formal review of work at the end of each semester. This will review objectives set in the last period and the attainment of those objectives, present a plan for the next six month period and report any problems or impediments to progress. The student will identify the outcomes of the previous 6 months in comparison with the plan, and will outline a clear plan for the next 6 months with goals and measurable outcomes (Appendix 9).
.

The student shall submit at least one paper 'of publishable quality' during the period of research, which the learner should seek to publish in a refereed journal, acknowledging where appropriate the work of the supervisor(s) and any other individuals who have made a demonstrable contribution to the research.

Students will be encouraged to present papers at conferences, both nationally and internationally. They should also establish a network of colleagues from other centres who are working in the same area.

It is expected that students should attend and contribute to the School research seminars, so as to ensure they are exposed to new ideas and have an opportunity to present their own work to critical review.

The student will be expected to present their own working seminar on their progress at least once per semester.

The student will prepare a technical report each year (an accepted paper will also suffice) and make a formal presentation on that paper to a research group: either 'in house' or at a conference.

5.6 The Dissertation

The student will complete the dissertation in the form determined by the College and in the format detailed by the Awarding Body. It is expected that the dissertation should be completed within 2 years of the completion of the course work.

The principal supervisor will sign off on the dissertation as 'being of a standard and style suitable for examination'.

.In the event that the principal supervisor is unwilling to sign-off on the dissertation, s/he must record in writing their concerns to the Postgraduate Research Programme Board. The Board may decide to refer the dissertation to an independent reviewer, who must be an expert in the area and should not be associated with NCI, for comment. The Board will then decide whether the dissertation may be submitted for examination or should be referred back for further work. In the event that the matter cannot be resolved the Board may refer the matter to the Vice President Research and Graduate Studies for his/her consideration.

5.6.1   Dissertation Submission

The supervisor should submit a panel of internal and external examiners to the Research Office at least six months before the dissertation is submitted for review. The Research Committee assesses the proposed panel and will then take responsibility for proposing the team of examiners to HETAC.

The candidate should be informed of the names of the proposed examiners and consulted to determine if there is a conflict of interest but has no involvement in the selection of the examiners.

- Once submitted to the College the dissertation will be sent to an internal reader, appointed by the College, by the Research Office, who will independently assess the dissertation as a piece of research for the appropriate degree.

- The report of the internal reader will be forwarded to the principal supervisor for consideration and incorporation of recommended changes

- The principal supervisor will communicate with the student regarding changes, if any, to be made to the dissertation prior to submission to HETAC

- When, in the opinion of the internal supervisor, the dissertation is ready for submission to the HETAC, the internal supervisor will sign-off on the dissertation and inform the Research Office

- HETAC must be notified by the Research Office of students who will be submitting theses by the following dates (form Appendix 10 RO05)

    - For summer examinations boards the deadline is the end of February

    - For autumn examinations board the deadline is the end of May

- Students should submit four soft bound copies of the dissertation to the Research Office by the end of February or May, as appropriate. These are distributed to the Chairperson of the assessment panel, the Registrar of NCI, and both examiners. The final dissertation must be typeset and hard bound in a fixed binding so that leaves can neither be removed nor replaced. A dissertation may be accompanied by an exhibit or artefact developed by the candidate, if it forms a significant part of the submission; in this case, a convenient mechanism should be devised so that the exhibit or artefact can be assessed by the external examiner. In the case of software or databases, the student will provide an electronic version of their dissertation on a CD Rom inside the cover of the dissertation and to include a user manual as an appendix to the dissertation.

- It is the duty of the student, working in conjunction with his/her supervisor, to ensure that these guidelines have been adhered to in the preparation of the final dissertation. Copies of the dissertation submitted for examination remain the property of NCI. Candidates are required to sign a declaration form, at the time of submitting the dissertation for examination, permitting access to their dissertation; where questions of confidentiality of the contents arise, candidates may request and obtain temporary restriction of access up to a maximum of four years for sufficiently cogent reasons. Module to this provision, the College will place one copy in the library for free consultation and the library retains the right to include the summary or abstract in any list of theses published by NCI or any publication to which the College may decide to contribute a list of theses.

- Under normal circumstances, the examination and the viva voce examination will take place within 90 days of the date of submission of the dissertation

- Feedback from the external examiners will be conveyed to the student by the supervisor prior to the *Viva Voce*

It is HETAC policy that all communications between NCI and HETAC on postgraduate matters comes through one designated officer of the relevant College, in the case of NCI the relevant person is the Registrar.

5.7 Examination

5.7.1 Examination Board

The supervisor should submit a panel of internal and external examiners to the Research Office at least six months before the dissertation is submitted for review. The Research Committee assesses the proposed panel and will then take responsibility for proposing the team of examiners to HETAC.

The candidate should be informed of the names of the proposed examiners and consulted to determine if there is a conflict of interest but has no involvement in the selection of the examiners.

5.7.2 Chairperson

There will be an independent Chairperson suggested by NCI and approved by the HETAC council for the *viva voce* examination. The primary role of the Chairperson is to ensure that the examination process is fair but thorough and is carried out in compliance with NCI and policies and procedures. They will take on the role of corresponding with HETAC regarding the examination result as indicated in section D1.10 of HETAC procedures (August 2005). The Chairperson will be provided with a report form which following the *viva voce* must be submitted to HETAC. The Chairperson reports back to the Research Office and the Research Committee on the result and process of the *viva voce* exam. The report should include a brief outline of the learning outcome, the names of each of the examiners with an outline of the assessment (the reports of the examiners may be attached) and a report of the consensus recommendation (see Appendix 9a/b form RO07/RO08).

5.7.3 External Examiner

The external examiner must have the expertise to recognise when the standard has not been met and the independence and authority to recommend failure in these cases.

The external examiner needs to be thoroughly familiar with the research context and fully cognisant of the front line of research in that field and be recognised for expertise in a closely related field of research. Such a person will be a recognised international expert in the field of study and will be known for their contribution and be currently active in research in the research area of the candidate.

The external examiner will be independent of NCI, the supervisory team, the candidate, any funding entities involved in the research, any co-operating off-campus organisation and shall be concerned primarily with the absolute standard of the work in a global context. Current or former employees, governors, consultants and graduates (of less than 10 years standing), directors, shareholders, mortgage holders, debenture holders, persons with a proprietary or financial interest in NCI are not eligible to serve as external examiners.

The external examiner should be appointed for a single candidate only and should not be reappointed until a significant period has elapsed. The external examiner should have:

- Academic qualification on a par or superior to the degree award in question

- Served as a member of a research degree examination board at least three times

- Experience in supervising a research student to completion.

5.7.4 Role of the Internal Examiner
The internal examiner plays an important role in the examination process serving as both an examiner and may, after the examination, be required to advise the candidate on minor corrections or

amendments. In such instances, the internal examiner will be required to confirm in writing to the Research Office that such corrections have been made.

5.7.5 Duties of Examiners

Examiners must be carefully briefed in advance of conducting the assessment so that there is no doubt as to criteria, standards and procedures.

NCI shall keep a precise record of any formal training and induction programmes attended by the candidate and this information will be taken into consideration by the examiners when assessing the knowledge, skill and competence of the candidate.

Candidates should not communicate with the examiners prior to the *viva voce* examination.

Examiners are normally expected to carry out their duties within 8 weeks of referral to them of the work in question.

Each of the examiners should read the dissertation and examine any submitted evidence prior to the *viva voce* examination. Each examiner should send an independent written report to the Research Office at least one week prior to the *viva voce* examination. A copy of this report will be forwarded by the Research Office to the Registrar. The *viva voce* examination should proceed even if both reports are negative. The examination shall normally take place within three months of the submission of the dissertation.

If written reports are not received by the Research Office one week prior to the planned *viva voce* examination, the Office will inform the Registrar in writing and the Registrar will take whatever action is necessary. Normally the *viva voce* will be cancelled by the Registrar unless unforeseen circumstances are presented three days before the *viva voce*. If no report is received within three days, the *viva voce* will be cancelled by the Registrar. These reports should be made available to the candidate not later than 2 days prior to the examination. In the event that they are not available, the *viva voce* may be delayed by up to one week; otherwise, the process is declared void and new examiners should be appointed.

5.7.6 Viva Voce Examination

The purpose of the oral examination is to access the candidate using the work submitted by the candidate in evidence. It gives the candidate the opportunity to present and defend the work through high-level debate with experts in the subject area. It enables the examiners to confirm that the candidate has a thorough understanding of the practical and theoretical aspects and methods involved in the work.

The chairperson shall introduce the examiners to the candidate, briefly explain the purpose of the examination and the procedures to be followed and advise the candidate to deal with questions as fully as he/she thinks necessary. The overall aim of the chairperson is to ensure fairness and consistency.

The *viva voce* examination is open to the public and notice of the examination will be announced on the web and on a notice board reserved for the purpose at least one week in advance of the examination. All staff, students, relatives and friends are encouraged to attend.

The candidate and both examiners shall be invited to make ten-minute opening statements (not lectures). The candidate will, typically, use an overhead projector, PowerPoint to give an overview of the main points in the dissertation. At least one hour and not more than three hours shall be devoted to the *viva voce* examination. The examiners, in a positive and constructive manner, shall challenge the candidate to defend the dissertation.

The examination board (that consists of the chairperson, the internal examiner and the external examiner) shall remove itself from the public forum after the discussion to meet, to agree and make a recommendation. The supervisor shall normally be requested to attend this meeting (to facilitate communication of requirements for revisions).

The chairperson presides over the meeting but does not have a vote in the decision which is made collectively by the examiners who must reach agreement on a single recommendation.

The decision of the examination board shall, in the case of a first submission, be one of the following:
1. Recommended
2. Not Recommended.

In the case of (2), a candidate who fails to satisfy the examiners at the first examination and whose dissertation is referred for re-examination may be allowed up to six months to revise and resubmit the dissertation, for the degree sought, or for a lower level award. In the case of a second attempt, option (2) is not available.

The decision of the examiners will normally be announced in public after the examination board meeting.

The examination board shall produce a detailed written specification for minor corrections and give clear guidance on any required revisions. This document will be made available to the candidate. The examiners are required to give a report that outlines clearly the precise grounds upon which the award is recommended. Each of the examiners shall submit their own report to the Research Office who in turn will forward to the Registrar, supporting the joint decision of the two examiners.

To be valid, the recommendations of the examination board must be in agreement with the report of the external examiner. The report of the external examiner should comment on broader issues that will be reported to the Council of HETAC in the chairperson's report.

The chairperson shall provide a detailed written report to the Council of HETAC, addressing the fairness and consistency (with respect to standards etc.) of the assessment process. In the case of a successful outcome, the Research Office will forward the report to the Registrar and in turn, the Registrar shall forward the report to HETAC and the following

- The approved dissertation (record of the work, hard bound dissertation, CD-ROM, video etc.) containing signed declarations by the candidate and the examiners

- The reports of the examiners.

HETAC Council meetings will normally be convened to approve examination results in June and October.
Approved results will be issued within two weeks of the appropriate Council meeting.

5.7.7   Guidelines for Reports by Examiners
Reports of examiners should address the following

Masters Degree (Research)
Examiners should assess and may recommend the award of Degree of Master (Research) in accordance with the following general criteria (where discipline-specific standards for awards in respect of research degree programmes have been published by HETAC those should be used instead):

Title Name	Masters Degree
Purpose	The knowledge, skill and competence acquired are relevant to the furthering of the discipline and personal development, participation in society and community, employment, and access to additional education and training.
Level	9
Volume	Large
Knowledge – breadth	A systematic understanding of knowledge at, or informed by, the forefront of a field of learning
Knowledge – kind	A critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, generally informed by the forefront of a field of learning

Know-how and skill – range	Demonstrate a range of standard and specialised research or equivalent tools and techniques
Know-how and skill – selectivity	Select from complex and advanced skills across a field of learning; develop new skills to a high level, including novel and emerging techniques
Competence – context	Act in a wide and often unpredictable variety of professional levels and ill defined contexts
Competence – role	Take significant responsibility for the work of individuals and groups; lead and initiate activity
Competence – learning to learn	Learn to self-evaluate and take responsibility for continuing academic/professional development
Competence – insight	Scrutinise and reflect on social norms and relationships and act to change them
Progression & Transfer	Progression to programmes leading to Doctoral Degree (Award-type O), or to another Masters Degree or to a Post-graduate Diploma (Award-types M or N).
Articulation	

Doctorate in Philosophy

The overall standard at level 10 of the framework is established in the following quotation "Learning outcomes at this level relate to the discovery and development of new knowledge and skills and delivering findings at the frontiers of knowledge and application. Further outcomes at this level relate to specialist skills and transferable skills required for managing such as the abilities to critique and develop organisational structures and initiate change."

Examiners are required to assess the candidate (*viva voce*) using the dissertation as evidence and satisfy themselves that the candidate has attained the standard for the award.

The examiners are required to report under each of the eight learning outcome strands (knowledge, skill and competence) described in the standard.

Standard to be attained by the candidate

Examiners should assess and may recommend the award of Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in accordance with the following general criteria (where discipline-specific standards for awards in respect of research degree programmes have been published by HETAC those should be used instead): -

Title Name	Doctoral Degree Doctor in philosophy
Purpose	The knowledge, skill and competence acquired are relevant to the furthering of the discipline and personal development, participation in society and community, employment, and access to additional education and training.
Level	10
Volume	Large
Knowledge – breadth	A systematic acquisition and understanding of a substantial body of knowledge which is at the forefront of a field of learning
Knowledge – kind	The creation and interpretation of new knowledge, through original research, or other advanced scholarship, of a quality to satisfy review by peers
Know-how and skill – range	Demonstrate a significant range of the principal skills, techniques, tools, practices and/or materials which are associated with a field of learning; develop new skills, techniques, tools, practices and/or materials
Know-how and skill – selectivity	Respond to abstract problems that expand and redefine existing procedural knowledge
Competence – context	Exercise personal responsibility and largely autonomous initiative in complex and unpredictable situations, in professional or equivalent contexts
Competence – role	Communicate results of research and innovation to peers; engage in critical dialogue; lead and originate complex social processes
Competence – learning to learn	Learn to critique the broader implications of applying knowledge to particular contexts
Competence – insight	Scrutinise and reflect on social norms and relationships and lead action to change them

The results of the examination will be reported to HETAC by the chairperson. These results will also be communicated to the Research Office

5.8 Appeals Procedure (post viva voce)

The acceptable grounds for appeal include:

- Major breaches of procedures have occurred

- A conflict of interest has occurred

- Errors occurred in the examination process

Disagreement with the expert judgement or opinion of the examiners is not an acceptable ground for appeal because the *viva voce* examination provides the candidate with the opportunity to defend his/her work.

The Registrar of NCI shall give students access to relevant information to prepare a case for appeal. The candidate shall be afforded the opportunity to present a case. Formal procedures for dealing swiftly with complaints from research students about the quality of the NCI learning and support provision shall be put in place.

In the event that the appeals process leads to the recommendation that the decision of the examination board be referred for review, this review shall be undertaken by the Council of HETAC. Following such a review, one of the following options shall be exercised:

(a) NCI will be requested to reconvene the original examination board to review the new information

(b) NCI will be requested to undertake a new examination

(c) A different third level institution (or other provider) will be requested to undertake a new examination

Appendix 1: Research Student Procedure

RO-Research Office
HOS-Head of School
PRC-Postgraduate Research Committee
AC-Academic Council
PS-Principal Supervisor
SL-Student Life

```
┌────────────────────┐
│ Candidate contacts RO │
│ and School            │
└──────────┬─────────┘
           │
           ▼
┌────────────────────┐
│ Candidate completes  │
│ application form with │
│ transcripts etc. submits │
│ to RO and SL         │
└────────────────────┘

┌────────────────────┐
│ RO arranges interview │
│ with HOS             │
└────────────────────┘

┌────────────────────┐
│ RO submit application │
│ & School report to    │
│ PRC for approval by   │
│ Academic Council      │
└────────────────────┘

┌────────────────────┐
│ RO inform SL to       │
│ register student as   │
│ Master by Research    │
└──────────┬─────────┘
           │
           ▼
┌────────────────────┐
│ Commence course      │
│ work and HETAC       │
│ application          │
└──────────┬─────────┘
           │
           ▼
┌────────────────────┐          ┌────────────┐
│ Examination          │─────────▶│ END        │
└──────────┬─────────┘          └────────────┘
           │
           ▼
┌────────────────────┐
│ Assign Principal      │
│ supervisor and submit │
│ application to HETAC   │
│ on Approval of PRC    │
└────────────────────┘
```

```
┌─────────────────────┐                          ┌─────────────────┐        ┌──────────────────────┐
│ Commence guided     │                          │ 1. Masters      │        │ Prepare/Modify       │
│ reading and         │                          └─────────────────┘        │ proposal             │
│ seminars            │                          ┌─────────────────┐        └──────────────────────┘
└─────────────────────┘                          │ 2. Repeat       │
           │                                      └─────────────────┘                   │
           ▼                                                                             ▼
┌─────────────────────┐                          ┌─────────────────┐        ┌──────────────────────┐
│ General Exam        │─────────────────────────▶│ 3. Discontinue  │        │ Agreed by Principal  │
└─────────────────────┘                          └─────────────────┘        │ supervisor           │
           │                                                                 └──────────────────────┘
           ▼                                      ┌─────────────────┐                   │
┌─────────────────────┐                          │ 1: Masters      │                   ▼
│ Select supervisory  │                          └─────────────────┘        ┌──────────────────────┐
│ team with HETAC     │                                                      │ Continue with        │
│ approval            │                                                      │ guided research      │
└─────────────────────┘                                                      └──────────────────────┘
           │                                                                             │
           ▼                                      ┌─────────────────┐                   ▼
┌─────────────────────┐                          │ 2: Repeat       │        ┌──────────────────────┐
│ Public defence      │─────────────────────────▶└─────────────────┘        │ Formal progress      │
└─────────────────────┘                                                      │ reports              │
           │                                                                 └──────────────────────┘
           ▼                                                                             │
┌─────────────────────┐                                                                  ▼
│ Submit transfer to  │                                                      ┌──────────────────────┐
│ PhD register form to│                                                      │ Dissertation         │
│ RO, PRC, AC &       │                                                      │                      │
│ HETAC               │                                                      └──────────────────────┘
└─────────────────────┘                                                                  │
┌─────────────────────┐                                                                  ▼
│ Undertake guided    │                                                      ┌──────────────────────┐
│ research            │                                                      │ Examination and      │
└─────────────────────┘               ┌─────────────────────┐               │ formal presentation  │
           │                           │ A: Distinguished    │               │ (see section 4.4.6)  │
           ▼                           │ Pass                │               └──────────────────────┘
┌─────────────────────┐               ├─────────────────────┤               ┌──────────────────────┐
│ Progress reports    │               │ B: Satisfactory     │               │ Advise RO, PRC,      │
│ and seminars        │               ├─────────────────────┤               │ AC & HETAC           │
├─────────────────────┤               │ C: Minor            │               ├──────────────────────┤
│ Dissertation and    │               │ Corrections,        │               │ Graduate inform SL   │
│ Submission          │               │ supervisor          │               │                      │
├─────────────────────┤               │ approval            │               └──────────────────────┘
│ Examination (see    │──────────────▶├─────────────────────┤
│ Appendix 12) on     │               │ D: Major            │
│ approval of exam    │               │ corrections & re-   │
│ board by HETAC      │               │ examine             │
├─────────────────────┤               ├─────────────────────┤
│ Advise RO, PRC,     │               │ E: Masters          │
│ AC & HETAC          │               ├─────────────────────┤
├─────────────────────┤               │ F: Not suitable     │
│ Graduate inform SL  │               └─────────────────────┘
│                     │
└─────────────────────┘
```

Appendix 2 - Application for Registration Form (NCI)

NATIONAL COLLEGE OF IRELAND
APPLICATION TO NCI FOR REGISTRATION OF A RESEARCH DEGREE PROGRAMME

1. Candidate's Details

Surname: _____

Forename: _____

Title: _____

Permanent Address: _____

_____

_____

Phone: _____

Mobile: _____

Email: _____

RSI/PPS Number _____

Date of Birth:

Day		**Month**		**Year**	

Nationality: _____

Sex: **Male** ☐   **Female** ☐

2. School in which Research will take place _____

3. Award Sought:

Master of Arts	Master of Science	Doctor of Philosophy
☐	☐	☐

4. Title/Area of Proposed Research Degree Programme _____

5. Proposed Duration of Research Programme

Proposed Start Date: Proposed Finish Date:

Full-time: ☐   Part-time: ☐

6. **Third Level Education**

Name & address of institutions attended	Awarding Body	Years of Study (from – to)	Award Title	Award Classification	Date Conferred

* Graduates of awarding bodies other than the HETAC must provide a transcript of final, undergraduate examinations results, together with copies of the award(s); a translation of non-English transcripts to be provided. This documentation will not be returned.

7. Professional/Industrial Experience
*Please give full details, in chronological order, of all previous **relevant** employment and/or industrial experience.*

Dates (from – to)	Employer's name & address	Title and/or position held	Duties

8. Other Relevant Information

8.1. Membership of professional bodies (including grade of membership and admission dates)

9. School Research Advisor
Note: The research advisor is assigned for initial support and is responsible for counselling the students on their course of study, their contextual studies, and the general process for the duration of their candidature.

9.1 **Name:**

9.2 **Current Position:**

A formal research supervisor is assigned on passing of the course work exams (semester 2). See Appendix 4.

Appendix 3 - School Resource Form

National College of Ireland

<u>**School Resource Form**</u>
To be completed by the Head of School or by a member of faculty in the area of research and signed off by the Head of School for submission to the Research Office after interview with candidate. This form along with the candidate's application form will be put to the Research Committee for approval by Academic Council to commence a program of research at NCI.

Date of interview _____

Name of candidate _____

1. Does the candidate meet the minimum entry criteria for this course?

_____

2. Does the candidate have the ability to carry out the proposed research project?

_____

_____

_____

3. Is the proposed research area within the strategic research focus of the School?

_____

4. Does the School have the appropriate space and resources to facilitate the proposed project?

_____

_____

5. How is the project to be funded? Please attach funding agency application.

_____

6. Give the name of the research advisor.

_____

7. Is there a potential primary supervisor? What experience do they have in this field? Have they previously supervised a PhD research project? If not have they completed the course on research supervision?

_____

_____

8. Does the student need further training to complete the project? If so has the School outsourced the required training? Has the training facility been sourced? Additional cost accounted for in research budget?

_____
_____
_____

9. Are required facilities available and funded e.g. IT, Library, special equipment, travel?

_____

10. Should a placement be offered to this applicant?

_____

If no please note a reason for decline:

_____

If yes are there any conditions of offer:

_____

11. Please note any additional information that is relevant to the applicant's interview below:

_____

_____

Attending Interviewers (Please Print):   _____

                                              _____

Signature of Head of School: _____

Appendix 4 – Application to HETAC

NATIONAL COLLEGE OF IRELAND
APPLICATION TO HETAC FOR REGISTRATION On A
RESEARCH DEGREE PROGRAMME

1. Candidate's Details

Surname: _____

Forename: _____

Title: _____

Permanent Address: _____
_____
_____
_____

Date of Birth:

Day		**Month**		**Year**	

Nationality: _____

Sex: **Male** ☐   **Female** ☐

2. School in which Research will take place _____

3. Award Sought:

Master of Arts	Master of Science	Doctor of Philosophy
☐	☐	☐

4. Institutional status in this discipline area

Approved	Accredited	Delegated Authority
☐	☐	☐

5. Title of Proposed Research Degree Programme _____

5.1 Fields of Education Classification (CSO)

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3

5.2 Proposed Duration of Research Programme

Proposed Start Date: Proposed Finish Date: Full-time: ☐   Part-time: ☐

5.3   Proposed Programme of Research
        Please provide details of the proposed programme of research that you intend to undertake under the headings listed below. *This information should be typed or printed on separate sheet(s) and attached to application.*

- Aims and objectives of the proposed programme of research
- Research methods
- Schedule of work (in detail for the first year) outlining the timeframe for the entire programme.
- Information regarding access to external resources, collaboration with other research groups and international conference participation

5.4   Generic training and specialist courses provided:

6   Third Level Education

Name & address of institutions attended	Awarding Body	Years of Study (from – to)	Award Title	Award Classification	Date Conferred

* Graduates of awarding bodies other than the HETAC must provide a transcript of final, undergraduate examinations results, together with copies of the award(s); a translation of non-English transcripts to be provided. This documentation will not be returned.

7   Professional/Industrial Experience
*Please give full details, in chronological order, of all previous **relevant** employment and/or industrial experience.*

Dates (from – to)	Employer's name & address	Title and/or position held	Duties

8   Other Relevant Information

8.1   Publications

_____

_____

_____

8.2   Membership of professional bodies (including grade of membership and admission dates)

_____

_____

_____

9   Supervisory Arrangements
Attach full C.V. with comprehensive bibliography, and complete the following.

Role: Principal supervisor☐ Co-supervisor☐ Mentor Supervisor ☐

9.1   Name: _____

9.2   Qualifications: _____

_____

_____

_____

9.3   Publications: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

9.4   Current Position: _____

Please provide the same details as above on a separate sheet for any additional supervisors, including off campus and mentoring supervisors, where applicable.

9.5   Details of other Postgraduate students currently being supervised (i.e. that have bee<u>n approved for admission</u> to the HETAC postgraduate register or approved at another institution)

Candidate's Name	Award (MSc, PhD, etc.)	Institution

9.6   Details of other Postgraduate students <u>previously</u> supervised (HETAC or otherwise)

Candidate's Name	Award (MSc, PhD, etc.)	Institution

The institution will undertake to supply such materials, support and guidance as will allow the applicant to carry out the proposed programme of research as outlined above, and to the best of its knowledge affirms that the applicant is capable of completing a programme of research toward the degree of Master/Doctor o Philosophy. The institution has ensured, to the best of its ability, that the information provided in this application form is correct.

Ethical Considerations
for Research Project

(Appendix 4 continued)
Application for approval by Research Committee
(to accompany research proposal)
NCI endeavours to follow the highest standards of ethics when undertaking research. This form is intended to allow the PRC to ensure this integrity.

Name of applicant

Date:

Contact details (e.g. e-mail)

Status
(Staff, post-grad. etc)

Title of project

Supervisor
(if appropriate)

Date of proposed start

(Please note: You may exceed the space provided if necessary)

1. **Describe how the study/survey will be proceed.**

Please attach copies of all questionnaires/ interview schedules.

2. **Participant group**

    How many participants are required?

3. **What design/ methodology will you use?**
How will reliability and validity be assessed?

4. **Where will participants be tested / interviewed?**

5. **How long (per participant) will the testing/ interviewing take?**

6. **Does the study involve deception or withholding of information? If yes, why is this necessary?**

7. **Does the study involve physical risk to the participants? If yes, why is this necessary? How has it been minimised?**

8. **Does the study involve any psychological risk to participants (e.g. upset, worry, stress, fatigue, feelings of being demeaned.)? If yes, how has this been minimised?**

9. **Does the study affect the participants socially (e.g. loss of status, privacy or reputation)? If yes, why is this necessary? How has it been minimised?**

10. **Does the study require participants to reveal information of a sensitive nature? If yes, why is this necessary, How will the procedure minimise distress caused by such disclosures?**

11. **Are there any risks other than those encountered in every day life? If yes, how have they been minimised?**

12. **How will confidentiality of participants be assured?**

13. **Can participants withdraw from the study at any stage? Are they made aware of this?**

14. **If observational research is to be undertaken without prior consent, describe the situation and how privacy, confidentiality and dignity will be preserved?**

15.	**Will participants be paid? What is the rate of payment?**	
16.	**How will you accommodate the Freedom of Information Act in relation to data storage?**	Please see NCI's Freedom of Information Policy
17.	**How will consent be obtained? (Attach a copy of the consent form)**	
18.	**How will the participant be debriefed?(if applicable)**	

19.	*Declaration of applicant* *I confirm that the information I have provided here is true and I will follow procedure with due care and diligence*	
	Signature of applicant	
20.	*Declaration of supervisor* *I have read through and approved the contents of this application.*	- -
	Signature of supervisor	
		- -

Appendix 5 – Intellectual Property Policy

Intellectual property (IP) resulting from research can often be further exploited to eventual commercial ends. This policy aims to protect all parties involved and enhance their mutual benefit by addressing issues of the management of intellectual property in a fair and equitable manner. This policy intends to comply with and must be implemented in the context of National Codes of Conduct and European Union regulations and guidelines.

As a general principal of law in Ireland, ownership of inventions and other IP created by employees during the course of employment resides with their employers, whether fully or partially publicly funded.

An objective of certain research projects is to enable the creation of commercial opportunities that maximise the exploitation of the research output. This is recognised by the College and will be implemented to benefit the community at large.

It is up to NCI to ensure a signed agreement by all parties (staff and students) assigning project intellectual property to NCI is in place before work commences on any research project. The owner of the IP has a responsibility to manage and exploit the IP and so NCI must consider what resources are required to fund patent applications. Confidentiality should be addressed at this stage including the researcher's entitlement to publish, the researcher should be aware that publication prior to patent application may affect the process.

Procedure and administration of policy:

1. Member of research team must inform Research Office of any discovery or invention that may be patentable or protected. The originator is expected to co-operate with the College in every way possible, but at no expense.
2. Researchers must liaise with the Research Office before publication of material containing relevant IP.
3. The Research Office will consult with ICELT and if deemed suitable the College will apply for patent and options to license and other contractual arrangements will be sought as soon as possible to support potential commercial use.
4. If at any stage the College does not intend to pursue the patent application the ownership of IP may then be transferred to the originator unless previously contracted otherwise. The College reserves the right to terminate the process at any stage it sees fit.
5. The College will keep the originator abreast of the situation involving the development and commercialisation of the IP generated.

This agreement should be flexible enough to allow future amendments thereby optimising exploitation. Partners should recognise that they all must share equitably in the rights to the research results and in the benefits derived from exploiting those results. Some funding agencies retain their own intellectual property policies which must be adhered to on receipt of funding for research and are usually addressed in the Terms and Conditions of each agency. . Written permission must be granted from the Funding agency for any transfer of ownership.

Appendix 6 – Structure of Research Proposal

1. Structure of Formal Research Proposals
Given the complexity of many research projects and their potential for generating multiple sub-projects, candidates will devise a detailed research plan after successful completion of the General Examination. The plan may cover the following topics

- Title of the Research Proposal: This may change slightly over the programme of the study.

- Summary of the Research Topic: This is typically a two page outline description detailing the background to the problem.

- Main Problem Being Addressed: Having a clear, precise definition of the problem under investigation is very important.

- Research Hypothesis and Main Research Questions: Typically, two or three research questions are identified. These help define the structure of investigation that will be used. It is useful to publish a working paper on each of these questions as the investigation progresses.

- Overview of the Area and Summary of Your Proposed Approach: A two page description of the background of the problem should set the context of the study.

- Special Resources Required: The research work may require access to specialised equipment, software, journals, a research visit abroad and so on.

- Major Contribution to Research Knowledge Anticipated: A dissertation is a work of scholarly investigation and differs from a report or a book. It is judged on a prescribed set of criteria (see section 5.7.6). Although the outcomes are tentative, it is useful to incorporate these criteria into the research work from the beginning.

- Main Research Milestones Anticipated: Candidates should agree a number (perhaps, three or four) research milestones and their likely delivery dates with their supervisors at the start of the process.

- Description of the Experimental Design / Validation Methodology: A dissertation will be judged on the rigor of its arguments. The experimental design and the validation process should be agreed early in the process.

- The research proposal must be signed by the supervisor and forwarded to the Research Committee.

2. Structure of Technical Reports
All postgraduate research students are required to submit at least one working paper per year for the duration of their research. The paper should reflect progress on their research work. Working papers must be contributed to the series by a staff member of NCI, other than one of the authors. The contributor (internal reviewer) should forward the paper to the Research Office for inclusion in the series.

The working papers should be formatted as a Word document, single- spaced and approximately 10 to 15 pages in length (3,500 – 5,000 words), excluding references. The front page should contain the title of the paper, author(s) name, qualifications, email addresses and their institutions.

The content should consist of an abstract, a statement of purpose of research, a brief literature review, a section on the methodology and original work of the researcher, data analysis, conclusions and references

Texts must be formally referenced. References to web sites must include the access dates. The working papers will be published on the NCI web-site.

Appendix 7 - Progress Report Form

Research Office

Master of Science/Master of Arts/Master of Business/PhD

PROGRESS REPORT FORM

(FORMAL PROGRESS MEETING)

PART A. STUDENT DETAILS
Surname or Family Name
Forenames or Other Names
Student number
MRA number (if applicable)
Award Sought ☐ MSc   ☐ MA   ☐ PhD
Method of Study ☐ Full-time   ☐ Part-time
Date of registration
School
Research Project Title:
Supervisory Team   Primary Supervisor: Team Member(s):
Date of meeting:

PART B. STUDENT'S COMMENTS

Please give your own assessment of your progress, identifying where appropriate what you feel may be strengths and/or weaknesses.

Transferable Skills			
Assess yourself in the following areas:	*Excellent*	*Adequate*	*Inadequate*
Oral Communication: do you communicate clearly and fluently			
Presentation Skills: can you present your science clearly and in ways appropriate to different audiences?			
Written Skills: can you write clearly and in an appropriate style?			
Maintenance of 'Day notebooks-research diaries'; up-to-date and comprehensive?			
Organisational Skills- How well do you; a) organise your practical work? b) organise your references, reprints etc? c) manage your time ? (d) organise external surveys/meetings?			

Supervision and Facilities

1.(a) How often do you have formal meetings with your supervisor to review your progress?

(b) Is there a record of the outcomes of those meetings?

(d) Comment on the usefulness of those meetings.

(e) Do you have sufficient access to your supervisor at other times?

2. How satisfied are you with the supervision you have received? (What has been useful to you? What needs improving?)

3. How satisfactory are the facilities within the School for your research?

4. How adequate are the computing facilities for your research?

5. How well is your topic provided for in the Library?

v4.2

Plans for next 6 months

Please give a brief outline, IN POINT FORM, of your study plans including goals, plans and outcomes for the next 6 months. Include actions to be taken to improve any "inadequate" ratings indicated above.

PART C. PRINCIPAL SUPERVISOR'S COMMENTS ON STUDENT'S PERFORMANCE			

Please give an assessment of the student's progress, indicating any strengths and/or weaknesses of which the student should be aware.

Transferable Skills			
Please indicate your assessment of the student's performance in the following areas:	*Excellent*	*Adequate*	*Inadequate*
Oral Communication			
Presentation Skills			
Written Skills			
Maintenance of 'Day Notebooks-research diaries'			
Organisational Skills			

Assessment of Overall Performance

Is the student acquiring adequate background knowledge of the literature of the research topic?

Are you satisfied with the student's attendance and the amount of time devoted to the research project?

How often are informal supervisory meetings held?

Are notes kept of informal supervisory meetings?

Is the student on target for completing by the due date?

If the student has reported any difficulties with facilities etc. what action has been or is being taken?

PART D. SUMMARY OF PROGRESS MEETING

Comments on Agreed Action Plan for the next 6 months, or for final year students, remainder of Period of Study. Please include plans for progress of the research and any further training needed by the student

Principal Supervisor's recommendation

☐ Excellent   ☐ Satisfactory

☐ Satisfactory with certain reservations* (please indicate action that needs taken)

☐ Serious Concern   ☐ Unsatisfactory

Student…………………………………………… Date……………….……

Principal Supervisor………………………………. Date……………………...

Appendix 8 – Structure of the Dissertation

It is recommended that a Masters thesis should not exceed 45,000 words and that a Doctoral thesis should not exceed 90,000 words. In the case of analytical research projects, the amount of text would normally be much less than these recommendations.

Candidates must submit three hard-bound copies to NCI on completion of the examination process. NCI regulations require that a page containing the following declaration should come immediately after the title page:

A significant number of research dissertations share a common structure, as described below. This structure may be inappropriate for analytical research projects, but if it is interpreted as being indicative rather than prescriptive it may be of help to some candidates.

Declaration

I [name] declare that this thesis is submitted by me in partial fulfilment of the requirement fro the degree [name award], is entirely my own work except where otherwise accredited. It has not at any time either whole or in part, been submitted for any other educational award.

[Candidate's Signature]

The examiners must sign the following declaration which should be bound with the final version of the thesis.

We have passed the knowledge, skill and competence of the candidate [name] by way of viva voce examination using the thesis, submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree [name award], as evidence and find that it meets with the standard determined by the Higher Education and Training Awards Council. We recommend that the degree be awarded.

[Examiners' Signatures]
[Examiners' names, date]

Title Page

The title page of each volume of the dissertation should contain:

- The full title of the dissertation, with any subtitles, in 20 point type

- If there is more than one volume, the total number of volumes and the number of the particular volume

- The full name of the author with any distinctions and qualifications

- The award for which the dissertation is submitted to the Council of HETAC

- The National College of Ireland

- The names of the supervisors of the research

- As the last line of the page – Submitted to the Higher Education and Training awards Council, [Month] [Year]

Declarations

The abstract should consist of at most 120 words, followed by a list of internationally recognised keywords. The abstract should be typed in single spacing and should indicate the author and title of the thesis in the form of a heading

Contents Pages – Chapter, content and page number

Executive Summary (Perhaps 3 Pages) Often this starts with a precise definition (one paragraph) of the problem being addressed, followed by a half page summary of the proposed solution to this problem. The main research questions should be identified. The remainder of this chapter could be devoted to a summary of the contents of the various chapters of the dissertation. Care is needed to ensure that the executive summary is consistent with the remainder of the dissertation.

Introduction (Perhaps 10 pages.) This chapter should define the background to the problem being addressed and discuss the reasons for undertaking the research.

Literature Review (Perhaps 25 pages.) This should summarise C.100 relevant articles (journal papers, books and web references – with access dates) in the area in question. This section is meant to demonstrate expert knowledge of current research activity by the candidate and it should contain a categorisation of the published work.

Problem Description (Perhaps 25 pages.) This should give a detailed description of the problem area with a clear definition of the relevant issues, case studies and so on.

Proposed Solution (Perhaps 25 pages.) This should give a detailed description of the solution proposed together with supporting arguments.

Data Analysis (Perhaps 10 pages.) This should demonstrate that the methodology is rigorous and is capable of independent replication.

Future Work (Perhaps 5 pages.) This should give concluding comments on the research work and indicating directions that future research might take.

References - It is recommended that candidates use the Berkeley or other internationally approved style. In scientific publications, the following style is often used:

[1996a] Melhorn K., Mutzel P. On the Embedding Phase of the Hopcraft and Tarjan Planarity Testing Algorithm. Algorithmica, 16, 233 – 242 (1996).

Here the "a" indicates that it is the second reference for the authors in 1996. (The candidate may publish material in advance of the presentation of the dissertation, but references should be made to any such publications, including material submitted for publication or in the press.)

Appendices

Footnotes and Quotations - Footnotes and indented quotations should be single line spaced. The footnotes of each chapter should be numbered consecutively.

Four soft bound copies of the dissertation are required for the examination stage, together with a summary working paper in electronic form (for publication on the NCI web site). Three hard bound copies of the thesis are required at the completion of the examination stage.

Doctoral theses - Often follow this general structure, except that several chapters would typically be devoted to the original work of the author.

Print and Pagination

It is a HETAC requirement that the Council receive

- A hard bound printed thesis containing the mandatory declarations, signed and dated

- A CD Rom with a PDF version of the dissertation

- A permanent and complete record of performances, compositions and artefacts submitted for assessment.

The dissertation should be typeset on A4 acid free paper on single sides only. All pages should be numbered. The body text line spacing should be 1.5 lines, single line spacing should be used for the other text and there should be six point spacing between paragraphs. The left margin should be at least 40 mm and the right margin at least 20 mm. Where the thesis consists of more than one volume, the pagination should indicate the relevant volume number as well as the page number on each page. Page numbers should be located centrally at the bottom of the page and about 20mm above the edge of the page.

The front board (cover) of the thesis shall contain the title of the thesis, the initials and surname of the candidate, the named award (M.Phil. or Ph.D.) for which the dissertation is submitted, the year of the submission (and, where relevant, the volume number and the total number of volumes). The same information (excluding the title of the dissertation) should be printed along the spine of the cover in such a way as to be easily legible when the copy is lying flat with the front cover uppermost. The cover should be dark blue and the lettering on the cover and spine should be of plain graphic design.

Appendix 9a (RO07)- Report of Chair - PhD

COMHAIRLE NA NDÁMHACHTAINÍ ARDOIDEACHAIS AGUS OILIÚNA
HIGHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING AWARDS COUNCIL
CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
Please Type/Print

1. Institution: _____

2. Candidate: _____

3. Award Sought:

Candidates Name:	Award: (MA. PhD etc)	Institution

4. Does the thesis constitute the award of Degree of Doctor of Philosophy following your assessment in accordance with the HETAC criteria:

YES   ☐   NO   ☐   State:

Please indicate from the following: -

(a) Recommended   ☐
(b) Not Recommended   ☐

Please Note:

Chairperson should refer to HETAC Taught and Research Programme Accreditation Policy, Criteria and Processes 2005 and include substantive comments which should be detailed, as necessary, on an official continuation sheet and securely affixed to this covering form.
External examiner's report should also be attached (refer to Section D, HETAC Examinations Marks and Standards and para 5.7.6).

Chairperson's Name: _____

Address: _____

_____

Chairperson's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 9b (RO08) - Report of Chair – Masters Degree

COMHAIRLE NA NDÁMHACHTAINÍ ARDOIDEACHAIS AGUS OILIÚNA
HIGHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING AWARDS COUNCIL
v4.2

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT DEGREE OF MASTER (RESEARCH)
Please Type/Print

1. Institution: _____

2. Candidate: _____

3. Award Sought: _____

_____

4. Does the thesis constitute the award of Master Degree following your assessment in accordance with the HETAC criteria:

YES   ☐   No   ☐

Please indicate from the following:

(a) Recommended without modification   ☐

(b) Recommended with minor corrections   ☐

(c) Not Recommended   ☐

Please Note:

Chairperson should refer to HETAC Taught and Research Programme Accreditation Policy, Criteria and Processes 2005 and include substantive comments which should be detailed, as necessary, on an official continuation sheet and securely affixed to this covering form.
External examiner's report should also be attached (refer to Section D, HETAC Examinations Marks and Standards and para 5.7.6 of NCI Quality Assurance Handbook).

Chairperson's Name: _____

Address: _____

_____

Chairperson's Signature: _____

Date:_____

Appendix 10 (RO05) – Intention to Present

COMHAIRLE NA NDÁMHACHTAINÍ ARDOIDEACHAIS AGUS OILIÚNA
HIGHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING AWARDS COUNCIL
NOTE OF INTENTION TO PRESENT FOR EXAMINATION FOR
POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH DEGREE

National College of Ireland

Notification of intention to present must be submitted at least two months in advance of the proposed date for the submission of material for examination. Material for examination must be submitted to the sponsoring designated institution at least two months in advance of relevant exam board meetings.

1.1 Institution: _____
v4.2

1.2 Candidate: _____

1.3. Award Sought:

MA	MSc	PhD
☐	☐	☐

1.4 Thesis Title: _____

2. Supervisor(s):

Name: _____   _____

Located at: _____   _____

Telephone No: _____   _____

Email: _____   _____

3. Internal Examiner:

Name: _____

Position: _____

Address: _____

TelephoneNo:_____

Email: _____

4. Proposed External Examiner(s):

Name: _____   _____

Position: _____   _____

Address: _____   _____

Telephone No: _____   _____

Email: _____   _____

5. Proposed Chairperson

Name: _____   _____

Position: _____   _____

Address: _____   _____

Telephone No: _____   _____

Email: _____   _____

6. Head of Academic Affairs/Registrar:_____ Date:_____

v4.2

Appendix 11 (RO06) – Application to Transfer Registers

COMHAIRLE NA NDÁMHACHTAINÍ ARDOIDEACHAIS AGUS OILIÚNA
HIGHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING AWARDS COUNCIL
APPLICATION FOR TRANSFER TO DOCTORAL REGISTER

National
College of
Ireland

Please Type/Print

1.   1.1 Sponsoring Designated Institution:

_____

        1.2 School/Department:

_____

2.   Currently Registered for:

_____

3.   Title of Proposed Doctoral project:

_____

_____

_____

4.   Area of Specialisation:

_____

5.   Duration of Research Programme:

        5.1 Date of admission to Master's Register: _____

        5.2 Proposed date of completion of PhD: _____

        5.3 Full-Time   5.4 Part-time

6.   Personal Details: (Details of surname and other names of candidates previously registered   with
HETAC will be used on all postgraduate documentation)

        6.1 Surname:

_____

        6.2 Other Names:

_____

        6.3 Permanent home address:

_____

_____

        6.4 HETAC reference No (MRA):

_____

7.   Proposed Programme of Research

v4.2

Please provide details of how it is proposed to develop and enhance the original programme of research in order to meet the standard and criteria required for a doctorate under the headings listed below.

      7.1 Overview of current status of programme of work

      7.2 Aims and objectives of the proposed doctoral programme

      7.3 Programme or schedule of work, indicating the time frame for completion

This information should be typed or printed on separate sheet(s) which should then be attached to this application

NOTE: The candidates attention is drawn to the requirement that credit has not, and will not, be given by any other awarding body for any part of the programme of research proposed.

I, the undersigned, certify that the information I have provided in this application is correct and that I have read and am aware of my responsibilities under Section D, HETAC Examinations Marks and Standards.

Signature of applicant: _____

Date: _____

8.   Supervisor's Statement of Grounds for Transfer

      Principal Supervisor

      8.1 Name: _____

      8.2 Qualifications: _____

      8.3 Current Position: _____

      8.4 Number of other postgraduate research candidates currently being supervised, indicating whether Master's or PhD candidates

      _____

      _____

      8.5 Declaration of support or otherwise for transfer including assessment of work to   date and the grounds for transfer.
This information should be typed or printed on separate sheet(s) which should then be attached to this application.

I, the undersigned, am satisfied with the proposed application for transfer. I have read the appropriate section of HETAC Examinations Marks and Standards.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

The same details as above must be provided on a separate sheet by any additional supervisors, including off-campus and mentoring supervisors, where applicable.

9. The institution requests the HIGHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING AWARDS COUNCIL to consider the application of _____, a student of this institution, as detailed above, for transfer to the postgraduate register for the award of PhD.

v4.2

_____
Signature of Registrar/Head of Academic Affairs/other appropriate officer

Date: _____

Appendix 12 Procedures for dealing with breaches of regulations

(as extracted from Chapter 6 of the Quality Assurance Handbook)

6.6   Disciplinary Policy & Procedures

As members of the College community, learners have an obligation to know and abide by, in addition to the laws of the state, all College policies and procedures, including the College Disciplinary Policy. Through its policies and regulations statements, the College has made an effort to outline the behavioural expectations it holds. In general, the College expects that the common sense of a mature and responsible individual will determine if the behaviour is one that should be avoided, but may be adjudicated upon by the College. The provisions of the Disciplinary Policy continue to apply when a learner is outside the campus on an academic exercise, attending College events or representing the College in any way. Learners should be aware that they are viewed by the public as representatives of the College and they are expected to behave in a manner that reflects positively on themselves and the College.

6.6.1   Authority and Timelines

The Registrar shall, as soon as is reasonably practicable (and generally this will be within 5 working days of receipt of notice in writing to her/him), deal summarily with what s/he considers to be a minor offence or refer to the Disciplinary Committee that which s/he considers to be a major offence. Where a learner admits to having committed a minor offence to the Registrar, if s/he deems it appropriate, may, with the consent of the learner, deal with the case in a summary manner.

Minor Offences

Minor offences regarding damage or related matters shall be dealt with by the Registrar who shall in her/his own discretion decide the appropriate penalty, if any, that should be imposed in each case. Similarly, minor academic offences such as, learner(s) during lectures, classes, research work, field exercises, seminars or any other academic work, be responsible for any breach of good conduct or discipline, or fail to obey instructions from any member of staff, or breach of any regulations, such as a member of staff may require a learner(s) to withdraw from a particular lecture or class or other academic activity, the staff member if he/she thinks fit, may bring the matter to the notice of the Registrar for appropriate action to be taken.
The Registrar will then decide the nature of the breach and may request the staff member to provide a written report on the matter.

Minor offences dealt by the Registrar will be concluded as follows:

First Offence – Written warning put on learners file

Second Offence – Second written warning put on learners file

Third Offence – Registrar will refer learner(s) to Disciplinary Committee

Any decision or any penalty or sanction imposed in this manner may be appealed by the learner concerned in writing to the Disciplinary Committee within 10 working days of receiving notification of the decision or penalty. The written notice of appeal must state briefly the grounds on which the appeal is made.

The learner(s) will be notified in writing that they are requested to attend a Disciplinary Committee. The learner(s) will be given no less than 72 hours notice to attend the committee.

Decisions of the Disciplinary Committee, on appeal from the Registrar, shall be final in relation to minor offences. The Registrar may from time to time establish regulations relating to the handling of minor offences.

The Disciplinary Committee shall be advised of these regulations.

In the event and need for an investigation, the Registrar will appoint a member of the Academic Council to investigate the matter and provide the Registrar with a complete and comprehensive report into the incident, and generally this will be within 5 working days of receipt of notice. This role will also include the interviewing of individuals concerned, research material that may be required to conduct the investigation and assist the Disciplinary Committee in its reaching conclusions.

The Registrar will then distribute this report for the attention of the Disciplinary Committee and the learner(s) concerned. The learner(s) will be notified in writing that they are requested to attend a Disciplinary Committee. The learner(s) will be given no less than 72 hours notice to attend the committee.

In circumstances where cases extend beyond the normal expected timeframes, the Registrar will appoint an independent member from Academic Council to ensure that the learner (s) concerned is provided with appropriate updates and at appropriate intervals up to the conclusion of the relevant committee business.

In such circumstances as determined by the President of the College "and without prejudice", the College has the right to immediately suspend any learner(s) whom the College believe to be a threat or danger to the College, to staff members or fellow learners, until the disciplinary process is complete.

6.6.2   Disciplinary Committee

The Disciplinary Committee is appointed by the Academic Council and shall be constituted as follows:

(a)   A Nominee of the President of the College
(b)   Three members of the Academic Council
(c)   One Nominee of the Learner Body

The Learner Body may nominate one alternative member and the Academic Council on an annual basis will appoint a panel of eight members of the Academic Council to represent the council on Disciplinary matters for one year. The eight members of the panel will be appointed on conclusion of the first Academic Council in each academic year.

Four members shall constitute a quorum. The Disciplinary Committee shall endeavour to reach its decision by consensus but in the event of a disagreement its determinations shall be decided by majority. The disciplinary Committee shall in its discretion decide the appropriate penalty, if any, that should be imposed in each case. In the event that there is a tied vote of the Disciplinary Committee, the nominee of the President shall exercise a casting vote.

6.6.3   Appeals

(a)   The decision of the Disciplinary Committee on major offences may be appealed by   the learner concerned or by the Registrar (on behalf of the College) to the Appeals   Committee appointed by the Academic Council. The Appeals Committee shall be   constituted as follows:

        President

        Three members of the Academic Council

        One Nominee of the Learner Body

Four members of the Appeals Committee shall constitute a quorum. The President may nominate an alternative when s/he is unavailable. In the event of a tied vote the President or his/her nominee shall exercise the casting vote.

(b)   Notice of Appeal from decisions of the Disciplinary Committee shall be lodged in writing within 10 working days by the learner(s) on receiving notification of the decision or penalty of the Disciplinary Committee. The written notice of appeal must   state briefly the grounds on which the appeal is made. The Appeals Committee shall   endeavour to reach its decision by majority and shall in its discretion decide the   appropriate penalty, if any, that should be imposed in each case.

The learner(s) will be notified in writing that they are requested to attend the Appeals Committee. The learner(s) will be given no less than 72 hours notice to attend the committee.

(c)   Decisions of the Appeals Committee shall be final.

(d)   For Disciplinary procedures relating to breach of examinations regulations please refer to procedures in Examinations and Awards Chapter

6.6.4   Major Offences

Without prejudice to the general power of the Registrar to decide whether an alleged offence is major or minor, the following examples (and this is not an exhaustive list) would normally be regarded as major offences:

a)   Plagiarism or the use of unauthorised material during an examination/assessment
b)   or other breaches of the examination regulations

c)   Failure to adhere to invigilators instructions

d)   Misuse of College IT systems in breach of College policies and procedures

e)   Furnishing false information to the College with intent to deceive

f)   Forgery, alteration or misuse of College resources, documents, records or identity cards

g)   Verbal or Physical abuse of another person

h)   Malicious destruction, damage or misuse of College property or of private property on   the campus

i)   Unauthorised retention of library materials

j)   Forcible occupation of College buildings and grounds

k)   Unwarranted interference with the College safety equipment, fire fighting equipment   and alarm systems

l)   Referral of learner (s) by Registrar who have committed three minor offences

6.6.5   Rules Regarding Both Major and Minor Offences

(a)   The provisions of this paragraph shall apply to major offences and minor offences equally.

(b)   A member of the Disciplinary Committee may not be a member of any Appeals   Committee considering the same case.

(c)   No member of the Disciplinary Committee or of the Appeals Committee shall   adjudicate in any case in which she/he is to prosecute or be a witness. An accused   person has the right to speak in her/his own defence and call witnesses, including   character witnesses, at hearings of the Disciplinary Committee and of the Appeals   Committee. Persons reporting instances may also call witnesses. An accused person   may also be represented at any hearing.
        The Disciplinary Committee and the Appeals Committee may seek advice from any
        expert or person they think fit and shall have the right to invite such persons to attend   at any hearing of the Disciplinary Committee or the Appeals Committee.

(d)   The College may make regulations governing the conduct of disciplinary and/or   appeal hearings and the procedures applicable to disciplinary issues.

(e)   The learner under normal circumstances will attend a Disciplinary/Appeal Committee
        hearing when established. In unforeseen circumstances where the learner cannot

attend, the committee will be rescheduled. The College maintains the right to insist   that a learner requested to attend a Disciplinary/Appeal Committee, must attend the
committee sessions. If the learner refuses to attend for his/her own personal reasons,   the learner will be advised that failure to attend may result in further action being   taken against the learner and/or the committee will continue their investigation in the   learner's absence based on the report presented to them. The Disciplinary   Committee may make a decision and or recommendations on the learner concerned   in their absence. The Appeals Committee decision is final.

6.6.6   Penalties

Without prejudice to its right to impose such penalties or make such recommendations as are considered appropriate in any case the Registrar, or Disciplinary Committee, or Appeals Committee as the case may be, shall be empowered to:

(a)   Suspend a learner from College for any specified period of time

(b)   Expel a learner from College

(c)   Prohibit a learner from sitting any examination or assessment

(d)   Impose such fines (not exceeding ¤1,000) as are considered appropriate

(e)   Require a learner to attend additional or other lectures or courses or undertake   additional academic work

(f)   Refer a learner for medical/psychological assistance to the College doctor

(g)   Place a written warning on a learner's personal file. This may be first, second or third written warning.

General Violations of College Code of Discipline

- Failure to comply with the reasonable directions of a College official acting in the performance of his/her duties.

- Failure to comply with the reasonable directions of law enforcement officers or fire department personnel acting in the performance of their duties.

- Failure to provide complete and truthful information to a College official.

- Failure to carry or surrender one's learner ID to a College official upon his/her request.

- Forgery, alteration, or misuse of any College document of identification

- Criminal convictions or actions that bring the College into disrepute.

Academic Violations

- Misrepresenting academic work as one's own, when it is not – e.g. plagiarism, cheating on projects or exams of any type, etc.

Library and Information Technology Violations

- Violations of the NCI Information Technology Acceptable Use Policy

- Violations of CHEST Code of Conduct for the Use of Computer Software or Datasets

- Violation of pertinent state laws:

  Data Protection Act, 1988 Intellectual Property Act, 1998 Copyright Act, 1963 (as amended) Prohibition of Incitement to
  Hatred Act, 1989 Criminal Damage Act, 1991 Child Trafficking and Pornography Act, 1998, Criminal Justice Act 1999

- Damaging or unauthorised taking of any library or information technology resources.

Residential Violations

(These are outlined in the Residence Handbook)

Alcohol Violations

- Under-age possession of alcohol.

- Under-age consumption of alcohol.

- Consumption of alcohol in public areas, the restaurant or other areas of the Campus.

- Purchasing or providing alcohol to a minor.

- Hosting an unauthorised on-campus function where alcohol is served.

- Attending an unauthorised on-campus function where alcohol is served.

- Illegal distribution of alcohol.

- Possession of an unauthorised quantity of alcohol.

- Public intoxication.

- Abuse of alcohol.

- Possessions and/or use of paraphernalia intended for the abuse of alcohol.

Illegal Drugs Violations

- Use of illegal drugs.

- Possession of illegal drugs.

- Distribution of illegal drugs.

- Possession and/or use of illegal drugs paraphernalia.

Gambling Violations

- Engaging in illegal gambling.

Key, Combination and Card Access Violations

- Unauthorised or inappropriate use or loan of keys, combinations, or access cards to any College or operated facility.

- Neglectful or intentional misuse or improper storage of any keys, combinations, or access cards to any College owned or operated facility.

v4.2

- Tampering with or damaging any door or lock of a College owned or operated facility.

- Entry into any College property that is not normally accessible to an individual, including misuse of College issued keys, combinations, or access cards, or actual forcible entry.

- Propping or any internal or external door of a College owned or operated facility.

- Three or more "lock outs" which require Residential Life staff assistance.

Fire Safety Violations

- Violation of fire safety policies.

- Illegal or unauthorised possession of firearms, explosives (including fireworks), other weapons (i.e. hunting knives, bows and arrows, martial arts weapons, etc.), or dangerous chemicals on College premises or at College-sponsored events.

- Use and/or possession of burned or burning candles or incense.

- Use and/or possession of prohibited electrical appliances.

- Tampering with fire prevention, fire safety, or fire fighting equipment.

- Causing an unnecessary emergency evacuation on College premises or at a College sponsored or supervised event.

- Failure to follow fire drill and/ or other emergency procedures including evacuation.

Personal Injury Violations

- Harassment and Bullying

- Conduct that is disruptive, lewd, indecent, or infringes upon the rights of others (i.e. use of profanity, obscenity, public nudity, sexual activity in public places, water fights, etc.)

- Physical Assault - physically beating another and/or inflicting any menacing touch to his/her person or clothes.

- Verbal Assault - a verbal attach that is a threat to someone's physical safety.

- Specific conduct that threatens or endangers the health/safety of a particular person.

- Threats - statements or action that causes an individual(s) to fear for his/her safety.

- Coercion - statements or action that is intended to compel or force an individual to act in a manner that is contrary to their chosen style.

- Harassment - behaviour(s) or statements(s) that have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual(s) academic, social, or work-related functions.

- Unwanted sexual contact.

Theft and Damage Violations

- Attempted or actual theft of College, individual, or group property.

- Unauthorised possession of College, individual, or group property.

- Tampering with or damaging any door or lock of a College owned or operated facility

- Entry into any College property that is not normally accessible to an individual, including misuse of College issued keys, combinations, or access cards, or actual forcible entry

- Propping or any internal or external door of a College owned or operated facility

- Three or more "lock outs" which require Residential Life staff assistance

Fire Safety Violations

- Violation of fire safety policies

- Illegal or unauthorised possession of firearms, explosives (including fireworks), other weapons (i.e. hunting knives, bows and arrows, martial arts weapons, etc.), or dangerous chemicals on College premises or at College-sponsored events

- Use and/or possession of burned or burning candles or incense

- Use and/or possession of prohibited electrical appliances

- Tampering with fire prevention, fire safety, or fire fighting equipment

- Causing an unnecessary emergency evacuation on College premises or at a College sponsored or supervised event

- Failure to follow fire drill and/or other emergency procedures including evacuation

Personal Injury Violations

- Harassment and bullying

- Conduct that is disruptive, lewd, indecent, or infringes upon the rights of others (i.e. use of profanity, obscenity, public nudity, sexual activity in public places, water fights, etc.)

- Physical Assault – physically beating another and/or inflicting any menacing touch to his/her person or clothes

- Verbal Assault – a verbal attack that is a threat to someone's physical safety

- Specific conduct that threatens or endangers the health/safety of a particular person

- Threats – statements or action that causes an individual(s) to fear for his/her safety

- Coercion – statements or action that is intended to compel or force an individual to act in a manner that is contrary to their chosen style

- Harassment – behaviour(s) or statements(s) that have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual(s) academic, social, or work-related functions

- Unwanted sexual contact

Appendix 13 NCI Personal Development Plan

National College of
Ireland

Training Needs Analysis &

Personal Development Plan,

Research Students

National College of Ireland
IFSC, Mayor St, Dublin 1

May 2007

Introduction

This document is intended to help explain the concept of Personal Development Planning and Personal Development Plans (PDPs), to analyse your training needs and to give you the opportunity to develop your own Personal Development Record (PDR).[1]

PDRs are not a new idea but it is only in recent years that they have become more accepted and used in a wide variety of contexts. Indeed many professional bodies have developed significant and sophisticated approaches to PDPs and PDRs and it is often compulsory for their members to maintain them in order to retain particular membership levels of such organisations. A number of professions require them to be used in order to maintain a licence to practice. Many large companies and not for profit organisations also expect their staff to maintain PDR's.

This document is written predominantly for use by research degree students at NCI. It should be read in conjunction with the College's *Handbook of Academic Regulations*, the *Handbook for Research Students and Supervisors* and the College's *Research Ethics Policy*.

What is Personal Development Planning?[2]

Personal Development Planning has been described as "a structured and supported process undertaken by an individual to reflect upon their own learning, performance and/or achievement and to plan for their personal, educational and career development".[1]

The primary purpose of a PDP (Personal Development Plan) is to help you learn and develop more effectively and to be able to:

- learn in a wider variety of ways and a wider range of contexts;
- recognise and be able to list evidence for your own learning and therefore the progress
- draw upon and use your expanded personal knowledge to achieve particular goals;
- view, plan and take responsibility for your own learning
- recognise and define your training/learning needs.

This document will help you to produce a PDP and analyse your needs and to:

- define short and long term aims and objectives
- decide what is needed to achieve these aims and objectives
- be able to list, analyse and understand your strengths and weaknesses
- use the analysis of aims and objectives and strengths and weaknesses to define your need for additional study, training, and further development of all kinds to enhance your skills, knowledge and competencies. Such a process is often described as producing a **Training Needs Analysis (TNA)** reflect on and take active
- part in planning and development of your own personal skills

Why do you need to develop a range of skills?

As a graduate you need to be equipped with a wide range of skills in this ever-changing world of work and continuous learning. You already have some of these skills-you have the opportunity to develop these skills further as well as learn new ones during your research.

---

[1] See also section on PDP in: Guidelines for Higher Education Progress Files, Quality Assurance Agency, Universities UK, SCOP, Universities Scotland 2001. www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/progressFiles/guidelines/progfile2001.pdf

[2] Adapted from London Metropolitan University's Skills Training Programme and PDP. NCI gratefully acknowledges Professor Ian Haines, Head, LMU Graduate School for his Assistance.

What is a Personal Development Record?

There are many different kinds of PDR (Personal Development Records) built around a variety of frameworks. However, all are intended in different ways to maintain a clear record of learning and personal development.

By reflecting on your skill needs over time and recording the training that is successfully completed a comprehensive set of information can be built up that can help you, *inter alia* to: initially be a more effective researcher

- be a more independent, autonomous and effective learner
- plan and manage your career
- decide on future career paths
- create appropriate CVs

Thus, although this document is written around the concept of the needs of research degree it can also be used to look further ahead into your career or life after you have successfully completed your research, written and submitted your thesis, negotiated your viva and been awarded your PhD

What skills and knowledge should I be developing?

This scheme is intended to encourage you to think in terms of a wide range of knowledge and skills. The University and its predecessor institutions have long taken the view that research students should engage in a significant programme of personal development.

When contemplating your position as a researcher there is a natural tendency to consider training needs purely in terms of those that relate directly and specifically to your research – knowledge directly connected with the specific discipline area and the subject/title of your research project, the specific research skills you will need to complete the project, perhaps a recognition that you may need to enhance your writing skills to cope with the production of a dissertation and/or writing a paper for publication in a book or specialist journal. However, these are only a few of the broader skills that the University expects of a researcher.

Thus your consideration of your knowledge and skills needs should cover your need to develop

- project specific knowledge and research skills
- an understanding of the research methodology and the research skills and tools used in the wider research community
- information handling
- planning and organisation skills
- the more generic skills of communication (in a variety of contexts), team working and networking, increasing personal effectiveness, etc.
- career management skills – the ability to assess own skills, set realistic career goals and implement an action plan to achieve goals

How will I develop skills?

This will depend on the particular skill. Generally support will primarily come from the members of your supervisory team, others in the academic department, research institute, research centre or research group in which you work and from fellow students. However, some skills may also be accessed in the following ways**:**

- **subject specific knowledge and skills:** can be found within taught postgraduate modules in the many Masters courses available in the university. You might need to take a whole module or only a part of it.
- **research methodology:** in research methods modules available within almost all postgraduate courses and part or all of the specific modules within the MRes Scheme

- **health and safety :** in the University Health and Safety Policy plus any local policy practice
- **ethics and good research practice:** from the Handbook for Research Students and Supervisors and Code of Practice and the Research Ethics Policy plus any local supplementation.
- **Career management skills:** use the resources and programme of activities provided by the Careers Service

Various training courses and drop in facilities are also available at UL which may help your skills development in such areas as project and resource management, information sources and archives, use of IT, writing and oral skills for a range of audiences, personal development such as creativeness, flexibility, self awareness, self discipline, networking and interaction with others. See www.ncirl.ie for a full list of training courses on offer or contact Research and Graduate Studies Office.

Information on learning and training opportunities will be made available from time to time by the Research and Graduate Studies Office, your supervisory team and within your research area via the Research and Graduate Studies Office web page**.**

Research Training Record: courses, seminars research colloquia symposia, conferences, training sessions, etc. (use additional paper, if necessary)

Date(s)	Event	Brief Comment

1. Skills Aims/Objectives Requirement A: Research Skills LEVELS

Researchers should be able to

Aims/Objectives	Comments	Level of expertise	Courses
The ability to recognise and validate problems.	Be able to see and understand problems research problems.	1 2 3 4 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	
Original independent and critical thinking and the ability to develop theoretical concepts.	Be able to think for yourself and be able to develop theoretical ideas	1 2 3 4 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	
Demonstrate knowledge of recent advances within one's field and in related areas.	Know about recent advances in your research area.	1 2 3 4 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	
An understanding of relevant research methodologies and techniques and their appropriate application in ones research field.	Know different research techniques and know when to use them.	1 2 3 4 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	
The ability to critically analyse and evaluate one's findings and those of others.	Be able to look at results and know what they mean and judge them.	1 2 3 4 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	
An ability to summarise, document, report and reflect on progress.	Be able to write down results clearly and assess progress.	1 2 3 4 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	

2. Skills Aims/Objectives B: Research Environment

Aims/Objectives	Comments	Level of expertise	Courses
Show a broad understanding of the context, at the national and international level, in which the research takes place.	Know how your research fits in with what others are doing in the world.	1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐	
Demonstrate awareness of the issues relating to the rights of other researchers, of research subjects, and of others who may be affected by the research e.g.:- confidentiality, ethical issues, attribution, copyright, malpractice ownership of data and the requirements of the data protection act.	Know how your research affect others, and know what rules must you follow	1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐	
Demonstrate appreciation of standards of good research practice in your institution and/or discipline.	Know the standards you must work to	1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐	
Understand relevant health and safety issues and demonstrate responsible working practices.	Know the relevant health and safety issues	1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐	
Understand the processes for funding and evaluation of research.	Know about research funding and assessment	1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐	
Justify the principles and experimental techniques used in one's own research	Know how to justify your research methods	1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐	
Understand the process of academic of commercial exploitation of research results.	Know how research results can be used commercially	1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐	

3. Skills Aims/Objectives C: Research Management

Researchers should be able to

Aims/Objectives	Comments	Level of expertise	Courses

Aims/Objectives	Comments	Level of expertise	Courses
Apply effective project management through the setting of research goals, intermediate milestones and prioritisation of activities.	Manage research correctly, setting goals to achieve targets and prioritizing work	1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐	
Design and execute systems for the acquisition and collation of information through the effective use of appropriate resources and equipment.	Obtain data/results with correct methods and/or use of equipment	1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐	
Identify and access appropriate bibliographical resources, archive, and other sources of relevant information.	Search for information and references in an effective way.	1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐	
Use information technology appropriately for database management, recording and presenting information.	Record data properly in databases or spreadsheets	1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐	

LEVELS
1 – Need to gain experience
2 – Some experience, need more
3 – Experienced
4 – Very experienced

4. Skills Aims/Objectives D: Personal Effectiveness

Researchers should be able to

Aims/Objectives	Comments	Level of expertise	Courses
Demonstrate a willingness and ability to learn and acquire knowledge	Be willing to learn about new topics and acquire new skills.	1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐	
Be creative, innovative and original in ones	Be able to have you own	1 2 3 4	

approach to research	ideas in your research	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	
Demonstrate flexibility and open-mindedness	Show that you are flexible and open to alternative approaches to problems/tasks	1 2 3 4 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	
Demonstrate self-awareness and the ability to identify own training needs	Able to evaluate your own skills and plan future training	1 2 3 4 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	
Demonstrate self-discipline motivation and thoroughness	Know how to organise and motivate yourself and work accurately without supervision	1 2 3 4 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	
Recognise boundaries and draw upon/use sources of support as appropriate	Know limiting factors and know when to ask for help	1 2 3 4 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	
Show initiative, work independently and be self reliant	Show that you have your own ideas and can work on your own when necessary.	1 2 3 4 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	

LEVELS
1 – Need to gain experience
2 – Some experience, need more
3 – Experienced
4 – Very experienced

5. Skills Aims/Objectives E: Communication Skills

Researchers should be able to

Aims/Objectives	Comments	Level of expertise	Courses
Write clearly and in a style appropriate to purpose e.g. progress reports, published documents, and thesis.	Write clearly, at the correct level and length for a variety of purposes.	1 2 3 4 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	
Construct coherent arguments and articulate ideas clearly to a range of audiences, formally and informally through a variety of techniques	Make clear arguments and explain ideas clearly to a range of audiences using different methods.	1 2 3 4 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	

Aims/Objectives	Comments	Level of expertise	Courses
Constructively defend research outcomes at seminars and viva examination	Defend your research outcomes fluently and confidently at seminars and viva examination	1 2 3 4 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	
Contribute to promoting the public understanding of one's research field.	Help to promote the public understanding of your research field.	1 2 3 4 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	
Effectively support the learning of others when involved in teaching, mentoring or demonstrating activities	Help in the learning of others when involved in teaching, mentoring or demonstrating activities.	1 2 3 4 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	

LEVELS
1 – Need to gain experience
2 – Some experience, need more
3 – Experienced
4 – Very experienced

6. Skills Aims/Objectives F: Networking and Team working

Researchers should be able to

Aims/Objectives	Comments	Level of expertise	Courses
Develop and maintain cooperative networks and working relationships with supervisors, colleagues and peers within the institution and the wider research community.	Get to know people at work and at other institutions, and keep good working relationships.	1 2 3 4 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	

Understand one's behaviours and impact on others when working in and contributing to the success of formal and informal teams.	Know that the way you behave affects the success of others and the group.	1 2 3 4 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	
Listen, give and receive feedback and respond perceptively to others.	Know how to listen to others and give helpful feedback.	1 2 3 4 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	

	LEVELS 1 – Need to gain experience 2 – Some experience, need more 3 – Experienced 4 – Very experienced

7. Skills Aims/Objectives G: Career Management

Researchers should be able to

Aims/Objectives	Comments	Level of expertise	Courses
Appreciate the need for and show commitment to continued professional development.	Know that you always need to develop professionally.	1 2 3 4 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	
Take ownership for and manage one's career progression, set realistic and achievable career goals and identify and develop ways to improve employability.	Know that you are responsible for your own career management. Undertake activities to improve your employability.	1 2 3 4 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	

Demonstrate an insight into the transferable nature of research skills to other work environments and the range of career opportunities within and outside academia.	Know that research skills can be used in other situations and jobs not just in academic research.	1 2 3 4 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	
Present one's skills, personal attributes and experiences through effective CV's, applications and interviews.	Know how to present your qualifications and skills in writing and verbally.	1 2 3 4 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	