

## Progression Review 2 (Confirmation)

Progression Review 2, also referred to as Confirmation, is conducted by **two** assessors from WSA who have had no involvement in the student's research and supervisor(s). Confirmation involves a viva, which is conducted by the internal independent assessors, proposed by the supervisor, and approved by the Director of the Faculty Graduate School. A member of the supervisory team will normally be in attendance, however, research students can request the opportunity to meet the confirmation panel without a supervisor being present. This request should be made through the Faculty Graduate School Office.. In exceptional circumstances, with the permission of the Director of the Faculty Graduate School, an external independent assessor may be appointed. One of these members of staff should act as chair of the panel. One of the independent assessors can be the assessor used for the first Progression Review. The final decision on whether to allow confirmation is made by the assessors.

A mini-thesis must be submitted at least **four working weeks in advance of the decision deadline** to allow the panel to consider the material, hold a viva, and make a recommendation within the specified timeframe. For instance, in the case of the full-time PhD programme, for the First attempt review, the respective written report must be submitted at least 4 weeks before the end of Month 21. Failure to submit a mini-thesis by the specified deadline will result in a failure of the respective progression review attempt.

Candidates must demonstrate the ability to:

- manage the research project
- become proficient in the special field of research involved
- achieve success at PhD level given adequate motivation and perseverance

The panel must also satisfy themselves that:

- the project being undertaken is of sufficient scope, originality and theoretical interest to constitute a genuine contribution to the subject in the form of the understanding of a problem, the advancement of knowledge or the generation of new ideas

The **written submission** should comprise of:

- Minimum 5,000 words providing an overview of the research problem, its critical context and the rationale and/or approach of the project, as well as detailed plans for practice-based work and/or data analysis.
- A literature review, or an equivalent substantive chapter or component of the thesis (usually between 10,000 – 15,000 words)

NB. For practice-based research, candidates should arrange to show work in progress, which is in addition to the above written submission. This can be installation of work or documentation of work. If the former, candidates must make the arrangements to display work appropriately.

The panel will assess the written work submitted by the research student. In order for the PhD status to be confirmed, the following criteria must be met:

- that the research student has demonstrated the ability to manage the research project, to become proficient in the special field of research involved, and to achieve success at PhD level given adequate motivation and perseverance;
- that the project being undertaken is of sufficient scope, originality and theoretical interest to constitute a genuine contribution to the subject in the form of the understanding of a problem, the advancement of knowledge or the generation of new ideas.

The review will also conduct an academic needs analysis. By the date of the review, the candidate is required to complete the Ethics 1 module, and completed the intensive training week. Failure to complete these components will trigger the process of Termination of the candidature due to significant academic concerns outside Progression review.

The Recommendation of the review panel must be supported by all its members and can be one of the following:

- Successful confirmation; the candidate can proceed to the next stage of the PhD candidature for the final submission of the thesis. Research students who have been successful in their confirmation should receive written feedback on the confirmation process highlighting, where appropriate, any potential areas of concern.
- PhD candidature is not confirmed; the PhD candidate must be given a written report giving a statement of the reasons, guidance regarding any ways in which s/he might reach the required standard, and offered the opportunity for a second (and final) confirmation panel.

The second attempt at the Confirmation Review will have the same format as the first attempt, and will usually be conducted by the same panel as for the first attempt. An independent chair for re-viva will be appointed by the Director of the Faculty Graduate School.

The second Confirmation panel may make one of three recommendations:

- PhD candidature is confirmed;
- the research student is transferred to an MPhil programme;
- the research student's candidature is terminated.

If a unanimous decision cannot be reached in either the first or second confirmation panel an additional assessor is appointed. This third assessor will be provided by the Faculty Graduate School Office with a copy of the confirmation report and the separate reports of the two original assessors. The additional assessor shall be permitted to interview the research student before submitting a final report and recommendation to the Director of the Faculty Graduate School who shall consider the independent reports of the original assessors and the report of the additional assessor before making a final decision.