

Standard Operating Procedure for extensions to candidature for PGR students: 12/02/20

Applications for extensions to candidature are required from point at which normal maximum period of study for degree has passed.

1. Applications for extensions to candidature should be made in advance – at least one month before the existing deadline for thesis submission expires.
2. Applications for extensions to candidature should only cover time up until anticipated thesis submission date. Extension applications do not need to cover time for examination, corrections and graduations. Research degree candidates will remain registered after submission until the end of the current academic year and those requiring visa renewals will be supported as set out in Appendix 1.
3. Applications should provide a clear timeline allowing an informed decision to be made. This should address: when the research degree candidate started; how long they have been enrolled (FT and/or PT); what previous extensions they have had (if any); and how long they have previously been on TSS (if any).
4. Applications should be supported by a credible plan to submission (Gantt chart or similar summarising what work remains outstanding and when it will be done).
5. Applications should be supported by evidence of ongoing engagement with supervisory team (i.e. there should be meeting records in the PGR Portfolio).
6. Applications should be supported by evidence of satisfying school progress processes (i.e. need to know that School are satisfied with progress and be aware of any feedback and progress milestones set).
7. Extensions are granted to recognise the impact of unanticipated problems/difficulties faced during research programme such as:
 - Prolonged inability to access research facilities because of fire or flood damage or unexpected delay in construction or fabrication of such facilities.
 - Prolonged failure or unreliability of key equipment preventing or delaying experimental data collection
 - Extreme weather conditions preventing or delaying field work
 - Civil unrest or security concerns preventing or delaying field work
 - Failure, or withdrawal from partnership, of a key industrial or other research partner
 - Non-receipt of promised and essential research data sets
 - Chronic ill health
 - Death, illness or withdrawal of appointed examiner(s)
8. Unacceptable reasons for extension include:
 - To delay submission to write papers
 - To delay submission to undertake work/consultancy or to recognise a delay resulting from a period of work undertaken during the period of study (this would be addressed through a TSS)
 - To undertake research which is not essential for a successful thesis submission
 - To delay submission because sponsor is willing to continue funding
 - To unnecessarily extend a visa

- Because acute illness or accident prevented the research degree candidate from working for a specified time period (this would be addressed through a TSS)
 - Because the research degree candidate is not a native English speaker
 - Because examiners haven't been identified in time for submission.
9. Up to six months considered for 1st extension if valid reason. 1st Extensions approved at School level only.
 10. Subsequent extensions – 6 months maximum. Approved by Chair of RDC.
 11. Where there are significant overruns, extensions may be made conditional on on-time completion of specified work packages.
 12. Where there are significant overruns, an extension may be made on a 'last extension' basis. This must be approved by the Chair of RDC
 13. Extensions will only be only granted if there is confidence that the extension will support an eventual submission. There is no benefit to the research degree candidate in extending enrolment where this is unlikely to lead to a successful submission.
 14. Where an extension is not granted, a research degree candidate's candidature ends at their latest approved end-date. This is formalised by a Compulsory Withdrawal approved by the RDC.