

## Policy and Programmes Sub-Committee

### Policy Framework for Integrated PhD Programmes

#### Introduction

1. This is the University's policy framework for Integrated PhD programmes. It should be read in conjunction with the University's [Policy on Research Degrees](#) (PoRD) and with the University's [Regulations for Research Degree Awards](#) (Regulation 2). If there is any inconsistency between the PoRD and this framework, this framework should apply.

#### The nature and purpose of the Integrated PhD

2. An Integrated PhD programme at York combines taught modules at Master's level, enabling students to broaden and/or deepen their knowledge in a specific area, with a substantive PhD research project. It differs from a standard three-year or four-year PhD programme at York with respect to the volume and timing of the taught element and the award of a Postgraduate Diploma alongside the PhD to successful students.
3. The approval of an Integrated PhD may be of particular value:
  - for interdisciplinary areas of research, where applicants typically do not have the necessary breadth and/or depth of knowledge to start a research project with immediate effect
  - for departments which frequently receive applications from individuals who have funding for a research degree of four years in duration and a Master's degree in the subject area (and so for whom a 1+3 route is not an option) but where the Master's degree has not provided the depth and/or breadth of knowledge that would be required for an individual to start their research project with immediate effect
  - for departments which frequently receive applications from individuals who have a Master's degree in a cognate discipline (and so for whom a 1+3 route is unattractive) but who do not have the depth and/or breadth of knowledge, in the discipline in question, to start a research project with immediate effect (e.g. to facilitate a move from modern languages to linguistics).

#### Structure and duration

4. An Integrated PhD programme comprises:
  - a. an **integrated studies component** of one year duration (or part-time equivalent), which includes a named Postgraduate Diploma;
  - b. a **PhD research project** of three years duration (or part-time equivalent).
5. An Integrated PhD programme has a normal period of enrolment of four years full-time (eight years part-time), with a minimum enrolment period of three years and nine months full-time (seven years and six months part-time) and a maximum period of enrolment of five years full-time (nine years part-time). Students on an Integrated PhD programme should plan their research so that they will submit within the normal period of enrolment. If students on an

Integrated PhD programme exceed their normal period of enrolment they will enter into a continuation period (of up to one year) and be subject to the continuation period policies and procedures as set out in the PoRD (including payment of the continuation fee).

### **Naming convention and awards**

6. An Integrated PhD programme should be normally be advertised as PhD (Integrated) in XXXX.
7. Students who successfully complete the Integrated PhD programme will be awarded a PhD in XXXX, together with the named Postgraduate Diploma (and will also receive a transcript of module marks). The award of the named Postgraduate Diploma will take place at the same time as the award of the PhD.
8. The named Postgraduate Diploma can also be awarded to students who: (i) at the final examination, fail their PhD or are awarded an alternative qualification, or (ii) withdraw from the Integrated PhD programme, or have their enrolment terminated, having progressed to year two (or part-time equivalent).

### **Admission requirements**

9. The admission requirements for an Integrated PhD programme are the same as for other PhD programmes, as set out in the University's [Admissions Policy](#). The English language requirements for entry to an Integrated PhD programme are the same as for admission to a department's non-integrated three-year and/or four-year PhD programmes.

### **Student status**

10. A student on an Integrated PhD programme is treated as a postgraduate research student and subject to the rules of the PoRD from the outset of their programme, other than where specified in this framework. In their first year, they should, for example, attend induction events for new postgraduate research students, complete BERT and the Online Research Integrity Tutorial, have access to postgraduate research student and GTA training opportunities, and make use of postgraduate research student facilities and resources.

### **Design of the academic programme**

#### ***Integrated studies component***

11. The integrated studies component is one year in duration (or part-time equivalent) and should be completed (including any reassessment/resubmission opportunities) within the first year of enrolment (or part-time equivalent). Care must be taken to ensure that there is a reasonable spread of workload across the integrated studies component.
12. The **integrated studies component** should comprise: (i) a **taught element**, and (ii) a **research element**.

#### ***Taught element***

13. The taught element is 120 credits of assessed taught modules, at least 90 credits of which should be at Master's level, with no credits below Honours level (NB modules at Honours level are taken on a pass/fail basis). The 120 credits of taught modules should be presented as a named

Postgraduate Diploma aligned with the York pedagogy and documented on the standard new programme forms for postgraduate taught awards. A named Postgraduate Certificate exit award should be specified. All taught modules should be listed in the module catalogue.

14. The taught element may be an existing Postgraduate Diploma or a new Postgraduate Diploma approved solely for this purpose. The taught element may focus on research skills and methods training, or on specialist subject knowledge, or a mixture of both. The taught element may: (i) include tutorial modules i.e. which enable a student to study a particular subject in depth supported by tutorials with a named academic; (ii) include laboratory rotations if these are set up as taught modules, including an appropriate assessment regime (alternatively laboratory rotations may form part of the research element of the integrated studies component); and (iii) enable students to choose, in consultation with their supervisor from defined sets of option modules (which may be from more than one department) to achieve a coherent collection of modules that are most appropriate to their individual circumstances.
15. The procedures for the assessment of the taught element are as set out for Postgraduate Diplomas in the *Guide to Assessment, Standards, Marking and Feedback* (unless otherwise specified in this framework). This includes the identification of an appropriate external examiner for the modules and Postgraduate Diploma if this is not already in place.
16. It is expected that the taught element will normally be scheduled towards the start of the integrated studies component, so that a student can focus on the research element in the latter part of the integrated studies component.

#### ***Research element***

17. The research element should be the equivalent 600 hours of notional learning and should comprise: (i) the development of a detailed ***research proposal*** for the student's PhD research, and (ii) a ***small-scale research project*** (which may include one or more laboratory rotations) assessed by means of a report (which is likely to include a literature review).
18. The format, word length, submission date and pass/fail assessment criteria for the research proposal and project report must be specified for each Integrated PhD programme and approved by the department and the Policy and Programmes Sub-Committee (PPSC). As the research element does not form part of the Postgraduate Diploma, a student may incorporate work undertaken as part of the research element into their PhD thesis. The research element is not credit-rated and is not the equivalent of a Master's dissertation (as it is focused on preparation for the PhD research project) meaning that students who exit from the Integrated PhD programme (see #8) having completed the first year (or part-time equivalent) will *not* be eligible for a Master's degree.

#### ***PhD research project***

19. The duration of the PhD research project is three years (or part-time equivalent).
20. The format and word length of the PhD thesis should be the same as the equivalent non-integrated PhD programme in the department.
21. The final examination for an Integrated PhD programme follows the rules set out for PhD programmes in the PoRD.

## Progression

### *Progression from the integrated studies component*

22. Progression from year one to year two (or part-time equivalent) of an Integrated PhD programme is dependent on:
- a. obtaining 120 credits from the taught element in accordance with the standard postgraduate taught programme rules of assessment (including the rules on compensation, reassessment and eligibility for merit or distinction);
  - b. passing the research proposal and project report. The research proposal and project report should be assessed by the student's research degree supervisor (or prospective research degree supervisor, if their appointment has not yet been confirmed) and the Chair of the GSB or their nominee (who should not be a member of the student's supervisory team or Thesis Advisory Panel) against the approved assessment criteria (#18) and a consensus reached. Students have one opportunity to resubmit their research proposal and/or project report if they do not meet the criteria at the first attempt.
23. Students who meet #22 (a) and (b) above will progress to the second year of the Integrated PhD programme. Students who do not meet #22 (a) *and* (b) above will have their enrolment on the Integrated PhD programme terminated, but those who have meet #22 (a) will receive the named Postgraduate Diploma as an exit award. If a student does not meet #22 (a) or (b), they may still be eligible to receive the named Postgraduate Certificate as an exit award.
24. Progression from year one to year two of an Integrated PhD programme, including any resits of taught modules and/or resubmission of the research proposal and/or project report, must be completed by the end of the twelfth month following first enrolment (or part-time equivalent).

### *Progression post integrated studies component*

25. Progression from year two to year three (or part-time equivalent) of an Integrated PhD programme follows the rules for the *first formal review of progress* for a standard three-year PhD programme as per Appendix 4 of the PoRD.
26. Progression from year three to year four (or part-time equivalent) of an Integrated PhD programme follows the rules for the *second formal review of progress* for a standard three-year PhD programme as per Appendix 4 of the PoRD.

## Supervision and Thesis Advisory Panels

27. Each student will have a research degree supervisor from the start of their Integrated PhD programme. There are two options:
- a. the research degree supervisor(s) is appointed at the start of the Integrated PhD programme;
  - b. a provisional research degree supervisor (who might be the nominated programme leader, see #33) is appointed at the start of the Integrated PhD programme, with the appointment of the confirmed research degree supervisor(s) by the end of the integrated studies component *at the latest*.

28. During the integrated studies component, students should meet regularly with their supervisor (confirmed or provisional) including formal supervision meetings at least every 6-7 weeks as set out in the PoRD (although when they are undertaking the taught component they will not be expected to submit and receive feedback on written work at their formal supervision meetings).
29. A Thesis Advisory Panel (TAP) should be appointed by the end of integrated studies component at the latest and should meet as required by the PoRD from this point onwards (earlier if the department wishes).

### **Approval and management**

30. All Integrated PhDs should be approved for planning purposes (including fee-setting), prior to approval of the academic case being sought from PPSC.
31. Departments will need to ensure that full details of the integrated studies component of the Integrated PhD are supplied, as specified above. The taught component of the integrated studies component must be approved by UTC and/or PPSC as set out in section 1 of the PoRD.
32. Minor exceptions to this framework may be agreed by the PPSC where there is a clear justification (e.g. to meet reasonable requirements from a funding body).
33. Each Integrated PhD programme should have a nominated programme leader who is responsible for overseeing the programme, particularly the integrated studies component. It may be appropriate for the programme leader to serve as a provisional supervisor for students.