

Procedure for the Annual Monitoring of Research Degrees

The Annual Monitoring of Research Degrees provides Schools with the opportunity to reflect on and evaluate the effectiveness of their research degree provision. It allows Schools to consider ways to enhance their research degree offering and provides an effective mechanism for identifying areas of both opportunity and potential risk.

The Annual Monitoring process enables the University to:

- ensure its research degree programmes are in good health;
- ensure its research degree programmes are achieving appropriate standards when measured against national and international criteria;
- ensure students are progressing as planned;
- ensure the enhancement of quality is being pursued and achieved;
- engage in critical discourse about this provision within an open and supportive process;
- record positive aspects to establish good practice;
- identify aspects for improvement;
- establish achievable and manageable Action Plans to enhance the quality of the research degree provision.

2. Annual Monitoring - Why do it?

- Annual monitoring facilitates the enhancement of the University's research degree programmes and provides the opportunity to reflect on the student experience, highlighting any areas of good practice and also those requiring enhancement.
- It allows the University to regularly review and improve the quality of its research degree provision.

3. Who is responsible for Annual Monitoring?

- Schools are responsible for undertaking annual monitoring for their research degree provision.
- When compiling the School Annual Monitoring report, report authors must take into consideration Progress Review records (and for Professional Doctorate courses, module monitoring plans).
- The Head of the Graduate School is responsible for considering the School Monitoring Report forms and presenting a summary report on the annual monitoring process, including a University-level action plan, to the Research and Innovation Committee, Quality and Enhancement Committee and Academic Board.

4. How is Annual Monitoring carried out?

- 4.1 Over the preceding 12-month period, all MPhil/PhD students and Professional Doctorate Students on the research stage of their course, will have completed a Progress Review report.
- 4.2 Module leaders on Professional Doctorate courses will also be required to complete a module monitoring plan for each taught module.

- 4.3 The progress review reports, alongside the module monitoring plans, will be reviewed and will inform the production of a School Report on research degree Annual Monitoring according to the template approved by Quality and Enhancement Committee.
- 4.4 The School will arrange for the draft School report and supporting documentation to be scrutinised by the School Academic Committee. The report author, Professional Doctorate Course leaders, two research active members of staff and a research degree student representative will be invited to attend this meeting.
- 4.5 The School Academic Committee will receive:
- a copy of the completed School Report on Annual Monitoring of research degree awards;
 - a list of all research degree students in the School.
- 4.6 Following the School Academic Committee meetings, the School Report on Annual Monitoring of research degree Awards including the Action Plan should be finalised by the School Research Degree Coordinator for submission to the Graduate School.
- 4.7 The Head of the Graduate School will review all the School reports and write a summary university-level monitoring report for consideration by the Graduate School Committee. The School reports will also be made available to Graduate School Committee members. The Associate Deans Research (or nominees) will be invited to attend the Graduate School Committee meeting where the reports are considered.
- 4.8 Following approval by the Graduate School Committee, the university-level monitoring report will be presented to the Research and Innovation Committee, Quality and Enhancement Committee and Academic Board.
- 4.9 It is important that Action Plans are realistic and achievable, and progress in completing actions is regularly monitored. The action plans will be received by the respective School Academic Committees mid-year to monitor progress. The University action plan will be monitored by the Graduate School and Quality and Enhancement Committee.

5. Collaborative Academic Partners

- 5.1 Collaborative Academic Partners offering Staffordshire University research degrees will follow this procedure. Staffordshire University's School Report template should be completed and considered by the collaborative academic partner's research committee prior to submission to the Staffordshire University Graduate School. The Chair of the partner's research committee (or nominee) will be invited to contribute to the consideration of the university-level annual monitoring report.

6. Annual Monitoring Forms (available on the QES website):

Link to be provided

7. Timetable

May	Progress review templates sent to MPhil/PhD students and Professional Doctorate students on the research stage of their course for completion.
July	Student Progress Review forms completed and submitted to the School

Between mid-September and mid November	School reports are completed and considered by School Academic Committees.
November	Final School Annual Monitoring Reports to be submitted to the Graduate School.
December	The Graduate School Committee meeting to consider the University annual monitoring report.
January	Quality and Enhancement Committee and Research and Innovation Committee meetings to consider University report and Action Plan from Annual Monitoring of MPhil/PhDs.
Spring	Academic Board to receive the University report and Action Plan