

POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH SERVICE: PROCESS AND ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDANCE ON CONCESSIONS

Please contact [the relevant Postgraduate Research Service team](#) with any queries.

Contents

Contents.....	1
1. Who is this Guide for?	3
2. What is a concession?	3
3. Who can submit a concession and what types are there?.....	3
(a) Research student concessions.....	3
(b) Research programme concessions	4
4. Process for a research student to submit a concession	4
5. Process for a staff member to submit a research programme concession.....	5
6. What final outcomes are possible for a concession?	5
7. Timing of concession process.....	5
8. Preparing a concession case and provisional outcomes	6
9. Final outcomes for minor concessions – School/Institute Directors.....	7
10. What happens if the student is not happy with a final outcome?	7
11. Definition of a retrospective concession.....	7
12. Authority to approve different categories of concessions.....	7
13. Limits of School/Institute authority for different programmes	8
14. Reference table for approval of research student concessions	9
15. Reference table for approval of research programme concessions	10
16. Research Student Concessions: Course and Mode Changes.....	11
(a) Transfer between full-time and part-time mode of a programme	11
(b) Other transfers between modes of study or research programmes	11
17. Checklist: Course and Mode Changes	12
18. Research Student Concessions: Extensions.....	13
(a) Extension to Period of Study	13
(b) Extension to period of fieldwork	14
(c) Extension to Period of Registration.....	14
(d) Extension to interruption	16
(e) Extension to time allowed for thesis corrections or resubmission	16
(f) Extension to time within which a Probationary Review Meeting is to be completed	16
(g) Extension to Deadline for Submission of the Thesis, without extension to the Period of Study – ClinPsyD and EdPsyD only	17
19. Checklist: Extensions	18
20. Research Student Concessions: Interruptions.....	19
(a) Interruption during Period of Study	19
(b) Interruption to Period of Registration.....	20
21. Checklist: Interruptions	21
22. Research Student Concessions: Viva	22
(a) Reasonable adjustments for viva	22
23. Research Student Concessions: Miscellaneous.....	22
(a) Requests relating to maternity, paternity or sickness not covered elsewhere.....	22
(b) Requests relating to reasonable adjustments for a disability not covered elsewhere	23

(c)	Any other requests not covered elsewhere	23
24.	Checklist: Parental/Adoption Leave and Sickness Absence	25
25.	Checklist: Reasonable Adjustments for viva	26
26.	Supplementary Checklist: Disability and Reasonable Adjustments	27
27.	Research Student Concessions: Reductions (post-registration).....	28
(a)	Reduction to Period of Study – post-registration.....	28
(b)	Reduction to Period of Registration not connected with reduction to Period of Study – post- registration	28
28.	Checklist: Reductions – post-registration.....	29
29.	Research Student Concessions: Supervision by blended or distance learning	30
30.	Checklist: Supervision by blended or distance learning	31
31.	Research Student Concessions: Other supervision matters.....	32
32.	Checklist: Other supervision matters	33
33.	Research Student Concessions: Thesis	34
(a)	Changes to format or exceeding word count limits	34
(b)	Other matters relating to the thesis.....	34
34.	Checklist: Thesis.....	35
35.	Research Student Concessions: Probationary Review Meetings	36
(a)	Extension to time within which a Probationary Review Meeting is to be completed	36
36.	Research Programme Concessions: Admissions	36
(a)	Registration date on non-standard entry date.....	36
(b)	Approval of applicant who does not meet School/Institute or Faculty entry requirements.....	36
(c)	Transfer from another institution	37
(d)	Admission of Category A candidates including staff candidates.....	37
(e)	Readmission following withdrawal	38
37.	Checklist: Admissions – Registration, transfer or readmission	40
38.	Checklist: Admissions – Category A candidates	41
39.	Research Programme Concessions: Miscellaneous.....	42
(a)	Any other requests not covered elsewhere	42
40.	Research Programme Concessions: Reductions (pre-registration).....	43
(a)	Reductions to Period of Study or Registration made pre-registration.....	43
41.	Checklist: Reductions – pre-registration	44
42.	Research Programme Concessions: Supervision	45
(a)	Supervisor exceeding limit on primary supervisee numbers	45
(b)	Supervisory team membership for non-UEA teachers.....	45
43.	Checklist: External supervision	46
44.	Research Programme Concessions: Probationary Review Meetings	47
(a)	Probationary Review Meeting to take place by videoconferencing	47
45.	Research Programme Concessions: Thesis.....	47
(a)	Missing report from examiner.....	47
(b)	Approval of an external examiner for a fourth appointment in three years	47
(c)	Approval of examiners for Category A candidates including staff candidates.....	48
(d)	Approval of appointment of an internal examiner who has not supported a research degree candidate through to successful completion or who does not have previous research degree examination experience.....	48
46.	Research Programme Concessions: Viva.....	48
(a)	Viva to take place more than three months after submission.....	48
(b)	Viva to take place with non-standard format	49
(c)	Viva to take place away from NRP.....	49
47.	Checklist: Vivas with non-standard format	50

48.	Research Programme Concessions: Boards of Examiners for Professional Doctorates.....	51
(a)	Examiner to attend Board of Examiners via videoconferencing	51
(b)	Absence of External Examiner from Board of Examiners.....	51
(c)	Absence of Internal Examiner from Board of Examiners	51
(d)	Replacement of Internal Examiner on Board (on a single occasion only)	52
49.	Notifying third parties, including funders, about a concession.....	52
50.	Case study 1: reasonable adjustments for a disability	54
51.	Case study 2: maternity leave and keeping in touch days	55
52.	Case study 3: Readmission following withdrawal	56

1. Who is this Guide for?

This Guide is designed to give practical advice for considering, advising on, preparing and processing concession requests relating to postgraduate research programmes. Although we would expect it to be most used by academic staff members such as School or Institute Directors of Postgraduate Research and professional staff members of the Postgraduate Research Service, we hope that it may be useful to individual students and supervisors as well as to members of other professional teams within the University.

Where the Concessions Guide document differs from University Regulations or the Code of Practice for Research Degrees, the Regulations and/or Code of Practice always take precedence.

We recommend that any student or supervisor who is unsure about a course of action should consult with their School or Institute PGR Director or with their Faculty Graduate School Postgraduate Research Officer or the NBI Graduate School Office team as appropriate.

This guide aims to help staff decide whether a request for concession against the Regulations is appropriate, which courses of action are open to the student, and to inform about the information that needs to accompany the concession request. Postgraduate Research Service staff should also consult other training manuals such as the SITS PGR Training Manual in order to update student records correctly.

2. What is a concession?

Concessions are exceptions to established procedure and Regulations. As such, when issues arise, the first port of call should be those documents which detail the Regulations and policy and procedure, to assess what actions may be open within established bounds. Reference points include:

- [UEA Regulations for Research Degrees;](#)
- [Code of Practice for Research Degrees and Policy Documents;](#)
- [Terms and conditions for Research Council Doctoral Training awards.](#)

Although procedures for approval of concessions against the Regulations operate with regard to the best interests of the students, they are designed to respond to **unforeseen** and **unavoidable** circumstances, not to compensate for poor progress, work commitments or poor supervision.

3. Who can submit a concession and what types are there?

There are two groups of people who can submit concessions relating to research degree programmes: research students, and members of academic or research staff involved in supervision.

(a) Research student concessions

Concessions submitted by research students are termed:

- **major concessions** if they need approval by the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor for UEA Doctoral College (APVC);
- **minor concessions** if they need approval by the School or Institute Director of Postgraduate Research.

(b) Research programme concessions

Concessions submitted by academic staff members relating to research degree programmes are termed:

- **major concessions** if they need approval by the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor for UEA Doctoral College (APVC);
- **minor concessions** if they need approval by the School/Institute PGR Director;
- **general concessions** if they need approval by the Faculty Associate Dean for PGR / Chair of NBI GSE;
- **workload concessions** if they need approval by the Head of School / Chair of NBI GSE.

In certain exceptional situations the approval of the Vice Chancellor or Executive Team may also be required.

Full details of the approval required for each concession is given later in this document.

4. Process for a research student to submit a concession

Students should complete the appropriate electronic form available from the [MyUEA Research Student Concessions page](#).

Students should send the completed form in a writeable format (not .pdf) and any accompanying documents to their Supervisor for review and completion of the Supervisor Section. Supervisors may need to discuss and agree the details with the student.

Once the Supervisor has completed their sections of the form, they should send the research student concession form in a writeable format (not .pdf) together with any accompanying documents to the PGR Service email address, copying in the student if they wish to do so:

[**pgr.concessions@uea.ac.uk**](mailto:pgr.concessions@uea.ac.uk)

The date when the concession is received at pgr.concessions@uea.ac.uk will be called the **receipt date** of the concession. The Postgraduate Research Service aims to respond to concessions with a final outcome within 20 working days of the receipt of a concession application, provided that the application is complete and accompanied by all the supporting information / documentation required. If further information is requested from a student or the School / Institute and it is not received promptly, this may cause the concession to be given a final outcome of “information missing” which means that a new concession will need to be submitted.

Once the concession has been received by the Postgraduate Research Service, it will be passed to a suitable Postgraduate Research Officer or Manager, known as the **Case Officer**.

If some information is missing, the Postgraduate Research Service will write to the student and/or supervisory team requesting further information before the concession can be processed further.

If all information is present, a case and provisional recommendation will be prepared by the relevant Postgraduate Research Officer/Manager, and then sent to the School or Institute Director of Postgraduate Research before returning to the PGR Service. This is to help prevent School/Institute PGR Directors agreeing to concessions without being aware of the potential consequences of this: for example, where granting a concession would be against the terms of a student’s visa or funding.

Where the School or Institute Director of Postgraduate Research is associated with the student concerned in some way, for example a member of the supervisory team, and where there could therefore be a perceived

conflict of interest, advice will be sought from the Head of School on who should consider the request in that instance.

Major concessions will have a further stage where they are considered by the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor for UEA Doctoral College (APVC). Certain major concessions may be signed off by a Manager within the Postgraduate Research Service acting as the delegate of the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor, typically HR-type concessions relating for example to parental leave and interacting with precedents in employment legislation.

General concessions will have an additional stage where they are considered by the Faculty Associate Dean for PGR or the Chair of the NBI GSE.

Concessions will be marked as **priority** if there is a clear and pressing need to resolve the case in the light of a deadline from a third party organisation: for example, if a student needs to make a Tier 4 visa renewal application within the next month. Case Officers need to be consistent in their use of priority notifications.

5. Process for a staff member to submit a research programme concession

There are various situations where it is more appropriate for a research programme concession to be submitted by a member of staff than for a research student concession to be prepared, for example where a supervisor wishes to act as primary supervisor for more students than is allowed for in the Code of Practice for Research Degrees.

All research programme concessions should be sent to the PGR Service email address pgr.concessions@uea.ac.uk, using an electronic form available from the [MyUEA Research Programme Concessions page](#). Normally the staff member should have discussed the situation with the School or Institute Director of Postgraduate Research before submitting a concession.

6. What final outcomes are possible for a concession?

Concessions should be given one of the following final outcomes. A concession may be **withdrawn** at the student's request or if the student's relationship with the University is terminated for some other reason.

Final outcome	Consequence
Approved	Records should be updated in accordance with the approved concession.
Approved with amendment	Records should be updated in accordance with the approved amended concession. If the amendments extend fees or other liabilities longer than the submitter's request, their consent to the amendment should be sought.
Rejected	Records should be updated in accordance with the original situation. The submitter is not allowed to submit a further concession on the same matter unless there is a substantial change in circumstances.
Information missing	Records should be updated in accordance with the original situation. The submitter may submit a further concession on the same matter but should include the missing information. This final outcome should only be given where the student/School have not provided information after suitable notice and within a reasonable time period. This outcome can be issued by the Postgraduate Research Service without reference to further authority.
Withdrawn	Records should be updated in accordance with the original situation. This outcome can be issued by the Postgraduate Research Service without reference to further authority.

7. Timing of concession process

The table below shows the target timeline for each concession case. This is a target monitored by the Postgraduate Research Service which the University aims to meet, rather than a procedural requirement.

Action	Target timeline	Example deadlines*
Date of receipt of concession at pgr.concessions@uea.ac.uk	Day 0	0: 15/12/21
Allocated to PGR Case Officer along with reference number	By Day 2	2: 17/12/21
PGR Case Officer makes any requests for further information, normally with five working days' notice for these to be returned	By Day 5	5: 22/12/21
If all information has been received, PGR Case Officer prepares case and provisional outcome and sends it to School/Institute Director for signature/comment/outcome	By Day 8	8: 5/1/22
School/Institute Director returns signature/comments. For minor concessions the final outcome will also be given at this stage.	By Day 10	10: 7/1/22
Major/General concessions only: PGR Case Officer checks that the case is ready for the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor/AD (PGR) and sends it to the AD (PGR) or confirms it can go to the APVC for consideration.	By Day 12	12: 11/1/22
Major/General concessions only: Concession considered by Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor/AD (PGR) and final outcome given.	By Day 20	20: 21/1/22
PGR Case Officer ensures that final outcome letter is sent out and that any implications for the student's record are acted on.	By Day 20	20: 21/1/22

*In the example, the University is closed for Christmas from Friday 24 December 2021 to Monday 3 January 2022 inclusive.

8. Preparing a concession case and provisional outcomes

When preparing a concession case, the Case Officer will refer to the guidance and checklists relevant to the category of concession under consideration.

The Case Officer will include a provisional outcome recommendation according to the following table. A case sent on to a member of academic staff should have a provisional outcome of either "Approve", "Approve with amendment" or "Reject". If the Case Officer's provisional outcome recommendation is either "Information missing" or "Withdrawn" it should instead be sent to the Doctoral Training and Quality Manager for consideration.

If it is a complicated case, it may be helpful for the Case Officer to consult another colleague within the Postgraduate Research Service, normally the Doctoral Training and Quality Manager in the first instance.

Provisional outcome recommendation	When to use this
Approve	Every essential item on the checklist for this category has been satisfied, and , taking into account the wider situation (including precedent, visa and funder conditions and other legislation), the Case Officer's judgement is that it should be appropriate to approve the concession on administrative grounds.
Approve with amendment	As "Approve", but where the Case Officer and School/Institute PGR Director have taken into account the circumstances and timeframes presented and recommended an alternative concession (e.g. interruption instead of extension, or a change to the length of time requested).
Reject	At least one essential item on the checklist for this category is not satisfied, and/or there are aspects of the situation which mean that there are strong concerns about the implications of approving the concession on administrative, financial or legal grounds. These should be clearly detailed in the concession case and all queries checked before recommending this outcome.

Information missing	If information required by the concession form or Case Officer has been requested twice but has not been forthcoming from the student or School and no satisfactory explanation has been given.
Withdrawn	If the student requests the concession to be withdrawn, or their relationship with the University is terminated for some other reason not related to the issues raised in the concession.

9. Final outcomes for minor concessions – School/Institute Directors

On receipt of a concession case from a PGR Service Case Officer, the School or Institute Director of Postgraduate Research should read the case carefully and note whether the provisional recommendation is Approve, Approve with amendment or Reject.

If the School or Institute Director of Postgraduate Research agrees with the provisional recommendation, they should respond with their final recommendation promptly, outlining their reasons, so that a final outcome can be issued by the Postgraduate Research Service as in Section 6.

If they wish to make a final recommendation of Approved against a provisional recommendation of Reject, they should note carefully their reasons for discounting the issues raised in the case, whether this is an essential item on the checklist or administrative, financial or legal concerns. Although it may seem easier to approve a concession, this can store up problems for the future. For example, repeated approval of interruptions can lead a student to think that these will always be granted, whereas it may be better for all concerned to consider withdrawal or other procedures at an earlier stage. This point has been made to the University by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education.

If they wish to make a final recommendation of Rejected against a provisional recommendation of Approve, they should note carefully their reasons for making this judgement so that it is possible to check whether similar cases are treated similarly across the University.

10. What happens if the student is not happy with a final outcome?

Although students cannot appeal the outcome of a rejected concession request, students are however able to make an Academic Complaint since an Academic Complaint may address any aspect of a student's academic experience about which they are dissatisfied. If a student was unhappy about a decision and complained, the Postgraduate Research Service would initially seek to ascertain whether any further information had been made available since the concession was submitted, which might influence the outcome (informal stage). The University's Academic Appeals and Complaints Procedures can be found on the [MyUEA PGR Appeals and Complaints page](#).

11. Definition of a retrospective concession

A concession will be deemed to be **retrospective** if the start of the period affected by the requested concession is at least one month earlier than the date of receipt of the concession by the Postgraduate Research Service. All such concessions will be treated as major concessions; certain retrospective concessions will not be allowed for students on a Tier 4 visa within the terms of their visa.

12. Authority to approve different categories of concessions

The Regulations set out circumstances where the Head of School or Chair of the NBI GSE has authority to grant an extension or an interruption to the Period of Study, which are summarised in the table below. In

practice this authority is normally delegated to the School or Institute Director of Postgraduate Research. Where the Regulations do not explicitly state that the School has the power to grant a concession or where approval is required for a retrospective concession not otherwise falling under the delegated powers of the School the approval of the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor for UEA Doctoral College (APVC) is required. In approving concessions against the Regulations, the APVC is acting under powers delegated to them by the Senate and the Learning and Teaching Committee.

13. Limits of School/Institute authority for different programmes

The Regulations give Heads of School or the Chair of NBI GSE the authority to reduce, extend, permit interruptions to Periods of Study or permit a period of work to be undertaken elsewhere than on the Norwich Research Park ('fieldwork') up to limits which differ for different research degree programmes as given in the table below.

Heads of School or the Chair of NBI GSE may also approve a corresponding reduction or extension to the Period of Registration, provided this is not more than the reduction or extension to the Period of Study. All other amendments to the Period of Registration will require the approval of the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor for UEA Doctoral College.

Degree	Reduction to Period of Study (up to)	Extension to Period of Study (up to)	Interruption to Period of Study (up to)	Fieldwork (up to)
PhD (full-time)	12 months	6 months	12 months	12 months
PhD (part-time)	24 months	6 months	12 months	12 months
PhD with rotation	12 months	0 months	12 months	12 months
MPhil	6 months for full-time candidates 12 months for part-time candidates	6 months	12 months	6 months
ClinPsyD	0 months	12 months	12 months	12 months
EdPsyD	0 months	6 months	12 months	12 months
EdD / MEd	0 months	6 months	12 months	0 months
ProfD	0 months	6 months	12 months	0 months
MD	6 months	6 months	12 months	6 months
Master's by Research	0 months for full-time candidates 6 months for part-time candidates	3 months	6 months	3 months
PhD by Publication	0 months	6 months	0 months	0 months

For Period of Study reductions, extensions and interruptions, and fieldwork longer than these periods, the approval of the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor for UEA Doctoral College will be required.

14. Reference table for approval of research student concessions

Reference table for approval of research student concessions			
Category	Concession Request	Section	Type
Course and Mode Changes	Transfer between full-time and part-time version of a research programme*	16(a)	Minor
	Any other transfers between modes of study or research programmes not explicitly provided for in the Regulations	16(b)	Major
Extensions	Extension to Period of Study, not retrospective, for up to six months (PhD), with or without a corresponding extension to the Period of Registration† *	18(a)	Minor
	Extension to Period of Study, either retrospective or exceeding six months (PhD), with or without a corresponding extension to the Period of Registration †	18(a)	Major
	Extension to period of fieldwork exceeding 12 months (PhD)† in total	18(b)	Major
	Extension to Period of Registration, where not associated with a corresponding extension to Period of Study	18(c)	Major
	Extension to interruption during Period of Study exceeding 12 months (PhD)† in total	18(d)	Major
	Extension to interruption during Period of Registration	18(d)	Major
	Extension to time allowed for thesis corrections or resubmission	18(e)	Major
	Extension to period permitted for completion of Probationary Review Meeting	18(e)	Major
Interruptions	Extension to time allowed for ClinPsyD or EdPsyD thesis submission only (with no extension to Period of Study)	18(g)	Minor
	Interruption, not retrospective, for up to 12 months (PhD)† in total during Period of Study*	20(a)	Minor
	Interruption, either retrospective or exceeding 12 months (PhD)† in total during the Period of Study	20(a)	Major
Viva	Interruption during Period of Registration	20(b)	Major
	Reasonable adjustments for a viva	22(a)	Major / Minor
Miscellaneous	Requests relating to maternity, paternity or sickness not covered elsewhere	23(a)	Major
	Requests relating to reasonable adjustments for a disability not covered elsewhere	23(b)	Major
	Any other requests not covered elsewhere	23(c)	Major
Reductions	Reduction to Period of Study for up to 12 months (PhD)† post-registration*	27(a)	Minor
	Reduction to Period of Study exceeding 12 months (PhD full-time)† post-registration	27(a)	Major
	Reduction to Period of Registration, where not associated with a corresponding reduction to Period of Study – post-registration	27(b)	Major
Supervision	Supervision by blended or distance learning	29	Major
Thesis	Change to format / exceed word count	33(a)	Major

* For Category A candidates including staff candidates these concession requests will be major concessions.

** For Category A candidates including staff candidates this concession request will be a general concession.

† Or other limit specified in the table in Section 13 for programmes other than PhD.

15. Reference table for approval of research programme concessions

Reference table for approval of research programme concessions			
Category	Concession Request	Section	Type
Admissions	Registration date on non-standard entry date	36(a)	General
	Approval of applicant with English language requirements below entry level	36(b)(1)	General
	Approval of applicant with academic qualifications below entry level	36(b)(2)	General
	Transfer from another institution, not including professional doctorates, where any associated reduction to the Period of Study is within the limits permitted by the Regulations*	36(b)	General
	Transfer from another institution, for professional doctorates or where any associated reduction to the Period of Study is outside the limits permitted by the Regulations	36(b)	Major
	Admission of staff or Category A candidate	36(d)	Major
	Readmission following withdrawal (not for disciplinary offence/debt)	36(e)	Major / General
	Readmission following withdrawal for disciplinary offence or debt	36(e)	Exceptional
Miscellaneous	Any other requests not covered elsewhere	23(c)	Major
Reductions	Reduction to Period of Study (short; as per Regulations) – pre-registration*	40(a)	Minor
	Reduction to Period of Study (long; as per Regulations) – pre-registration	40(a)	Major
	Reduction to Period of Registration – pre-registration	40(a)	Major
Supervision	Supervisor to exceed limit on number of primary supervisees from Code of Practice	42(a)	Workload
	Supervisory team membership for non-UEA teachers	42(b)	Major
Thesis	Missing report from examiner	45(a)	Major
	Approval of an external examiner for a fourth appointment in three years	45(b)	Major
	Approval of examiners for Category A candidates including staff candidates	45(c)	Major
	Appointment of an internal examiner who has not supported a research degree candidate through to successful completion and/or have previous research degree examination experience	45(d)	General
Viva	Viva to take place in fourth month after submission*	46(a)	Minor**
	Viva to take place more than four months after submission*	46(a)	General
	Viva to take place with non-standard format*	46(b)	General
	Viva to take place away from NRP*	46(c)	Minor
Boards of Examiners for Professional Doctorates	Examiner to attend Board of Examiners via videoconferencing	48(a)	General**
	Absence of External Examiner from Board of Examiners	48(b)	General
	Absence of Internal Examiner from Board of Examiners	48(c)	General**
	Replacement of Internal Examiner on Board of Examiners (on a single occasion only)	48(d)	General**

* For Category A candidates including staff candidates these concession requests will be major concessions.

** These concessions requests will be considered by the Head of the Postgraduate Research Service (or nominee) on delegated authority from the Faculty Associate Dean (PGR), with the exception of the Chair of the Board of Examiners, whose absence / replacement will require the approval of the Faculty Associate Dean (PGR).

16. Research Student Concessions: Course and Mode Changes

(a) Transfer between full-time and part-time mode of a programme

Part-time students are normally regarded as studying half-time (50%) of the full-time equivalent, except where stated in the Regulations. Students who wish to change from full-time to part-time study of a programme or vice versa should complete a **minor** "[Research Student - General](#)" concession request form and submit it to the Postgraduate Research Service for consideration by their School or Institute Director of Postgraduate Research. The Postgraduate Research Service will arrange for adjustments to fees where appropriate.

Some visas and funders do not allow part-time study, so this should be checked first. In addition, certain funders restrict part-time provision to certain full-time equivalent rates: e.g. at 60%, 65% or 75% rather than 50%, and this can affect approval, submission deadlines and funding.

Changes to the Period of Study are normally matched by a change to the Period of Registration, where a Registration-Only Period is provided for within the Regulations for the degree. Note that the Period of Registration is 1 year for both full-time and part-time students, unless a longer Period of Study and reduced Registration-only period has been approved by the Head of School or Chair of the NBI Graduate School Executive. Breaking the study pattern into monthly blocks can help calculate the new timeline, particularly where students have a mixed pattern of full-time and part-time study.

Changes will need to be recorded on SITS to ensure that fees are calculated correctly. For part-time students not studying at 50% the Finance, Planning & Governance Office will need to be explicitly consulted to ensure that the correct fees are levied and the correct returns made to HESA.

PGR Service Case Officers should attach the checklist in Section 17 to the concession cover sheet.

(b) Other transfers between modes of study or research programmes

In cases where a transfer from one programme to another is not specifically covered by the Regulations (e.g. a proposed transfer from MSc by Research to MPhil or the MD to the PhD) the student will need to be withdrawn from their current programme and admitted to the new programme. This can be done by the student deciding to withdraw and making an online application similar to any other applicant, but this does not provide the student with any guarantee that they will be accepted on to the new programme before they have withdrawn from their current programme.

If such a guarantee is required and/or the student is to be admitted to the new programme with a request to make associated alterations (for example to the length of the Period of Study or Registration) then a **major** "[Research Student - General](#)" concession request form should be submitted to the Postgraduate Research Service for consideration by the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor for UEA Doctoral College. It should include details of the reasons for the proposed transfer and a plan for completion of the degree. In these situations it may be desirable to waive the requirement for the student to make an online application. The PGR Service Case Officer must however ensure that the student record is completely correct following the concession outcome, particularly if no online application has been made.

PGR Service Case Officers should attach the checklist in Section 17 to the concession cover sheet.

17. Checklist: Course and Mode Changes

This checklist should be completed by the Case Officer. For concessions of this type:

A provisional outcome of **Approve** should be given where every essential item on the checklist below has been marked as satisfactory, and where the PGR Service Case Officer's judgement is that it should be safe to approve the concession on administrative grounds.

A provisional outcome of **Reject** should be given where at least one essential item on the checklist cannot be marked as satisfactory, or there are aspects of the situation which mean that there are strong concerns about the implications of approving the concession on administrative, financial or legal grounds. These should be clearly detailed in the concession case.

The essential items should never be altered for a given type of concession, although they may be marked as not applicable. Where essential items are missing, the Case Officer should contact the student/supervisor; if information is not supplied then they may give a provisional outcome of **information missing** as in Section 8.

Essential items on concession form	Satisfactory?	Comments
Correct concession form completed/signed by student		
Correct concession form completed/signed by supervisor		
Reasons clearly explained for requesting transfer		
Satisfactory medical evidence if reason depends on this		
Detailed schedule for the completion of the thesis		
Copy of action plan from most recent annual progress review, annotated to show objectives achieved/remaining		
Essential supplementary checks by Case Officer		
Student will still have the right to study within the UK, i.e. the change does not invalidate visa		
Student's funding body has given approval, or student has alternative funding and is aware of funding changes		
For changes to part-time study: the implications of visa or funder restrictions have been fully explored along with any consequences on reporting within the University		
Student has demonstrated that they will be able to dedicate sufficient time to their study / submission of their thesis (particularly for changes to full-time)		
New timeline for Periods of Study and Registration has been accurately drawn up and is included on cover sheet		
Disability checklist included if required (Section 26)		
Major concessions: supporting statement from the School or Institute Director of Postgraduate Research must be included when the request goes to the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor		

18. Research Student Concessions: Extensions

The extensions policy for research degrees is included in Section 7(c) of the [UEA Code of Practice: Research Degrees](#) and Section 1 of the [Research Degree Policy Documents](#).

(a) Extension to Period of Study

Students can see their current Period of Study end date in the 'Personal and Course Details' section on their eVision record as "Period of Research End Date". Extensions to the Period of Study can be requested via a "[Research Student - Extension](#)" concessions form submitted to the Postgraduate Research Service. This should always be accompanied by a detailed schedule for completion of the thesis, and a copy of the action plan from the most recent annual progress review, annotated to indicate which objectives have been achieved and which remain to be completed.

The concession will be a **minor or major** concession for consideration respectively by the School or Institute Director of Postgraduate Research or the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor for UEA Doctoral College depending on the length of extension requested (see table in Section 13), whether it is retrospective, and whether the student is a staff/Category A candidate or not.

If a request is made retrospectively (see Section 11 for definition) it must be considered as a **major** concession submitted to the Postgraduate Research Service for consideration by the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor for UEA Doctoral College. Retrospective requests should be avoided wherever possible, particularly where students are funded by Research Councils and other funding bodies who require immediate notification of a delay in progress.

Supervisory teams and the PGR Service Case Officer should consider, taking into account the student's circumstances, whether interruption or transfer to part-time study might be more appropriate options than an extension. Changes to the mode of study can be restored should the problem rectify itself. The starting point for choosing the most appropriate option may be the amount of progress a student has made during the period affected by personal circumstances.

A change from full-time to part-time might be appropriate if the changes in circumstances are likely to be long-standing and the student is going to be able to give a half-time commitment to study.

Interruption might be appropriate if the student is not going to be able to study at all due to ill-health or extreme personal circumstances which will prevent any study for a given period.

An extension might be appropriate if there is going to be/had been a short-term reduced ability to progress, which can be backed by evidence and is a result of unforeseen and unforeseeable circumstances. Acceptable grounds would include prolonged ill health, the illness of a dependant, the death of a close relative or an inability to access data which is beyond the control of the student and which was not foreseen. Requests for extensions on the following grounds will be treated less sympathetically: undertaking part-time work or internships; loss of data or notes which should have been backed up.

An extension to Period of Study may be an appropriate reasonable adjustment under the terms of the Equality Act for a student with a disability. Fees should normally be waived and training grants should normally be extended if an extension is to be granted as a reasonable adjustment for a disability. Further information regarding extensions as reasonable adjustments in the case of disability is given in Section 23(b) and in the case study in Section 50. A supplementary checklist can be found in Section 26.

When faced with a retrospective concession request, the PGR Service Case Officer should decide whether the extension is to the Period of Study or Registration. If a student's progress was delayed during their Period of Study, the extension should normally be made to their Period of Study. The expectation is that students should have completed their research and any required taught elements of the course by the end of the Period of Study. If it becomes apparent that research will not be completed by the end of the Period

of Study due to factors beyond the control of the student, then an extension to the Period of Study should be sought.

For students on a combined Period of Study and Registration, any extensions should be treated as extensions to the combined Period of Study and Registration if research or any taught elements of the course have not been completed, otherwise only to the Period of Registration.

Where the Case Officer recommends approval of a concession for extension to Period of Study, they should always recommend a corresponding extension to the Period of Registration. However, the School or Institute Director for Postgraduate Research or Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor will remain entitled to approve an extension to Period of Study but not the corresponding extension to Period of Registration. In these cases there should be a clear rationale for the decision recorded in the case notes and letter to the student.

Students will be charged for tuition fees proportional to the extension to the Period of Study.

Where repeated requests for extensions are made, the concession form must be accompanied by a copy of any previous schedules for completion annotated to indicate which of the objectives have been achieved and which remain to be completed.

If a School or Institute wishes to pay a stipend during an extended Period of Study but not to receive the tuition fees associated with the Period of Study extension, the proposed waiving of the fees should be clearly noted within the concession request so that it can be considered by the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor for UEA Doctoral College as part of the overall concession request. This will still need to be confirmed by the Fees Officer.

PGR Service Case Officers should attach the checklist in Section 19 to the concession cover sheet.

(b) Extension to period of fieldwork

Extensions to periods of fieldwork can be requested via a **major** "[Research Student - Extension](#)" concessions form submitted to the Postgraduate Research Service for consideration by the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor of UEA Doctoral College. This applies for fieldwork longer than the periods allowed by the Regulations (see table in Section 13).

Such requests should be accompanied by a clear case for why the extension is needed, and evidence to show that there will be appropriate supervision and support during the entire requested period of fieldwork.

An extension might be appropriate if there is going to be/has been a short-term reduced ability to progress, which can be backed by evidence and is a result of unforeseen and unforeseeable circumstances. See Section 18(a) for details of acceptable grounds. Extensions to a period of fieldwork **will not** automatically lead to any extensions in Periods of Study or Registration, which should be requested in addition.

PGR Service Case Officers should attach the checklist in Section 19 to the concession cover sheet.

(c) Extension to Period of Registration

Students can see their Period of Registration end date (the thesis submission deadline) in the 'Personal and Course Details' section on their eVision record as "End Date: Expected". Extensions to Periods of Registration can be requested via a **major** "[Research Student - Extension](#)" concessions form submitted to the Postgraduate Research Service for consideration by the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor for UEA Doctoral College. This should always be accompanied by a detailed schedule for completion of the thesis, and a copy

of the action plan from the most recent annual progress review, annotated to indicate which objectives have been achieved and which remain to be completed.

Retrospective requests should be avoided wherever possible, particularly where students are funded by Research Councils and other funding bodies who require immediate notification of a delay in progress. More generally, requests should be made **at least three months before the end of Period of Registration**. It is expected that students and supervisory teams will be able to plan and monitor work such that slippage in the schedule for completion or the emergence of unforeseen difficulties (such as the need to redraft chapters) will be apparent at this early stage. Early requests also take into account the right of the University to refuse the request for an extension.

Supervisory teams and the PGR Service Case Officer should consider whether an extension or another option is most appropriate, depending on the student's circumstances. Changes to the mode of study can be restored should the problem rectify itself. The starting point for choosing the most appropriate option may be the amount of progress a student has made during the period affected by personal circumstances.

Interruption might be appropriate if the student is not going to be able to work on the thesis at all due to ill-health or extreme personal circumstances which will prevent any work for a given period.

An extension might be appropriate if there is going to be/had been a short-term reduced ability to progress, which can be backed by evidence and is a result of unforeseen and unforeseeable circumstances. Acceptable grounds would include prolonged ill health, the illness of a dependant, the death of a close relative or an inability to access data which is beyond the control of the student and which was not foreseen. Requests for extensions on the following grounds will be treated less sympathetically: starting a job; undertaking part-time work; disruption resulting from voluntary change of job; poor standard of English in the thesis draft and delays in proof reading; loss of data or notes which should have been backed up. These circumstances will be looked upon less sympathetically because it is expected that:

- A student will need to find employment during the registration-only period to support themselves;
- The registration-only period already represents a period of grace;
- A student will have an appropriate standard of English when admitted to the University;
- A student will regularly back up notes, data or drafts and that the planning of the project will include time for contingencies.

For students on a combined Period of Study and Registration, any extensions should be treated as extensions to the combined Period of Study and Registration if research or any taught elements of the course have not been completed, otherwise only to the Period of Registration.

Where repeated requests for extensions are made, the concession form must be accompanied by a copy of any previous schedules for completion annotated to indicate which of the objectives have been achieved and which remain to be completed.

An extension to Period of Registration may be an appropriate reasonable adjustment under the terms of the Equality Act for a student with a disability. Continuation fees should normally be waived if an extension is to be granted as a reasonable adjustment for a disability. Further information regarding extensions as reasonable adjustments in the case of disability is given in Section 23(b) and in the case study in Section 50. A supplementary checklist can be found in Section 26.

Students who owe continuation fees will not be granted an extension.

The Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor for UEA Doctoral College will not normally approve an extension of more than **6 months** in the first instance. Where a supervisory team and student believe that a longer extension will be required this should be indicated on the concession form. In the case of requests longer than 6 months the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor would approve an extension of 6 months and then request a

progress report before considering a further extension; this report should be submitted between 4-8 weeks before the end of the extension. This approach has been adopted as a way to provide students whose progress has been slower than planned with a structured framework for completion.

A deadline for completion set by a Research Council or other funding body is not the same as the deadline for submission of the thesis approved by the University. Approval from a Research Council for an extension should not be assumed to mean that the University deadline has been or will be automatically amended. Students are expected to submit theses in accordance with the time limits set out in [the Regulations](#).

Candidates who fail to submit their thesis by the submission deadline and who have not requested an extension may be deemed to have withdrawn their candidature for the degree. They will not then subsequently be permitted to present a thesis.

Students who gain approval for an extension to their Period of Registration will accrue continuation fees (whether the extension is for a full or part year). Liability for continuation fees may be waived in the case of prolonged certified illness, supervisory issues outside the candidate's control or UEA equipment failure. The Case Officer should make a clear recommendation on this as part of their case and should ensure that the University's Fees Officer is notified of any recommended waivers, with a summary of the evidence provided as part of the concession submission to enable them to make a final decision.

PGR Service Case Officers should attach the checklist in Section 19 to the concession cover sheet.

(d) Extension to interruption

These should be treated as further interruption requests: consult Section 20.

(e) Extension to time allowed for thesis corrections or resubmission

Where exceptional circumstances mean a candidate wishes to request an extension to the time allowed for post-viva corrections to their thesis or resubmission of their thesis, they should complete a **major** "[Research Student - Extension](#)" concession request form which should be submitted to the Postgraduate Research Service for consideration by the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor for UEA Doctoral College. These should always be accompanied by a detailed schedule for completion of the corrections or resubmitted thesis (see also Section 18(a) above).

An extension might be appropriate if there is going to be/had been a short-term reduced ability to progress, which can be backed by evidence and is a result of unforeseen and unforeseeable circumstances (i.e. personal or medical problems, or family illness, or unexpected delay in obtaining results).

PGR Service Case Officers should attach the checklist in Section 19 to the concession cover sheet.

(f) Extension to time within which a Probationary Review Meeting is to be completed

Where exceptional circumstances mean that a Probationary Review Meeting cannot take place during months 6-9 of a full-time student's Period of Study (or pro rata for part-time students, usually during month 20), a candidate should complete a **major** "[Research Student - Extension](#)" concession request form which should be submitted to the Postgraduate Research Service for consideration by the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor for UEA Doctoral College. In Part 1.4 – Details of the Extension Request, the box titled *Extension to an element of your course without extending the course end date* should be checked, unless an extension

to the Period of Study and/or Period of Registration is also being requested. These should always be accompanied by a clear explanation of the reasons for the delay and a copy of the most recent action plan.

PGR Service Case Officers should attach the checklist in Section 19 to the concession cover sheet.

(g) **Extension to Deadline for Submission of the Thesis, without extension to the Period of Study – ClinPsyD and EdPsyD only**

Extensions to the deadline for submission of the thesis can be requested via a "[Research Student - Extension](#)" concessions form submitted to the Postgraduate Research Service. This should always be accompanied by a detailed schedule for completion of the thesis, and a copy of the action plan from the most recent annual progress review, annotated to indicate which objectives have been achieved and which remain to be completed.

The concession will be a **minor or major** concession for consideration respectively by the School Course Director or the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor for UEA Doctoral College depending on whether it is retrospective, and whether the student is a staff/Category A candidate or not.

If a request is made retrospectively (see Section 11 for definition) it must be considered as a **major** concession submitted to the Postgraduate Research Service for consideration by the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor for UEA Doctoral College. Retrospective requests should be avoided wherever possible, particularly where students' funders may require immediate notification of a delay in progress.

An extension might be appropriate if there is going to be/has been a short-term reduced ability to progress in relation to the thesis, which can be backed by evidence and is a result of unforeseen and unforeseeable circumstances. Acceptable grounds would include prolonged ill health, the illness of a dependant, the death of a close relative or an inability to access data which is beyond the control of the student and which was not foreseen. Requests for extensions on the following grounds will be treated less sympathetically: circumstances which are foreseeable or could be planned for e.g. holidays, weddings, loss of data or notes which should have been backed up.

PGR Service Case Officers should attach the checklist in Section 19 to the concession cover sheet.

19. Checklist: Extensions

This checklist should be completed by the Case Officer. For concessions of this type:

A provisional outcome of **Approve** should be given where every essential item on the checklist below has been marked as satisfactory, and where the PGR Service Case Officer’s judgement is that it should be safe to approve the concession on administrative grounds.

A provisional outcome of **Reject** should be given where at least one essential item on the checklist cannot be marked as satisfactory, or there are aspects of the situation which mean that there are strong concerns about the implications of approving the concession on administrative, financial or legal grounds. These should be clearly detailed in the concession case.

The essential items should never be altered for a given type of concession, although they may be marked as not applicable. Where essential items are missing, the Case Officer should contact the student/supervisor; if information is not supplied then they may give a provisional outcome of **information missing** as in Section 8.

Essential items on concession form	Satisfactory?	Comments
Correct concession form completed/signed by student		
Correct concession form completed/signed by supervisor		
Reasons clearly explained for requesting extension		
Satisfactory medical evidence if reason depends on this		
Detailed schedule for the completion of the thesis		
Copy of action plan from most recent annual progress review, annotated to show objectives achieved/remaining		
If not the first concession, copies of previous schedules, annotated to show objectives achieved/remaining		
Essential supplementary checks by Case Officer		
Extension is the most appropriate course of action		
Grounds given are acceptable according to guidance above		
Student does not owe continuation fees		
Student will still have the right to study within the UK, i.e. the proposed extension does not invalidate visa		
Student’s funding body has given approval, or student has alternative funding and is aware of funding changes		
Any implications of visa or funder restrictions have been fully explored along with any consequences on reporting within the University		
Relevant fieldwork risk assessments have been completed		
Student has demonstrated that they have a realistic plan for study / submission of their thesis		
Length of extension is consistent with evidence supplied, or Case Officer is recommending a different length		
New timeline for Periods of Study and Registration has been accurately drawn up and is included on cover sheet		
Disability checklist included if required (Section 26)		
Major concessions: supporting statement from the School or Institute Director of Postgraduate Research must be included when the request goes to the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor		

20. Research Student Concessions: Interruptions

(a) Interruption during Period of Study

If a student is in their Period of Study, any approved pause in their study is described as an **interruption to their Period of Study**; this is a period when the student is not undertaking any study, not in attendance and not liable for fees. The student is therefore not entitled to supervision or to the use of full University facilities. The student will retain University email access and may consult staff in the University Counselling Service, Student Services, Careers Service, the University Medical Centre (including the Dental Practice) and the UEA SU Advice Centre. Further details on entitlements during this period can be found in the "[Notice to Interrupting PGR Students](#)" on the PGR Service website.

If the student is in their registration-only period, a pause of their continuing study prior to submission is described as an **interruption to their Period of Registration**, i.e. a clock-stopping exercise until they are able to continue their study. The student is subject to limited use of the University's facilities during this period (as detailed above). See Section 20(b) below for further details.

Where it is apparent that ill-health, caring responsibilities or personal difficulties are of a type, severity and duration which will prevent any study for some time (typically at least one month), students and supervisory teams should be advised to seek an interruption. This should only be done where there is a **complete, temporary cessation of study for a material period**, rather than just a slowing down process. Leave of absence provisions under General Regulation 13 and/or use of annual leave may be useful for shorter periods depending on circumstances.

Interruptions during the Period of Study can be requested via a "[Research Student - Interruption](#)" concessions form submitted to the Postgraduate Research Service. Research degree candidates in the first six months of study, and those who are requesting interruptions to Period of Study of up to three months with no previous interruption, do not need to supply a schedule for the completion of thesis. All other candidates should submit a detailed schedule for completion of the thesis, and Case Officers will normally supplement this with a copy of the action plan from the most recent annual progress review. The requirement for a schedule can also be waived where it would be unreasonable to require this from the student, for example in cases of severe personal difficulties or acute ill health; in these cases a review should be scheduled for 4-8 weeks before the proposed date of return and the schedules/action plan submitted as part of the return to study process.

The concession will be a **minor or major** concession for consideration respectively by the School or Institute Director of Postgraduate Research or the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor for UEA Doctoral College depending on the length of extension requested (see table in Section 13), whether it is retrospective, and whether the student is a staff/Category A candidate or not.

If a request is made retrospectively (see Section 11 for definition) it must be considered as a **major** concession submitted to the Postgraduate Research Service for consideration by the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor for UEA Doctoral College. Retrospective requests should be avoided wherever possible, particularly where students are funded by Research Councils and other funding bodies who require immediate notification of a delay in progress; acting at the time may also help to reassure a distressed student.

Supervisory teams and the PGR Service Case Officer should consider whether an interruption or another option is most appropriate, depending on the student's circumstances. If work is still continuing but at a slower rate, a transfer to part-time study might be more appropriate. Changes to the mode of study can be restored should the problem rectify itself. The starting point for choosing the most appropriate option may be the amount of progress a student has made during the period affected by personal circumstances. See Sections 16 and 18 for further information about mode changes and extensions respectively.

Interruption might be appropriate if the student is not going to be able to study at all due to ill-health or is experiencing extreme personal circumstances which will prevent any study for a given period. Medical certificates and other evidence should ideally cover the whole period of interruption being requested. However, where it is difficult to determine how long the circumstances will prevent study, approval for a longer interruption should be sought on the basis that this could be amended were the student able to resume at an earlier point.

An interruption will not normally be granted for more than one year at a time.

An interruption will not normally be granted for less than one month. For students on UEA Studentships terms and conditions short periods might be eligible to be covered by a period of sickness absence instead.

Retrospective requests for interruption can be considered where a student has made no progress due to severe personal circumstances or illness even if they have been in attendance and have attempted to continue with their work. This will not always be possible under the terms of a student's visa or funding conditions. Moreover, the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor for UEA Doctoral College will not normally give approval for a period of interruption where the student is in attendance and has been in attendance for the preceding six months. Supervisory teams are expected to have recognised and addressed any serious interruption to progress at the time and to have acted accordingly.

An interruption to Period of Study may be an appropriate reasonable adjustment under the terms of the Equality Act for a student with a disability – for example, if an existing condition flares up for a specified period to the extent that no work can be done. Further information regarding interruptions as reasonable adjustments in the case of disability is given in Section 23(b) and in the case study in Section 50. A supplementary checklist can be found in Section 26.

For students on a combined Period of Study and Registration, any interruptions should be treated as interruptions to the Period of Study.

Where the Case Officer recommends approval of a concession for interruption of Period of Study, they should assume that they are also recommending approval of a concession for extending the end date of the Period of Study and the Period of Registration correspondingly.

Where repeated requests for interruptions are made, the concession form must be accompanied by a copy of any previous schedules for completion annotated to indicate which of the objectives have been achieved and which remain to be completed, and a clarification noting whether previous return to study processes were completed.

PGR Service Case Officers should attach the checklist in Section 21 to the concession cover sheet.

(b) Interruption to Period of Registration

If a student is in their registration-only period, a pause of their continuing study prior to submission is described as an **interruption to their Period of Registration**, i.e. a clock-stopping exercise until they are able to continue their study. The student is subject to limited use of the University's facilities during this period as detailed in Section 20(a) above.

Interruptions during the Period of Registration can be requested via a major "[Research Student - Interruption](#)" concessions form submitted to the Postgraduate Research Service for consideration by the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor for UEA Doctoral College.

All of the considerations in Section 20(a), excepting transfer to part-time study, apply to interruptions during the Period of Registration as well.

PGR Service Case Officers should attach the checklist in Section 21 to the concession cover sheet.

21. Checklist: Interruptions

This checklist should be completed by the Case Officer. For concessions of this type:

A provisional outcome of **Approve** should be given where every essential item on the checklist below has been marked as satisfactory, and where the PGR Service Case Officer's judgement is that it should be safe to approve the concession on administrative grounds.

A provisional outcome of **Reject** should be given where at least one essential item on the checklist cannot be marked as satisfactory, or there are aspects of the situation which mean that there are strong concerns about the implications of approving the concession on administrative, financial or legal grounds. These should be clearly detailed in the concession case.

The essential items should never be altered for a given type of concession, although they may be marked as not applicable. Where essential items are missing, the Case Officer should contact the student/supervisor; if information is not supplied then they may give a provisional outcome of **information missing** as in Section 8.

Essential items on concession form	Satisfactory?	Comments
Correct concession form completed/signed by student		
Correct concession form completed/signed by supervisor		
Reasons clearly explained for requesting interruption		
Satisfactory medical evidence if reason depends on this		
Supervisory team comments on progress if required		
Schedule for the completion of the thesis if required		
Essential supplementary checks by Case Officer		
Interruption is the most appropriate course of action		
Grounds given are acceptable according to guidance above		
Most recent annual progress review has been attached, if it contains relevant information and/or if progress was satisfactory with reservations or unsatisfactory		
If not the first concession, copies of previous cover sheets and schedules held on file		
End of period of interruption in future or last 6 months		
Student will still have the right to study within the UK, i.e. the proposed interruption does not invalidate visa		
Student's funding body has given approval, or student has alternative funding and is aware of funding changes		
Any implications of visa or funder restrictions have been fully explored along with any consequences on reporting within the University		
If a student has not provided a schedule for the completion of the thesis, they are not in their first six months of study and the interruption is for more than three months, the Case Officer has recommended that a review meeting must be scheduled 4-8 weeks before end of interruption to agree a schedule before return to study		
Length of interruption is consistent with evidence supplied, or Case Officer is recommending a different length		
New timeline for Periods of Study and Registration has been accurately drawn up and is included on cover sheet		
Type of return to study process has been clarified		
Disability checklist included if required (Section 26)		
Major concessions: supporting statement from the School or Institute Director of Postgraduate Research must be included when the request goes to the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor		

22. Research Student Concessions: Viva

(a) Reasonable adjustments for viva

Research degree candidates have the opportunity to detail any reasonable adjustments required in Part 3 (Special Circumstances) of the Research Degree Entry Form. The Internal Examiner has responsibility for facilitating on the day any reasonable adjustments to the viva, which will have been agreed upon in advance. However, not all candidates may wish to declare details on this form. The "[Viva: Reasonable Adjustments](#)" concession template allows candidates can specify who the details will be shared with.

Some issues may be able to be addressed without requiring formal concessionary approval e.g. requests for breaks or a particular room layout (see Research Degree Policy Document 15 for expected norms). Where a concession is required this will be a minor or major concession depending on whether or not the request contravenes University Regulations including the [Instructions to Examiners](#) and whether the student is a staff/Category A candidate.

An example of a reasonable adjustment for the viva which would require a major concession could be:

- A PhD candidate with both a visual and speech impairment requests to have their supervisor present at the viva in order to assist with interpreting technical terms in their speech with the examiners, where the supervisor has years of experience in interpreting this.

In these types of situations, the Case Officer should seek expert advice from senior PGR colleagues, Student Services and/or the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Office on whether the adjustment proposed is reasonable and to confirm our obligations under the terms of the Equality Act 2010. Where it is, the recommendation should be to approve it, perhaps with amendments to ensure that the proposed solution satisfies University requirements as far as reasonably possible. Where it is not considered reasonable, an alternative suggestion should be made wherever possible.

Vitae's '[Every Researcher Counts, equality and diversity in research careers](#)' web pages contain useful case studies based on the experiences of postgraduate research students with disabilities participating in the HEFCE funded Premia project. These highlight potential adjustments for the viva which could be considered.

PGR Service Case Officers should attach the checklist in Section 25 to the concession cover sheet.

23. Research Student Concessions: Miscellaneous

(a) Requests relating to maternity, paternity or sickness not covered elsewhere

From time to time students may make requests which relate to parental or caring responsibilities or sickness absence which are not requests for extension, interruption, changes of mode or other categories covered elsewhere. An example (keeping in touch days) is given in the case study in Section 51; other requests might include requests for flexible working hours for a student working in a laboratory situation or for specific days off which will mean that training needs to be rearranged. Many such requests will be able to be resolved locally within a School or Institute.

Any requests which contravene University Regulations or studentship terms and conditions should be detailed on a **major** "[Research Student - General](#)" concessions form submitted to the Postgraduate Research Service for consideration by the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor for UEA Doctoral College. The general principle is to try to treat students on a par with contract research staff, while bearing in mind that students are not subject to the same terms and conditions or rights and responsibilities as staff, and that University

Regulations, funding terms and conditions and visa conditions must be adhered to. Since these concessions are primarily concerned with issues of human resource management, the Case Officer may wish to consult colleagues within the PGR Service to seek advice on PGR precedents or a HR Manager for background information on what might happen if the request were made by a member of contract research staff.

PGR Service Case Officers should attach the checklist in Section 24 to the concession cover sheet.

(b) Requests relating to reasonable adjustments for a disability not covered elsewhere

Reasonable adjustments for a disability can be very broad, ranging from requests for changes to the physical environment to extension or interruption requests. Most requests about facilities should be dealt with by passing them on to the relevant School or Faculty officer or other Service area (e.g. Estates, Library, IT, NBI Partnerships team), since the PGR Service has no budget to implement changes directly. The PGR Service might need to be involved in other aspects relating to Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) or Regulations around Research Training Support Grants (RTSGs). However, these are not normally concessions against Regulations.

Examples of reasonable adjustment concession requests not covered elsewhere could be:

- A Doctoral Training Partnership (DTP) research student with a long-term mental health condition which means that they find it difficult to participate in activities with large groups of people requests not to attend specific mandatory elements of their training programme which involve this.
- A part-time research student with a disability which means that they can only work for 3 hours per day requests to be registered as a part-time student at 0.4FTE rather than 0.5FTE.

In these types of situations, the Case Officer should seek expert advice from senior PGR colleagues, Student Services and/or the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Office on whether the adjustment proposed is reasonable and to confirm our obligations under the terms of the Equality Act 2010. Where it is, the recommendation should be to approve it, perhaps with amendments to ensure that the proposed solution satisfies University requirements as far as reasonably possible. Where it is not considered reasonable, an alternative suggestion should be made wherever possible.

PGR Service Case Officers should attach the checklist in Section 26 to the concession cover sheet.

(c) Any other requests not covered elsewhere

This category picks up miscellaneous concession requests which don't fall into any of the other categories. These will need to be treated on their merits, using information elsewhere in this guide as a general guide to what will need to be checked. Students should complete a "[Research Student - General](#)" concession form.

Examples of concession requests not covered elsewhere could be:

- A self-funded full-time PhD student during their Period of Study applies for a 4-month maternity cover full-time position as a research assistant related to the topic of their research, and is the preferred candidate; they request to be able to continue on their programme full-time rather than interrupt.
- A pair of students request to be able to job-share a PhD studentship opportunity.

Under current Regulations, the first of these hypothetical concession requests might be able to be approved, depending on contractual arrangements.

The second one would normally be recommended for rejection as it is too far from our existing framework.

The Case Officer should seek expert advice from senior PGR colleagues for any miscellaneous requests unless it's very clear what the recommendation should be and they are aware of existing precedents in this area.

PGR Service Case Officers should attach a checklist based on the closest available category to the concession cover sheet, with amendments where appropriate, detailing what has been checked.

24. Checklist: Parental/Adoption Leave and Sickness Absence

This checklist should be completed by the Case Officer for miscellaneous requests which do not fall into other categories such as extension/ interruption /changes to mode of study. For concessions of this type:

A provisional outcome of **Approve** should be given where every essential item on the checklist below has been marked as satisfactory, and where the PGR Service Case Officer's judgement is that it should be safe to approve the concession on administrative grounds.

A provisional outcome of **Reject** should be given where at least one essential item on the checklist cannot be marked as satisfactory, or there are aspects of the situation which mean that there are strong concerns about the implications of approving the concession on administrative, financial or legal grounds. These should be clearly detailed in the concession case.

The essential items should never be altered for a given type of concession, although they may be marked as not applicable. Where essential items are missing, the Case Officer should contact the student/supervisor; if information is not supplied then they may give a provisional outcome of **information missing** as in Section 8.

Case Officers may wish to consult the technical guidance on [the Equality Act in FE/HE](#), and/or to consult senior colleagues in the PGR Service, Student Services and/or the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Office.

Essential items on concession form	Satisfactory?	Comments
Correct concession form completed/signed by student		
Correct concession form completed/signed by supervisor		
Reasons clearly explained for request		
Satisfactory medical evidence if reason depends on this		
Indication from supervisory team on whether progress has generally been satisfactory, excluding the circumstances		
Detailed schedule for the completion of the thesis		
Copy of action plan from most recent annual progress review, annotated to show objectives achieved/remaining		
If not the first concession, copies of previous schedules, annotated to show objectives achieved/remaining		
Essential supplementary checks by Case Officer		
Request is the most appropriate course of action		
Student will still have the right to study within the UK, i.e. the proposed request does not invalidate visa		
Student's funding body has given approval, or student has alternative funding and is aware of funding changes		
Any implications of visa or funder restrictions have been fully explored along with any consequences on reporting within the University		
Disability checklist included if required (Section 26)		
Advice sought from senior PGR colleagues and/or HR and included where appropriate		
Major concessions: supporting statement from the School or Institute Director of Postgraduate Research must be included when the request goes to the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor		

25. Checklist: Reasonable Adjustments for viva

This checklist should be completed by the Case Officer. For concessions of this type:

A provisional outcome of **Approve** should be given where every essential item on the checklist below has been marked as satisfactory, and where the PGR Service Case Officer's judgement is that it should be safe to approve the concession on administrative grounds.

A provisional outcome of **Reject** should be given where at least one essential item on the checklist cannot be marked as satisfactory, or there are aspects of the situation which mean that there are strong concerns about the implications of approving the concession on administrative, financial or legal grounds. These should be clearly detailed in the concession case.

The essential items should never be altered for a given type of concession, although they may be marked as not applicable. Where essential items are missing, the Case Officer should contact the student/supervisor; if information is not supplied then they may give a provisional outcome of **information missing** as in Section 8.

Essential items on concession form	Satisfactory?	Comments
Correct concession form completed/signed by student		
Brief supervisor statement about the adjustments included / attached (where student has given consent to sharing information with their supervisory team)		
Reasons clearly explained for proposed viva arrangements		
Satisfactory supporting evidence has been supplied (where student is not registered on University systems as having a disability)		
Essential supplementary checks by Case Officer		
Request is the most appropriate course of action		
Grounds given are acceptable according to guidance above		
Consent given to share necessary details of the reasonable adjustments with examiners and any others who may be allowed to be present at the viva		
Disability checklist included (Section 26)		
Major concessions: supporting statement from the School or Institute Director of Postgraduate Research must be included when the request goes to the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor		

26. Supplementary Checklist: Disability and Reasonable Adjustments

This checklist should be completed by the Case Officer where a candidate has declared one or more disabilities and the University is considering reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act (2010). Schools have the responsibility to implement these; the role of the PGR Service is to monitor consistency of approach. Those involved may wish to consult the technical guidance on [the Equality Act in FE/HE](#), and/or to consult senior colleagues in the PGR Service, Student Services and/or the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Office.

This checklist will be supplementary to another concession checklist and is therefore structured differently. A detailed example of its use is given in the case study in Section 50. Reasonable adjustments may on occasion be suggested by the student, School or Institute, but would normally be recommended by a medical practitioner or a trained professional within the University. Fees should normally be waived and training grants should normally be extended if an extension to the Period of Study and/or Registration is to be granted as a reasonable adjustment for a disability.

Elements of the candidate's programme

Disability and evidence	Effect on each element of programme of advanced study and research	Reasonable adjustments and who recommended	Actions taken and effect

Issues which should be addressed without requiring concessionary approval and actions to be taken

Issues which should be addressed and require concessionary approval as described

27. Research Student Concessions: Reductions (post-registration)

(a) Reduction to Period of Study – post-registration

Where a candidate wishes to submit their thesis earlier than the limits prescribed in the Regulations, a reduction to Period of Study (post-registration) will be required. For a PhD candidate, the limits are set out in the award Regulations, section 5.5 and state that “a thesis may be presented for examination at any time after the beginning of the last six months of the prescribed Period of Study”. Other limits apply for other research degrees. A candidate submitting a thesis within the last six months (PhD), or within the appropriate equivalent period for other research degrees, will still be liable for fees until the end of the official Period of Study. A reduction in fee liability will only be considered where there is an approved concession in place to reduce the Period of Study.

Reductions to Periods of Study can be requested via a "[Research Student - General](#)" concessions form submitted to the Postgraduate Research Service. For requests made post-registration the form should be completed by the student and this section applies. For requests made pre-registration the form should be completed by a member of academic staff: see Section 40.

Post-registration requests should always be accompanied by a detailed schedule for completion of the thesis, and a copy of the action plan from the most recent annual progress review, annotated to indicate which objectives have been achieved and which remain to be completed.

The concession will be a **minor or major** concession for consideration respectively by the School or Institute Director of Postgraduate Research or the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor for UEA Doctoral College depending on the length of reduction requested (see table in Section 13), whether it is retrospective, and whether the student is a staff/Category A candidate or not.

If a request is made retrospectively (see Section 11 for definition) it must be considered as a **major** concession submitted to the Postgraduate Research Service for consideration by the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor for UEA Doctoral College. Financial and visa consequences must be considered very carefully.

Any reduction in the Period of Study will reflect a reduced Period of Study in which to undertake research. Any subsequent request for extension of the Period of Registration, on the grounds that the student had insufficient time to complete, will not be looked upon sympathetically.

Acceptable grounds for approving a reduction in Period of Study are normally where research contributing to the topic has been undertaken prior to admission, or, in exceptional cases associated with readmission, where the original research is deemed to be of sufficient quality and up to date. This will most commonly be where a student has transferred from another institution. The approved topic should reflect a breadth and scope of study or research which would normally be completed within the standard Period of Study for the relevant award. Applications for a reduction in the Period of Study may also be approved on the grounds of transfer into a programme from another programme of study: see Section 36(c) for further details.

Where the Case Officer recommends approval of a concession for reduction to Period of Study, they should always recommend a corresponding reduction to the Period of Registration.

PGR Service Case Officers should attach the checklist in Section 28 to the concession cover sheet.

(b) Reduction to Period of Registration not connected with reduction to Period of Study – post-registration

Such concessions are very unlikely since there is little to be gained from them. Any such requests would need approval by the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor for UEA Doctoral College.

PGR Service Case Officers should attach the checklist in Section 28 to the concession cover sheet.

28. Checklist: Reductions – post-registration

This checklist should be completed by the Case Officer. For concessions of this type:

A provisional outcome of **Approve** should be given where every essential item on the checklist below has been marked as satisfactory, and where the PGR Service Case Officer's judgement is that it should be safe to approve the concession on administrative grounds.

A provisional outcome of **Reject** should be given where at least one essential item on the checklist cannot be marked as satisfactory, or there are aspects of the situation which mean that there are strong concerns about the implications of approving the concession on administrative, financial or legal grounds. These should be clearly detailed in the concession case.

The essential items should never be altered for a given type of concession, although they may be marked as not applicable. Where essential items are missing, the Case Officer should contact the student/supervisor; if information is not supplied then they may give a provisional outcome of **information missing** as in Section 8.

Essential items on concession form	Satisfactory?	Comments
Correct concession form completed/signed by student		
Correct concession form completed/signed by supervisor		
Reasons clearly explained for requesting reduction		
Confirmation from supervisory team that they are confident the thesis will be completed within the reduced Period of Study/Registration		
Detailed schedule for the completion of the thesis, including a clear indication of research already undertaken		
Copy of action plan from most recent annual progress review, annotated to show objectives achieved/remaining		
If not the first concession, copies of previous schedules, annotated to show objectives achieved/remaining		
Essential supplementary checks by Case Officer		
Grounds given are acceptable according to guidance above		
Student's funding body has given approval, or student has alternative funding and is aware of funding changes		
Any implications of visa or funder restrictions have been fully explored along with any consequences on reporting within the University		
New timeline for Periods of Study and Registration has been accurately drawn up and is included on cover sheet		
Disability checklist included if required (Section 26)		
Major concessions: supporting statement from the School or Institute Director of Postgraduate Research must be included when the request goes to the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor		

29. Research Student Concessions: Supervision by blended or distance learning

Students who wish to be based away from Norwich and who will therefore be unable to meet in person with their supervisory team should seek approval for this by completing the appropriate “Research Student – Blended or Distance Learning” concession request form and submit it to the Postgraduate Research Service for consideration by the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor for UEA Doctoral College.

Case Officers must explore the visa implications of any such requests very carefully, and seek advice from the Student Visa Compliance Team where appropriate.

The reasons should be carefully detailed in the concession form and should be unavoidable, or at least not avoidable without serious consequence to the student.

PGR Service Case Officers should attach the checklist in Section 30 to the concession cover sheet.

30. Checklist: Supervision by blended or distance learning

This checklist should be completed by the Case Officer. For concessions of this type:

A provisional outcome of **Approve** should be given where every essential item on the checklist below has been marked as satisfactory, and where the PGR Service Case Officer's judgement is that it should be safe to approve the concession on administrative grounds.

A provisional outcome of **Reject** should be given where at least one essential item on the checklist cannot be marked as satisfactory, or there are aspects of the situation which mean that there are strong concerns about the implications of approving the concession on administrative, financial or legal grounds. These should be clearly detailed in the concession case.

The essential items should never be altered for a given type of concession, although they may be marked as not applicable. Where essential items are missing, the Case Officer should contact the student/supervisor; if information is not supplied then they may give a provisional outcome of **information missing** as in Section 8.

Essential items on concession form	Satisfactory?	Comments
Correct concession form completed/signed by student		
Correct concession form completed/signed by supervisor		
Reasons clearly explained for request		
Satisfactory medical evidence if reason depends on this		
Requirements for blended/distance learning met (e.g. living situation, supervisory team permission).		
For continuing students, where required on the form		
Indication from supervisory team on whether progress has generally been satisfactory, excluding the circumstances		
Detailed schedule for the completion of the thesis		
Copy of action plan from most recent annual progress review, annotated to show objectives achieved/remaining		
If not the first concession, copies of previous schedules, annotated to show objectives achieved/remaining		
Essential supplementary checks by Case Officer		
Request is the most appropriate course of action		
Grounds given are acceptable according to guidance above		
Student will still have the right to study within the UK, i.e. the proposed change does not invalidate visa		
Student's funding body has given approval, or student has alternative funding and is aware of funding changes		
Any implications of visa or funder restrictions have been fully explored along with any consequences on reporting within the University		
Disability checklist included if required (Section 26)		
Major concessions: supporting statement from the School or Institute Director of Postgraduate Research must be included when the request goes to the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor		

31. Research Student Concessions: Other supervision matters

This section refers to concession requests made by a research student. Changes or additions to supervisory teams do not normally require concession requests and should be dealt with initially by the School or Institute Director of Postgraduate Research according to Section 8 of the [Code of Practice for Research Degrees](#). The Postgraduate Research Service will require details of the change in writing including any changes to supervisory split percentages or roles (primary, secondary, team) and the effective date of any such change.

Concessions relating to the number of students which a primary supervisor can supervise or to the appointment of supervisors not holding an academic/research contract at UEA are research programme concessions and should be submitted by a member of academic staff rather than an individual student. See Section 42 for more details.

Concession requests which would come under this heading could include requests by students for changes or additions to supervisory teams which have already been requested at School or Institute level but have not been able to be resolved. Students should complete a "[Research Student - General](#)" concession form. Where a School finds itself unable to provide appropriate supervision internally, the Head of School should consider whether supervision can be provided by a supervisor from another UEA School or from an external supervisor based at another higher education institution. Further guidance on the University's requirements for the appointment of external supervisors can be found in Section 8 of the [Code of Practice for Research Degrees](#).

PGR Service Case Officers should attach the checklist in Section 30 to the concession cover sheet.

32. Checklist: Other supervision matters

This checklist should be completed by the Case Officer. For concessions of this type:

A provisional outcome of **Approve** should be given where every essential item on the checklist below has been marked as satisfactory, and where the PGR Service Case Officer's judgement is that it should be safe to approve the concession on administrative grounds.

A provisional outcome of **Reject** should be given where at least one essential item on the checklist cannot be marked as satisfactory, or there are aspects of the situation which mean that there are strong concerns about the implications of approving the concession on administrative, financial or legal grounds. These should be clearly detailed in the concession case.

The essential items should never be altered for a given type of concession, although they may be marked as not applicable. Where essential items are missing, the Case Officer should contact the student/supervisor; if information is not supplied then they may give a provisional outcome of **information missing** as in Section 8.

Essential items on concession form	Satisfactory?	Comments
Correct concession form completed/signed by student		
Correct concession form completed/signed by supervisor		
Reasons clearly explained for request		
Satisfactory medical evidence if reason depends on this		
If applicable, requirements for blended/distance learning met (e.g. living situation, supervisory team permission).		
For continuing students, where required on the form		
Indication from supervisory team on whether progress has generally been satisfactory, excluding the circumstances		
Detailed schedule for the completion of the thesis		
Copy of action plan from most recent annual progress review, annotated to show objectives achieved/remaining		
If not the first concession, copies of previous schedules, annotated to show objectives achieved/remaining		
Essential supplementary checks by Case Officer		
Request is the most appropriate course of action		
Grounds given are acceptable according to guidance above		
Student will still have the right to study within the UK, i.e. the proposed change does not invalidate visa		
Student's funding body has given approval, or student has alternative funding and is aware of funding changes		
Any implications of visa or funder restrictions have been fully explored along with any consequences on reporting within the University		
Disability checklist included if required (Section 26)		
Major concessions: supporting statement from the School or Institute Director of Postgraduate Research must be included when the request goes to the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor		

33. Research Student Concessions: Thesis

(a) Changes to format or exceeding word count limits

Candidates who wish to submit a thesis with a word count in excess of the limits laid down in the Regulations should first be encouraged to revise their thesis to comply with the word limits. Word limits include footnotes, endnotes, the abstract and the bibliography but exclude the title page, copyright statement, acknowledgements, table of contents, list of illustrations, tables, figures or images and their legends, glossary of terms, and appendices. A failure to comply with the word limit may indicate problems in the design of the research project or the structure and content of the thesis.

If informal negotiation to reduce the word count does not resolve the issue, the candidate and supervisory team should complete a **major** "[Research Student - General](#)" concession request form explaining the exceptional circumstances which have prompted the request and why the thesis cannot be edited to meet the stated word limit. This should be submitted to the Postgraduate Research Service for consideration by the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor for UEA Doctoral College. Theses with word counts exceeding the stated word length by more than 20% are very unlikely to be accepted.

The approval of the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor for UEA Doctoral College is required for the submission with the thesis of any materials as supporting evidence. Any recorded materials submitted with the thesis must be not more than 1 hour in duration.

The approval of the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor for UEA Doctoral College is required if a thesis is to be submitted in a format other than A4. The concession request should include the reasons for why another format is required and why it is not appropriate to produce the material in A4.

The candidate will not be allowed to submit their thesis until the concession is approved. If the request is approved then the primary supervisor should inform the examiners of the additional word length before the thesis is submitted for examination. In approving a request to exceed the stated word limit the University is permitting the thesis to go forward for examination; it is for the examiners to decide whether a thesis that exceeds the normal word length otherwise satisfies the criteria for the award of the relevant degree.

PGR Service Case Officers should attach the checklist in Section 34 to the concession cover sheet.

(b) Other matters relating to the thesis

There may be occasions when a candidate wishes to submit a thesis not complying with the University Regulations for reasons other than changes to format or exceeding word count limits. All such situations will require the candidate to complete a **major** "[Research Student - General](#)" concession request form explaining the situation and submit it to the Postgraduate Research Service for consideration by the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor for UEA Doctoral College. The candidate will not be allowed to submit their thesis until the concession is approved.

PGR Service Case Officers should attach the checklist in Section 34 to the concession cover sheet.

34. Checklist: Thesis

This checklist should be completed by the Case Officer. For concessions of this type:

A provisional outcome of **Approve** should be given where every essential item on the checklist below has been marked as satisfactory, and where the PGR Service Case Officer's judgement is that it should be safe to approve the concession on administrative grounds.

A provisional outcome of **Reject** should be given where at least one essential item on the checklist cannot be marked as satisfactory, or there are aspects of the situation which mean that there are strong concerns about the implications of approving the concession on administrative, financial or legal grounds. These should be clearly detailed in the concession case.

The essential items should never be altered for a given type of concession, although they may be marked as not applicable. Where essential items are missing, the Case Officer should contact the student/supervisor; if information is not supplied then they may give a provisional outcome of **information missing** as in Section 8.

Essential items on concession form	Satisfactory?	Comments
Correct concession form completed/signed by student		
Correct concession form completed/signed by supervisor		
Reasons clearly explained for request		
Satisfactory medical evidence if reason depends on this		
Essential supplementary checks by Case Officer		
If concession relates to word length, word length exceeds regulatory limit by no more than 20%		
Request is the most appropriate course of action		
Grounds given are acceptable according to guidance above		
Disability checklist included if required (Section 26)		
Major concessions: supporting statement from the School or Institute Director of Postgraduate Research must be included when the request goes to the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor		

35. Research Student Concessions: Probationary Review Meetings

(a) Extension to time within which a Probationary Review Meeting is to be completed

Please see section 18(f) of the Concessions Guide and attach the checklist in Section 19 to the concession cover sheet.

36. Research Programme Concessions: Admissions

(a) Registration date on non-standard entry date

Students are currently expected to register on one of the following dates: 1 February, 1 June or 1 October, except for those professional doctorates (ClinPsyD, EdPsyD) which have a different specified start date each year. This is the date shown on student records and used to calculate the Period of Study and Period of Registration. In practice, students may start study shortly before or shortly after these dates. In these cases amendments to student records are not normally made. However, in some circumstances a student may be supported by a research studentship or other grant which commences on a different date. In these circumstances a different registration date may be approved by the Faculty Associate Dean of Postgraduate Research or the Chair of NBI GSE, who should bear in mind the need for an appropriate and prompt programme of induction.

Requests for registration on a date other than the standard entry dates should be made via a "[Research Programme - Admissions](#)" concessions form submitted to the Postgraduate Research Service. This form should be completed by a member of academic staff (normally the primary supervisor). Copies of any correspondence from those funding the student should be included.

PGR Service Case Officers should attach the checklist in Section 37 to the concession cover sheet.

(b) Approval of applicant who does not meet School/Institute or Faculty entry requirements

(1) English language requirements below School/Institute or Faculty entry level

Students must meet the minimum English language requirements for study in the UK at the appropriate level; this is mandatory even when the student does not require a Tier 4 visa. Schools and Institutes will normally require higher levels of English language than these minimums (e.g. 7.0 IELTS).

In exceptional cases a School or Institute may wish to make an offer to an applicant who has met the minimum mandatory English language requirements for study in the UK but has not yet met the normal required standard of English language for the School/Institute and Faculty. In this situation a concession request should be made via a "[Research Programme - Admissions](#)" concessions form submitted to the Postgraduate Research Service. This form should be completed by a member of academic staff (normally the primary supervisor). The concession request will be to give the applicant additional time to achieve the required standard of English language in order to continue beyond a specified period (normally six months) or successfully complete probation. Such a concession may be approved by the Faculty Associate Dean of Postgraduate Research or the Chair of NBI GSE.

PGR Service Case Officers should attach the checklist in Section 37 to the concession cover sheet.

(2) Academic qualifications below School/Institute or Faculty entry level

In certain cases a School may wish to make an offer to an applicant who has not met the minimum academic entry requirement for entry to a doctoral degree (at least a 2:1 in a UK undergraduate degree, or a Master's degree, or equivalent), but who can demonstrate **significant** research or professional experience within a relevant field. In this situation a concession request should be made via a "[Research Programme - Admissions](#)" concessions form submitted to the Postgraduate Research Service. This form should be completed by a member of academic staff (normally the primary supervisor). The concession request should include evidence that the research or professional experience is indicative of the applicant's potential for research. Such a concession may be approved by the Faculty Associate Dean of Postgraduate Research as in the General Regulations: Admissions Requirements for PGR Degree Programmes.

PGR Service Case Officers should attach the checklist in Section 37 to the concession cover sheet.

(c) Transfer from another institution

Where an applicant wishes to transfer from another institution, they will need to submit an application as for any other applicant, to ensure that we have their correct details. They will normally request a reduction to Period of Study: see Section 40. The length of this reduction determines whether the concession should be **major** or **minor**, and therefore who should consider it. Transfers involving professional doctorates (e.g. ClinPsyD) require the approval of the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor for UEA Doctoral College.

The decision to admit the student rests with the School (and Institute if appropriate), and the requirements of the [Code of Practice for Research Degrees](#) in respect of admissions should be followed. For example, the School/Institute must satisfy itself that there are appropriate resources, supervisory capacity and facilities to support the proposed research topic. In addition the following actions are required:

- The Postgraduate Research Service must as a matter of courtesy write to the department from which the student is proposing to transfer to confirm that there is agreement for the transfer;
- Permission must be obtained from any funding sponsor;
- Visa implications must be checked;
- An appropriate reduction in Period of Study must be determined and requested;
- The primary supervisor should complete a "[Research Programme - Admissions](#)" concession form.

PGR Service Case Officers should attach the checklists in Sections 37 and 41 to the concession cover sheet.

(d) Admission of Category A candidates including staff candidates

As set out in the award Regulations, [Code of Practice for Research Degrees and accompanying Research Degree Policy Document 6 – Classification of Students as Category A and Staff Candidates](#), candidates for research degrees are classified as being either Category A or Category B students. The Category A candidates include **all** academic staff at the University, Research Associates or Technical staff based in the School of Study / UEA Research Centres associated with the School of Study, and research staff at an affiliated Graduate School who will be based as a PGR student at that affiliated Graduate School. They may also include near relatives of members of staff (i.e. partner, child, parent, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece or grandparent). An assessment of the category of a student should be made at the point of admission, and thereafter at each annual review and when examiners are appointed.

Admission of Category A candidates must be approved by the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor for UEA Doctoral College (on the recommendation of the Head of the School or Chair of NBI GSE). This also includes approval of the candidate's field of study and research and formal approval of the supervisory team.

Full-time University employees may be eligible for remission of fees when registering for a part-time degree. Part-time employees will also benefit from fees remission on a pro-rata basis. There is currently, however, a qualifying period of three years' continuous employment before any employee will be allowed to benefit from fees remission. However, where staff are employed with the expectation that they will register for a higher degree the qualifying period will be waived and registering for the higher degree made a formal condition of employment. Where the Head of School considers that a newly-appointed member of academic staff should register for a higher degree in the interests of their career development, the Head of School may request that the Director of People and Culture (or their nominee) waives the qualifying period, in which case the requirement to register for a higher degree will be made a condition of employment, either on appointment or later.

Employees of the NBI and other affiliated Institutes, whether full-time or part-time, and registered for a part-time degree at UEA, may be eligible for fee discounts (e.g. of 25% of the normal fee for the course).

Where a member of staff registers for a higher degree but does not meet the qualifying period and is not otherwise exempted from fee liability they will be liable for full fees. If they continue to be employed by the University and subsequently meet the three-year qualifying period they will then be entitled to fee remission. Fee remission is granted only as long as the student remains in the employment of the University etc. Those who cease to be employees but who continue to be registered as UEA students will be liable for the full fee for the course for which they are registered from the date they cease to be employees.

The Planning and Resource Committee has also approved reduced fees for certain members of staff who work at the University but who are not employed by the University (e.g. the Students' Union, Chaplaincy and Health Centre). The Finance, Planning & Governance Office should be consulted for the latest list of units covered by this policy.

The following relationships count as "near relative" for the purposes of admission as a Category A candidate: husbands, wives, partners, children, parents, sisters, brothers, uncles, aunts, nieces, nephews, grandchildren or grandparents of members of staff. The key considerations for these groups are as follows:

- That any potential or perceived conflict of interest has been avoided in deciding whether an applicant is suitable for a project on academic grounds;
- That members of staff must not participate in the interview and admissions of any student to whom they are related;
- Whether the applicant or a near relative of the applicant will have access to sensitive student records – if they do then an appropriate staff/student disclaimer template (used by LTS and PGR) should be completed;
- Whether the applicant or a relative of the applicant would be party to the assessment process or teaching or administration of the programme in any way;
- To ensure that relevant controls have been put in place so that the applicant will not receive unfair advantage during their time at UEA as a consequence of their family relationship.

The primary supervisor should complete a "[Research Programme - Admissions](#)" concession form.

PGR Service Case Officers should attach the checklist in Section 38 to the concession cover sheet.

(e) Readmission following withdrawal

Readmission following withdrawal covers the following different cases:

- (1) An applicant wishes to return to any research degree programme at the University following withdrawal due to disciplinary processes or suspension on financial grounds;
- (2) An applicant wishes to return to the same programme (degree and project) as they withdrew from, following withdrawal due to other grounds from those in (1);

(3) An applicant wishes to be readmitted to a different research degree project or programme, following withdrawal from a research degree programme due to other grounds from those in (1).

In case (1), the **approval of the Vice-Chancellor** will be required. The Case Officer should forward the concession paperwork to the Head of the Postgraduate Research Service, who will liaise with the Vice-Chancellor's Office and University Secretary.

In cases (2) and (3), this will normally also require a concession request for reduction in Period of Study pre-registration: see also Section 40. If the reduction in Period of Study is sufficiently long to require the approval of the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor for UEA Doctoral College, the concession request should be processed as a major concession request and all aspects of it will need approval by the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor. If the reduction in Period of Study is sufficiently short that it could be approved by the School or Institute Director of Postgraduate Research, the concession request should be initially processed as a minor concession request and approved at School or Institute level, but the readmission must **also** be approved by the Faculty Associate Dean of Postgraduate Research of the admitting School. Where an applicant wishes to be readmitted to a different research degree project or programme, the Case Officer must seek information from the previous School or Institute (if different) and include this in the request.

The concession request will need to make clear the reasons for original withdrawal, justification for a return to the programme (or to a new project/programme) and confirmation that the student's circumstances will allow them to complete the programme, particularly where withdrawal was due to ongoing circumstances.

The primary supervisor should complete a "[Research Programme - Admissions](#)" concession form.

PGR Service Case Officers should attach the checklists in Sections 37 and 41 to the concession cover sheet.

37. Checklist: Admissions – Registration, transfer or readmission

This checklist should be completed by the Case Officer. For concessions of this type:

A provisional outcome of **Approve** should be given where every essential item on the checklist below has been marked as satisfactory, and where the PGR Service Case Officer's judgement is that it should be safe to approve the concession on administrative grounds.

A provisional outcome of **Reject** should be given where at least one essential item on the checklist cannot be marked as satisfactory, or there are aspects of the situation which mean that there are strong concerns about the implications of approving the concession on administrative, financial or legal grounds. These should be clearly detailed in the concession case.

The essential items should never be altered for a given type of concession, although they may be marked as not applicable. Where essential items are missing, the Case Officer should contact the student/supervisor; if information is not supplied then they may give a provisional outcome of **information missing** as in Section 8.

Essential items on concession form	Satisfactory?	Comments
Correct concession form completed/signed by supervisor or other appropriate member of academic staff		
Reasons clearly explained for request		
Satisfactory medical evidence if reason depends on this		
Satisfactory evidence from funders or other institutions if reason depends on this		
Essential supplementary checks by Case Officer		
Request is the most appropriate course of action		
Grounds given are acceptable according to guidance above		
Information provided from previous department if appropriate		
Disability checklist included if required (Section 26)		
Major concessions: supporting statement from the School or Institute Director of Postgraduate Research must be included when the request goes to the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor		

38. Checklist: Admissions – Category A candidates

This checklist should be completed by the Case Officer. For concessions of this type:

A provisional outcome of **Approve** should be given where every essential item on the checklist below has been marked as satisfactory, and where the PGR Service Case Officer's judgement is that it should be safe to approve the concession on administrative grounds.

A provisional outcome of **Reject** should be given where at least one essential item on the checklist cannot be marked as satisfactory, or there are aspects of the situation which mean that there are strong concerns about the implications of approving the concession on administrative, financial or legal grounds. These should be clearly detailed in the concession case.

The essential items should never be altered for a given type of concession, although they may be marked as not applicable. Where essential items are missing, the Case Officer should contact the student/supervisor; if information is not supplied then they may give a provisional outcome of **information missing** as in Section 8.

Essential items on concession form	Satisfactory?	Comments
Correct concession form completed/signed by supervisor or other appropriate member of academic staff		
Reasons clearly explained for why applicant is a Category A candidate (e.g. staff or near relative)		
Essential supplementary checks by Case Officer		
Information provided is sufficient to mitigate against any potential conflicts of interest		
Offer letter conditional on concession included		
Information about any fee reductions and associated approvals is included		
Disability checklist included if required (Section 26)		
Major concessions: supporting statement from the School or Institute Director of Postgraduate Research must be included when the request goes to the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor		

39. Research Programme Concessions: Miscellaneous

(a) Any other requests not covered elsewhere

This category picks up miscellaneous concession requests which don't fall into any of the other categories. These will need to be treated on their merits, using information elsewhere in this guide as a general guide to what will need to be checked.

Examples of concession requests not covered elsewhere could be:

- A self-funded full-time PhD student during their Period of Study applies for a 4-month maternity cover full-time position as a research assistant related to the topic of their research, and is the preferred candidate; they request to be able to continue on their programme full-time rather than interrupt.
- A pair of students request to be able to job-share a PhD studentship opportunity.

Under current Regulations, the first of these hypothetical concession requests might be able to be approved, depending on contractual arrangements.

The second one would normally be recommended for rejection as it is too far from our existing framework.

The Case Officer should seek expert advice from senior PGR colleagues for any miscellaneous requests unless it's very clear what the recommendation should be and they are aware of existing precedents in this area.

Students should complete a "[Research Programme- Lifecycle](#)" concession form.

PGR Service Case Officers should attach a checklist based on the closest available category to the concession cover sheet, with amendments where appropriate detailing what has been checked.

40. Research Programme Concessions: Reductions (pre-registration)

(a) Reductions to Period of Study or Registration made pre-registration

A member of academic staff may wish to submit a concession request for an applicant to begin their programme with a reduced Period of Study. This will be where an applicant has undertaken research contributing to the topic prior to admission, or, in exceptional cases associated with readmission, where the original research is deemed to be of sufficient quality and up to date. This will most commonly be where a student has transferred from another institution. The approved topic should reflect a breadth and scope of study or research which would normally be completed within the standard Period of Study for the relevant award. Applications for a reduction in the Period of Study may also be approved on the grounds of transfer into a programme from another programme of study: see Section 36(c) for further details.

Reductions to Periods of Study can be requested via a "[Research Programme- Lifecycle](#)" concessions form submitted to the Postgraduate Research Service. For requests made pre-registration the form should be completed by a member of academic staff (normally the primary supervisor) and this section applies. For requests made post-registration the form should be completed by the student: see Section 27.

Pre-registration requests should always be accompanied by a detailed schedule for completion of the thesis and an outline of the research already undertaken, indicating when and where it was undertaken.

The concession will be a **minor or major** concession for consideration respectively by the School or Institute Director of Postgraduate Research or the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor for UEA Doctoral College depending on the length of reduction requested (see table in Section 13) and whether the student is a staff/Category A candidate or not.

Any reduction in the Period of Study will reflect a reduced Period of Study in which to undertake research. Any subsequent request for extension of the Period of Registration, on the grounds that the student had insufficient time to complete, will not be looked upon sympathetically.

Where the Case Officer recommends approval of a concession for reduction to Period of Study, they should always recommend a corresponding reduction to the Period of Registration.

PGR Service Case Officers should attach the checklist in Section 41 to the concession cover sheet.

41. Checklist: Reductions – pre-registration

This checklist should be completed by the Case Officer. For concessions of this type:

A provisional outcome of **Approve** should be given where every essential item on the checklist below has been marked as satisfactory, and where the PGR Service Case Officer’s judgement is that it should be safe to approve the concession on administrative grounds.

A provisional outcome of **Reject** should be given where at least one essential item on the checklist cannot be marked as satisfactory, or there are aspects of the situation which mean that there are strong concerns about the implications of approving the concession on administrative, financial or legal grounds. These should be clearly detailed in the concession case.

The essential items should never be altered for a given type of concession, although they may be marked as not applicable. Where essential items are missing, the Case Officer should contact the student/supervisor; if information is not supplied then they may give a provisional outcome of **information missing** as in Section 8.

Essential items on concession form	Satisfactory?	Comments
Correct concession form completed/signed by supervisor		
Reasons clearly explained for requesting reduction		
Confirmation from supervisory team that they are confident the thesis will be completed within the reduced Period of Study/Registration		
Detailed schedule for the completion of the thesis, including a clear indication of research already undertaken		
Essential supplementary checks by Case Officer		
Grounds given are acceptable according to guidance above		
Student’s funding body has given approval, or student has alternative funding and is aware of funding changes		
Any implications of visa or funder restrictions have been fully explored along with any consequences on reporting within the University		
New timeline for Periods of Study and Registration has been accurately drawn up and is included on cover sheet		
Disability checklist included if required (Section 26)		
Major concessions: supporting statement from the School or Institute Director of Postgraduate Research must be included when the request goes to the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor		

42. Research Programme Concessions: Supervision

(a) Supervisor exceeding limit on primary supervisee numbers

Section 8(f) of the [Code of Practice for Research Degrees](#) states that: “a member of staff should not normally act as primary supervisor to more than six students at the same time, and never more than ten without the prior permission of their Faculty Associate Dean. Any member of staff wishing to act as primary supervisor to more than six students (up to the maximum of ten), must have the written permission of their Head of School or Institute Director who is responsible for making sure that the member of staff concerned is not overburdened by other duties.”

A member of staff who plans to exceed these limits should complete a "[Research Programme- Lifecycle](#)" concession form and submit it to the Postgraduate Research Service for processing as above. School or Institute Directors of Postgraduate Research should liaise with their Head of School or Institute Director to resolve any workload issues which arise.

There is no specific checklist for these concessions, since there is no standard workload model across all Schools/Institutes. What we require is an assurance that Schools, Institutes and Faculties are acting responsibly in the management of supervisory capacity against other demands on staff workload.

(b) Supervisory team membership for non-UEA teachers

Sections 8(b) and 8(e) of the [Code of Practice for Research Degrees](#) set out the ways in which the University manages appointments of external supervisors.

In all situations there should be clear paperwork setting out the level and nature of supervision expected, including a memorandum of understanding signed by the proposed external supervisor. A formal contractual agreement detailing any associated payment is also required wherever the external supervisor neither holds an honorary appointment within the University nor is covered by an existing agreement at institutional level between the University and the proposed supervisor's home institution.

A concession request is required in the following situations:

- (1) If a School or Institute seeks to appoint as a supervisor a holder of an honorary appointment (at UEA) who has not acted previously in this capacity at the University **and** where supervision of UEA students is not covered by an existing agreement at institutional level between UEA and the proposed supervisor's home institution, or
- (2) If a School or Institute wishes to appoint an external supervisor, including those who hold an honorary appointment at UEA, as a **primary** supervisor, or
- (3) If a School or Institute wishes to appoint as a **primary** supervisor an external supervisor who is not based at the Norwich Research Park.

In the first situation, Postgraduate Research Service Case Officers may wish to consult senior colleagues within the Postgraduate Research Service to establish whether an existing agreement at institutional level exists, for example within the NRP or a Doctoral Training Partnership (DTP).

Colleagues should complete a "[Research Programme- Lifecycle](#)" concession form.

PGR Service Case Officers should attach the checklist in Section 43 to the concession cover sheet.

43. Checklist: External supervision

This checklist should be completed by the Case Officer. For concessions of this type:

A provisional outcome of **Approve** should be given where every essential item on the checklist below has been marked as satisfactory, and where the PGR Service Case Officer's judgement is that it should be safe to approve the concession on administrative grounds.

A provisional outcome of **Reject** should be given where at least one essential item on the checklist cannot be marked as satisfactory, or there are aspects of the situation which mean that there are strong concerns about the implications of approving the concession on administrative, financial or legal grounds. These should be clearly detailed in the concession case.

The essential items should never be altered for a given type of concession, although they may be marked as not applicable. Where essential items are missing, the Case Officer should contact the student/supervisor; if information is not supplied then they may give a provisional outcome of **information missing** as in Section 8.

Essential items on concession form	Satisfactory?	Comments
Correct concession form completed/signed by School or Institute Director of Postgraduate Research		
Reasons clearly explained for proposed supervision arrangements and whether proposed supervisor holds or is likely to hold an honorary appointment		
Information provided about proposed supervisor's supervisory experience and training in supervisory matters		
Essential supplementary checks by Case Officer		
Proposed supervisor has a similar level of research and supervisory experience to those within the University		
Proposed supervisor will or has attended UEA supervisory training, or if not, clear details have been provided about alternative supervisory arrangements		
Information provided is sufficient to mitigate against any potential conflicts of interest		
Information about any relevant existing institutional agreements (or plans to develop such agreements)		
Major concessions: supporting statement from the School or Institute Director of Postgraduate Research must be included when the request goes to the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor		

44. Research Programme Concessions: Probationary Review Meetings

(a) Probationary Review Meeting to take place by videoconferencing

In exceptional circumstances the Faculty Associate Dean of Postgraduate Research or the Chair of NBI GSE may agree to a Probationary Review Meeting taking place by video-conference. Agreement will be required by the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor for UEA Doctoral College for Category A including staff candidates.

The agreement of the student, the supervisory team and the internal assessor(s) to this arrangement must be given in writing. Where a Probationary Review Meeting is held via video-conference the panel chair will be responsible for taking all reasonable steps to ensure that the student is not disadvantaged in any way compared to the normal situation of a face-to-face oral meeting. At least two parties from the student, supervisory team and internal assessor must be in the same location, ideally the student and at least one supervisor, along with the panel chair.

Colleagues should submit a "[Research Programme - Lifecycle](#)" form to the Postgraduate Research Service.

PGR Service Case Officers should attach the checklist in Section 47 to the concession cover sheet with amendments, where appropriate, detailing what has been checked.

45. Research Programme Concessions: Thesis

(a) Missing report from examiner

In exceptional cases where an examiner attends a candidate's viva but does not sign the final report, and there is no likelihood of ever receiving such a report (for example if the examiner is seriously ill), the Head of School or Chair of NBI GSE may seek either the appointment of an additional external examiner as laid out in the [Instructions to Examiners](#) or they may submit a concession request via a "[Research Programme-Lifecycle](#)" concession form to approve an award without appointing an additional examiner. The latter course of action might be more appropriate where the internal examiner is unable to submit a final report, where both examiners have submitted clear and complete preliminary reports which recommend an award with no corrections, and it was clear to the external examiner who has submitted the final report that the viva did not have a material impact on either examiner's view.

There is no specific checklist for these concessions, but the [Instructions to Examiners](#) should be carefully consulted by all parties. In particular, it should be very clear what the process is to approve any corrections.

(b) Approval of an external examiner for a fourth appointment in three years

Where a School/Institute seeks to appoint an external examiner for a fourth appointment in three years, a "[Research Programme-Lifecycle](#)" concession form should also be submitted to the Postgraduate Research Service in order to seek approval from the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor for UEA Doctoral College. See also Section 4.6 in the [Research Degree Policy Document 8: the Code of Practice for the Examination of Research Degree Awards at UEA](#).

There is no specific checklist for these concessions, but the [Instructions to Examiners](#) and [Code of Practice](#) as above should be carefully consulted by all parties. In particular, it should be very clear why appointing this particular external examiner is the best alternative, and evidence may be required of the attempts the supervisory team have made to identify suitable alternative examiners.

(c) Approval of examiners for Category A candidates including staff candidates

Where a School/Institute seeks to appoint two external examiners and an Independent Chair for the examination of a Category A candidate, a "[Research Programme- Lifecycle](#)" concession form should also be submitted to the Postgraduate Research Service in order to seek approval from the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor for UEA Doctoral College. See also [Research Degree Policy Document 8: the Code of Practice for the Examination of Research Degree Awards at UEA](#).

There is no specific checklist for these concessions, but the [Instructions to Examiners](#) and [Code of Practice](#) as above should be carefully consulted by all parties. In particular, it should be very clear that all of the normal requirements (experience, CVs, no conflicts of interest) have been satisfied.

(d) Approval of appointment of an internal examiner who has not supported a research degree candidate through to successful completion or who does not have previous research degree examination experience

Where a School/Institute seeks to appoint an internal examiner who does not have the experience as a primary or second supervisor of supporting research degree candidates through to successful completion or of research degree examination a "[Research Programme- Lifecycle](#)" concession form should be submitted to the Postgraduate Research Service in order to seek approval by the Faculty Associate Dean of Postgraduate Research or the Chair of NBI GSE. See also Section 5.1(k) in [Research Degree Policy Document 8: the Code of Practice for the Examination of Research Degree Awards at UEA](#). Where an internal examiner has not examined previously under the UK research degree examination system, they are required to attend the appropriate programme of development for new examiners or an Independent Chair will need to be appointed.

There is no specific checklist for these concessions, but the [Instructions to Examiners](#) and [Research Degree Policy Document 8: the Code of Practice for the Examination of Research Degree Awards at UEA](#) should be carefully consulted by all parties. In particular, it should be very clear what support is being put in place by the School/Institute to support the internal examiner and how the School/Institute will ensure that there is a balanced level of seniority, expertise and research degree examination experience between the two examiners.

46. Research Programme Concessions: Viva

(a) Viva to take place more than three months after submission

Where a candidate's viva will need to take place more than three months after submission of the thesis, the primary supervisor should seek the candidate's agreement to the timing of the viva via email.

Where the request is for the viva to take place in the fourth month after submission and there are no further concerns raised within the request, the Supervisor can send the request in an email to pgr.concessions@uea.ac.uk to be considered for approval by the Head of the Postgraduate Research Service (or nominee) on delegated authority from the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor for UEA Doctoral College.

Where the request is for the viva to take place later than the fourth month after submission, or there are further concerns raised within the request, the supervisor should complete a "[Research Programme- Lifecycle](#)" concession request form and submit it to the Postgraduate Research Service. It will be considered for approval by the Faculty Associate Dean of Postgraduate Research or the Chair of NBI GSE, or the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor for UEA Doctoral College for Category A including staff candidates.

There is no specific checklist for these concessions, but the reason for the delay should be clearly explained.

(b) Viva to take place with non-standard format

From 1 August 2021 a concession is no longer required for a viva to take place by videoconferencing, providing the viva complies with any of the standard formats allowed by Research Degree Policy Document 15: Policy on UEA Research Degree Vivas.

In exceptional circumstances the Faculty Associate Dean of Postgraduate Research or the Chair of NBI GSE may agree to an oral examination with a format not compliant with Research Degree Policy Document 15. Agreement will be required by the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor for UEA Doctoral College for Category A including staff candidates.

The agreement of the candidate and examiners to this arrangement must be given in writing. Where an oral examination is held with a non-standard format an Independent Chair must always be appointed, who will be responsible for taking all reasonable steps to ensure that the candidate is not disadvantaged in any way compared to a standard format.

Colleagues should submit a "[Research Programme - Lifecycle](#)" form to the Postgraduate Research Service.

PGR Service Case Officers should attach the checklist in Section 47 to the concession cover sheet.

(c) Viva to take place away from NRP

If a viva with participants attending in person is being planned to take place at a location not at the University (or on Norwich Research Park for candidates based in one of the Norwich Bioscience Institutes), the primary supervisor should complete a "[Research Programme - Lifecycle](#)" concession request form and submit it to the Postgraduate Research Service for consideration by the School or Institute Director of Postgraduate Research.

The candidate and examiners must agree to the proposed location in writing and must be given reasonable notice of the location well in advance of the viva date.

There is no specific checklist for these concessions, but the reason for the change in location should be clearly explained. The conditions of the viva must be equivalent to those expected of a viva at UEA, and all of the persons involved must be in the same room.

47. Checklist: Vivas with non-standard format

This checklist should be completed by the Case Officer. For concessions of this type:

A provisional outcome of **Approve** should be given where every essential item on the checklist below has been marked as satisfactory, and where the PGR Service Case Officer's judgement is that it should be safe to approve the concession on administrative grounds.

A provisional outcome of **Reject** should be given where at least one essential item on the checklist cannot be marked as satisfactory, or there are aspects of the situation which mean that there are strong concerns about the implications of approving the concession on administrative, financial or legal grounds. These should be clearly detailed in the concession case.

The essential items should never be altered for a given type of concession, although they may be marked as not applicable. Where essential items are missing, the Case Officer should contact the student/supervisor; if information is not supplied then they may give a provisional outcome of **information missing** as in Section 8.

Essential items on concession form	Satisfactory?	Comments
Correct concession form completed/signed by internal examiner or other appropriate member of academic staff		
Reasons clearly explained for proposed viva arrangements		
Information provided showing that an Independent Chair has informally agreed to be appointed		
Essential supplementary checks by Case Officer		
The format proposed is the most appropriate course of action, i.e. there are good reasons not to delay the viva, hold it at another place or hold it in accordance with RDPD15		
Independent Chair ready and willing to be appointed		
Contingency plan is in place in case of technical difficulties		
Confirmation in writing that candidate and examiners are happy with viva and arrangements		
Disability checklist included if required (Section 26)		
Major concessions: supporting statement from the School or Institute Director of Postgraduate Research must be included when the request goes to the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor		

48. Research Programme Concessions: Boards of Examiners for Professional Doctorates

(a) Examiner to attend Board of Examiners via videoconferencing

In exceptional circumstances, for example in the case of ill-health or severe weather conditions, an Examiner may be unable to attend a Board of Examiners' meeting in person but may be able to attend instead via videoconferencing. Where it is not possible and/or appropriate to reschedule the date of the meeting, the Chair of the Board of Examiners should complete a "[Professional Doctorate Examination Board](#)" concession request form and submit it to the Postgraduate Research Service.

The request will be considered for approval by the Head of the Postgraduate Research Service (or nominee) on delegated authority from the Faculty Associate Dean (PGR).

There is no specific checklist for these concessions, but the reason for the request should be clearly explained.

(b) Absence of External Examiner from Board of Examiners

Where an External Examiner is unable to attend a Board of Examiners' **Final Assessment*** Board meeting in person or via videoconferencing, and it is not possible and/or appropriate to reschedule the date of the meeting, but the Chair of the Board of Examiners believes it to be appropriate to go ahead with the meeting, the Chair should complete a "[Professional Doctorate Examination Board](#)" concession request form and submit it to the Postgraduate Research Service.

The request will be considered by the Faculty Associate Dean (PGR), who will be guided by [the Instructions to Examiners](#) Appendix B Professional Doctorates with taught elements Year and Final Assessment Section 2.1 Membership of the Board of Examiners. Factors that will be considered include the number of other External Examiners who will be present and whether there is sufficient expertise on the Board to cover all subject areas.

There is no specific checklist for these concessions, but the reason for the request should be clearly explained.

*The External Examiners will be consulted prior to the Year Assessment Board, but they will not normally be expected to attend the meeting.

(c) Absence of Internal Examiner from Board of Examiners

Where an Internal Examiner is unable to attend a Board of Examiners' meeting in person or via videoconferencing, and it is not possible and/or appropriate to reschedule the date of the meeting, the Chair of the Board of Examiners should complete a "[Professional Doctorate Examination Board](#)" concession request form and submit it to the Postgraduate Research Service.

Where the Internal Examiner is **not** Chair of the Board of Examiners, the request will be considered for approval by the Head of the Postgraduate Research Service (or nominee) on delegated authority from the Faculty Associate Dean (PGR).

In considering the request the Head of the Postgraduate Research Service (or nominee) will be guided by [the Instructions to Examiners](#) Appendix B Professional Doctorates with taught elements Year and Final Assessment Section 2.1 Membership of the Board of Examiners. Factors that will be considered include

whether it is a Year or Final Assessment Board, the number of External Examiners and other Internal Examiners who will be present, and whether there is sufficient expertise on the Board to cover all subject areas. In some cases it may be appropriate to appoint an alternative Internal Examiner (see 48(d) below).

Where the **Chair** of the Board of Examiners is unable to attend a Board of Examiners' meeting, the meeting should normally be rescheduled. However requests for absence will be considered by the Faculty Associate Dean (PGR) on a case-by-case basis.

There is no specific checklist for these concessions, but the reason for the request should be clearly explained.

(d) Replacement of Internal Examiner on Board (on a single occasion only)

As noted above on some occasions to ensure sufficient numbers of Examiners and/or broad subject coverage where a current Internal Examiner is unable to attend a Board of Examiners' meeting in person or via videoconferencing it may be appropriate to appoint an alternative Internal Examiner to attend the Board meeting. This should be on a single occasion only; more permanent changes to the structure of the Board of Examiners will require the approval of the Faculty Associate Dean (PGR). The Chair of the Board of Examiners should complete a "[Professional Doctorate Examination Board](#)" concession request form and submit it to the Postgraduate Research Service.

Where the Internal Examiner is **not** Chair of the Board of Examiners the request will be considered for approval by the Head of the Postgraduate Research Service (or nominee) on delegated authority from the Faculty Associate Dean (PGR).

Where it is proposed that the Chair of the Board of Examiners be replaced on a single occasion only e.g. by another Internal Examiner the request will be considered by the Faculty Associate Dean (PGR).

There is no specific checklist for these concessions, but the reason for the request should be clearly explained.

49. Notifying third parties, including funders, about a concession

If the student for whom a concession is being sought is funded by a Research Council or other funder where the funding is received **as part of a block grant** by the University, the PGR Case Officer should inform the appropriate Doctoral Training Partnership (DTP) or Centre for Doctoral Training (CDT) team within the PGR Service of the circumstances at the same time as seeking a concession, to check that the requested concession complies with the funder's terms and conditions for studentships. DTP/CDT teams may need to contact the funder or lead partner prior to the concession being considered although in some circumstances it may be appropriate to await the outcome of consideration of the case by the University. Prompt discussion of issues affecting progress and completion with the Research Councils will ensure good working relationships. DTP/CDT teams should be copied into the concession outcome letter.

In cases where the student's funder is invoiced by the University, the PGR Case Officer should discuss with the student who will contact the funder if there is any doubt about whether the funder is aware of the circumstances and will be willing to continue funding if the concession is approved.

The PGR Case Officer should ensure that the Fees Officer in the Finance, Planning & Governance Office and Faculty Finance teams are made aware promptly of any concession cases or approvals which may affect fee liabilities or stipend payments.

Where the concession relates to an interruption Student Records, the Library, Finance, Planning & Governance and School Managers (where there are workspace considerations) are notified via the SITS student records system or copies of the concession outcome letter.

50. Case study 1: reasonable adjustments for a disability

This case is not based on any individual student’s situation, but has been created as a training example.

Anna Other is a full-time self-funded UK PhD student in the School of Psychology. Ms Other submitted an interruption request on 1 February 2021 requesting an interruption from 1 December 2020 to 28 February 2021 to cover a period when she was hospitalised due to back surgery. The Case Officer in the PGR Service notes from Ms Other’s records that she also has a visual impairment which is registered as a disability. The medical evidence provided with the concession suggests that Ms Other has had severe and chronic back pain for over a year which has contributed to Ms Other only being able to work 15-20 hours per week, but this is not formally registered as a disability.

The Case Officer should complete the interruption checklist as normal and also the disability checklist. Both the visual impairment and the chronic back pain should be listed in the disability checklist as follows.

Elements of the candidate’s programme
Advanced study and research

Disability and evidence	Effect on each element of programme of advanced study and research	Reasonable adjustments and who recommended	Actions taken and effect
Chronic back pain	Condition may interfere with ability to sit and work for prolonged periods – affects all elements of advanced study and research. Possible fatigue. Evidence from GP and consultant letters.	No specific reasonable adjustments were recommended by the GP. Occupational Health suggests phased return. Workstation assessment was carried out by School: new chair recommended.	Partially addressed: Period where work stopped completely / progressed at 0.5FTE to be considered through concession request. Completely addressed: Candidate reports that new chair is satisfactory.
Visual impairment	Condition may interfere with ability to read text on a screen for long periods. Evidence from Student Services’ report.	Student Services’ report recommends taking regular breaks from the screen and using a coloured screen overlay.	Completely addressed: School purchased coloured screen overlay and candidate reports that this is fine and that she takes breaks.

Issues which should be addressed without requiring concessionary approval and actions to be taken
The School should meet with Ms Other following return from interruption to see what effect the back surgery has had on her ability to work. If there is no improvement, they may wish to discuss the possibility of moving from full-time to part-time registration.

Issues which should be addressed and require concessionary approval as described
The interruption request does not make full allowance for a period of eight months (Apr-Dec 2020) prior to the interruption when Ms Other was only able to work on a basis of 0.5FTE. In addition to the interruption requested it may be worth allowing an extension of four months to the Period of Study as a reasonable adjustment for the chronic back pain. Fees should be waived for this additional period since it is in effect a transfer to part-time registration.

Case Officers should note that, if Ms Other held a Student/Tier 4 visa, (a) she would need to spend any period of interruption outside the UK; (b) the retrospective request should have been made earlier; but (c) it is possible to extend Period of Study and waive fees. The Equality Act applies to **all** disabled students so we still have a duty to make reasonable adjustments.

51. Case study 2: maternity leave and keeping in touch days

This case is not based on any individual student's situation, but has been created as a training example.

Mary Christmas is a full-time UK PhD student in the School of Environmental Sciences who is part of the ARIES Doctoral Training Partnership as an ENV student in a related area holding a UEA studentship. Ms Christmas submitted an interruption request on 1 August 2021 requesting an interruption from 1 December 2021 to 30 November 2022 to cover a period of maternity leave. Ms Christmas' expected due date is 27 December 2021 and this interruption request had already been approved, with maternity pay being paid in accordance with the terms and conditions of her UEA studentship.

On 1 May 2021 she contacts pgr.concessions@uea.ac.uk asking whether it is acceptable for her to come into UEA to attend the ARIES summer school, which is taking place over two weeks in early July 2021; she has arranged alternative childcare. Normally interrupting students are not allowed to take part in research or training events on campus. On the other hand, employees who are on maternity leave are allowed to work for up to ten keeping in touch days – and employers may pay additional pay on these days although it is not required. The Case Officer should ask Ms Christmas to set down what she wants in an email, including written agreement from her supervisor. Then the Case Officer would complete the parental leave checklist as follows, and send it to the School PGR Director in ENV to check that they have no objection.

Essential items on concession form	Satisfactory?	Comments
Correct concession form completed/signed by student	Y	No form – details in email.
Correct concession form completed/signed by supervisor	Y	No form – agreed by email.
Reasons clearly explained for request	Y	
Satisfactory medical evidence if reason depends on this	N/A	Maternity is not ill health.
Indication from supervisory team on whether progress has generally been satisfactory, excluding the circumstances	N/A	Progress is not relevant to this request.
Detailed schedule for the completion of the thesis	N/A	
Copy of action plan from most recent annual progress review, annotated to show objectives achieved/remaining	N/A	
If not the first concession, copies of previous schedules, annotated to show objectives achieved/remaining	Y	Interruption request for maternity leave attached.
Essential supplementary checks by Case Officer		
Request is the most appropriate course of action	Y	In line with KIT days
Student will still have the right to study within the UK, i.e. the proposed request does not invalidate visa	N/A	No visa
Student's funding body has given approval, or student has alternative funding and is aware of funding changes	Y	Funding body is UEA
Any implications of visa or funder restrictions have been fully explored along with any consequences on reporting within the University	Y	No visa implications; candidate content that no pro-rata stipend will be paid.
Disability checklist included if required (Section 25)	N/A	No disability
Advice sought from senior PGR colleagues and/or HR and included where appropriate	Y	Consulted senior PGR colleague.
Major concessions: supporting letter from the School or Institute Director of Postgraduate Research must be included when the request goes to the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor	Y	Letter attached.

It is useful for this to be a formal request because interrupting students are expected to remain away from the University. There may still be problems in accessing IT or campus facilities needing a workaround. If Ms

Christmas were on a Student/Tier 4 visa she would not be in the UK during interruption. Case Officers might need to consider splitting her interruption into two parts and amend visa dates so she can return to the UK.

52. Case study 3: Readmission following withdrawal

This case is not based on any individual student’s situation, but has been created as a training example.

Sanjay Santos was a full-time PhD student in the School of International Development. Mr Santos is from Mexico, was funded by the Mexican government and was studying on a Tier 4 visa. Mr Santos previously studied within the UK for a three-year BSc in Human Geography at another UK university and a one-year Masters at UEA. Mr Santos started his PhD at UEA on 1 October 2015.

In April 2017, after eighteen months of his PhD, he was involved in a serious car accident and withdrew from the University, returning to Mexico. In March 2021 Mr Santos writes to his previous supervisor Professor Smith explaining that he has now fully recovered, asking whether it is possible to resume the PhD. This counts as a readmission with associated reduction in Period of Study of 18 months. Since the withdrawal was not due to a disciplinary or financial suspension, this will not need the approval of the Vice-Chancellor, but it will need the approval of the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor for UEA Doctoral College due to the length of reduction of Period of Study.

The concession request will need to make clear the reasons for original withdrawal, justification for a return to the programme (or to a new project/programme) and confirmation that Mr Santos’ circumstances have changed and will allow him to complete the programme.

A key issue for the Case Officer will be to check with the Student Visa Compliance Manager in ARM to see whether a Student visa can be issued for the appropriate length of time, given the existence of caps in total length of time that can be spent by an individual on specific visas. It may be that the particular circumstances will allow this but appropriate guidance must be sought in any case of this type. The Case Officer may also need to liaise with the applicant and the funder / International Office to clarify whether Mr Santos’ funding can be resumed. Depending on the outcome of these discussions, the key aspects of the admission/reduction checklists might be completed as follows:

Essential items on concession form	Satisfactory?	Comments
Confirmation from supervisory team that they are confident the thesis will be completed within the reduced Period of Study/Registration	Y	School have spoken with Mr Santos via Skype and have prepared the attached plan and timeline for the completion of the thesis.
Detailed schedule for the completion of the thesis, including a clear indication of research already undertaken	Y	
Essential supplementary checks by Case Officer		
Grounds given are acceptable according to guidance above	Y	
Student’s funding body has given approval, or student has alternative funding and is aware of funding changes	Y	UEA not on funder’s current list and funder not willing to resume funding, but Mr Santos is aware of this and will seek to fund himself.
Any implications of visa or funder restrictions have been fully explored along with any consequences on reporting within the University	Y	Home Office adviser has confirmed that CAS can be issued for this length
New timeline for periods of study and registration has been accurately drawn up and is included on cover sheet	Y	
Disability checklist included if required (Section 24)	N	Not required – see letter from hospital consultant

Major concessions: supporting statement from the School or Institute Director of Postgraduate Research must be included when the request goes to the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor	Y	See attached letter from DEV PGR Director handling admissions
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