

Research Degrees Registration Transfers

| What this guidance is for |
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| To provide guidance to faculty admissions staff on the process and required documentation for a research student applying to transfer to The Open University. |
| Scope |
| <p>These procedures apply to candidates who wish to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • transfer their research degree registration and register with The Open University from another institution; or • register with The Open University to complete their research degree after withdrawing from registration at another institution; or • register with The Open University to complete their research degree after their registration at another institution has lapsed. <p>This policy does not apply to students wishing to transfer their registration to an Affiliated Research Centre, but could be used if an ARC student wishes to be directly supported by the Open University.</p> |
| Policy |
| <p>Transfers of registration from another university or institution to The Open University is permitted where a student has previously been supervised by someone who has become a member of The Open University academic staff, provided that the following information is supplied and the contents therein approved by the Faculty or Institution and the Graduate School Director:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) The title of the research project and the contact details of the supervisors and any sponsors. b) A copy of the student's original application to the other university or institution (this should include those documents referred to in RD 3.3). c) The date of the original registration and the registration period required to completion, this should include details of periods of suspension. d) An indication of the resources required to support the research project. e) Copies of the reports and feedback marking academic milestones (e.g., transfer from MPhil to PhD, progress reports) to date. f) A letter of agreement from the university or institution where the candidate is currently registered and, where applicable, any sponsor approving the transfer of registration and any intellectual property rights to The Open University. <p>In exceptional cases The Open University may also accept applications for transfer from individuals who are not moving with their existing supervisor. In such cases in addition to providing the information, outlined in above, the student must fulfil the entrance requirements outlined in RD 2.1 to RD 3.12 as appropriate.</p> |

All candidates wishing to apply for admission for a research degree at The Open University will be subject to the same academic and administrative selection process as students who are applying for research degree study for the first time. No offer of registration can be made to a student who is still registered at another University, unless we have written confirmation from an appropriate authority at that University that the student can be released.

When offering to register a transfer student consideration should be given to the support that will be provided to the student, particularly in terms of funding and supervision. Standard fees will apply.

If there is a studentship or other contractual arrangement in place, please seek advice from the Research Degrees Office before submitting the *Applicant recommendation form*. There may be conflicting terms and conditions which could affect our ability to make an offer of registration to the student.

It is unusual for a student to be transferred in after starting their third year of study; such students may not be counted towards Open University totals for statutory returns.

Tier 4 students who have been sponsored by another institution will need a new CAS from the Research Degrees Office showing that The Open University will be their new sponsor. Students **must** seek advice from the UK Visa and Immigration (UKVI) on their visa status. The Research Degrees Office is unable to provide specific immigration advice to students but will provide supporting documentation as required.

Process

Applications for transferred-in students should be assessed by faculty admissions staff following standard practice for fair selection. Details should be submitted to the Research Degrees Office on an *Applicant recommendation form*, including the following:

- the name of the institution at which the applicant is or was registered for research degree study
- the date on which the applicant was registered as a research degree student at that institution
- whether the applicant is or was registered for full-time or part-time study
- the degree for which the applicant is or was registered (PhD or MPhil)
- the name(s) and contact details of the applicants supervisors at that institution
- the title of the research project
- the total length of prior registration, with the dates and reasons for any periods of suspended study
- details of why the applicant wishes to transfer their registration to The Open University from that institution or why they did not complete their research degree at that institution
- the likely date of submission
- details of how the faculty will assess probation.

The *Applicant recommendation form* must be authorised as normal by the Associate Dean (Research) or equivalent, and accompanied by:

- an academic reference from the applicant's supervisor, or, if the supervisor is no longer an employee at the institution, the head of department where the applicant is or was registered for research degree study
- a detailed case which explains the basis on which the applicant has satisfied the potential supervisors and head of discipline that they are in a position to successfully complete an Open University research degree
- if available, a copy of the student's latest progress report

- a letter from the administrative authority at the current or previous institution which provides detailed information about the candidate's research degree registration at that institution and where applicable confirms that the proposed transfer is acceptable to and supported by their institution, or that the student has withdrawn from that institution.

• Probation arrangements

- Once the admission recommendation has been approved by or on behalf of the Research Degrees Committee, the applicant will be offered, and asked to accept, research degree registration on the understanding that they will be subject to a registration transfer probationary period, (typically six months for full-time students and twelve months for part-time students) and that they will submit their thesis by the date specified in the offer letter. The registration transfer probationary period report should include:
 - an assessment of the student's progress since registration with The Open University
 - details of the formal training undertaken, including performance in any related assessment
 - details of the supervision arrangements, including frequency, approximate duration of sessions and date of most recent contact
 - details of any academic contributions made by the student to publications, seminars, conferences
 - details of the progress review undertaken by the discipline and/or academic unit for the transfer probationary report
 - details of any concerns about the student's performance and ability to successfully complete
 - a recommendation about continuing registration and the degree for which the student's registration should be confirmed
 - the endorsement of the Associate Dean, Research (or equivalent).

Resources

Further advice is available from the Research Degrees office on:

+44 (0)1908 654882, or email research-degrees-office@open.ac.uk

This form can be downloaded from the forms and guidance section of the GSN at www.open.ac.uk/students/research.