PhD Handbook - Progression meetings

Two progression meetings will be required at **month 9 and month 21**. Two TAP meeting are needed each year, one in the fourth month after the start of program each year and one in the ninth month after the start of the program. So in Year 1 it is months 4 and 9; Year 2 it is 16 and 21 and in Year 3 it is 28 and 33.

Who will be there?

These meetings will be conducted in front of a panel that consists of

- existing members of the student's TAP panel
- MINUS the supervisor(s) and
- PLUS an additional member of staff who has previously supervised a successful PhD student.

What must happen?

Important note: Progression meetings will be combined with the second and fourth TAP meeting from October 2018

The second and fourth TAP meetings in year 1 and 2 will be combined with two Progression meetings scheduled for year 1 in the 9th month and year two in the 21st month after the start of the program respectively (termed TAP/Progression meetings). The format, requirements and the composition of the TAP and Progression panels would stay the same except now the two meetings would happen on the same day during a longer integrated meeting (Advise that rooms are booked for at least 90 minutes for these combined meetings). The student first meets with the TAP members, her/his supervisor and the additional member serving as a chair of the progression panel and do their presentation. After the student presentation and the formative feedback from the TAP the advisor should leave the room and the remaining TAP members and the progression panel chair should carry out an evaluation of the student's progress. During this second part of the meeting with the student's supervisor absent the panel will assess whether the student, based on the written work provided as well as the student's presentation and ability to answer questions, has met the University's criteria for progression.

We recommend that progression meetings are audio recorded. Students may request that their supervisors are present although we do not expect this to be standard procedure. If supervisors are present in the room they must act as observers only.

At nine months:

The student needs to present a complete, comprehensive review of the relevant literature. This will form the basis for the first chapter of their thesis. This review will be presented to the Progression panel at least a week before the meeting. The supervisor will be asked to provide a progress report on student's performance. The student by that date is expected to successfully complete both of the two core training modules with a minimum passing mark of 54 unless they have been exempted on the basis of prior training. The students will be given one opportunity for reassessment if they do not pass the core modules at first attempt. There may be situations where the starting date of the candidate does not allow time to complete the modules before the first progression point or the student does not obtain the minimal passing grade on the first attempt. In these cases, progression will be conditional on these taught modules being completed at the next attempt. The meeting style will be similar to that of a viva, to allow the student to be more familiar with the viva format. The progression panel will not make detailed judgments about the student's research project but ascertain if the student based on the evidence provided and the student's presentation has met the University's criteria for progression.

The student should present

1. A reasonably complete **literature review** that will form the basis of their introductory chapter. This should be a complete document (i.e. not in note format) with citations and a bibliography. It should demonstrate that the student is familiar with existing research in the field, has a well-defined research question and is able to produce a long-form written document that is coherent and readable. Because this document will be produced before the student's experimental programme is well-underway, it is not expected to be a final version of the thesis introduction and may be subject to changes as the thesis, data and research questions evolve.
2. A brief (5-10 slides) **presentation of the work** planned and underway for the PhD. This should include a schedule outlining an approximate timetable for the experimental programme and writing up within three years from the start of the PhD.
3. They should also have a passing mark on the **core training modules** required in the first Year of PhD study and have completed the **academic integrity tutorial**

Note that the student is not required to present experimental results at this point, although the confirmation panel will seek reassurance that an experimental programme is well underway. The literature review and the supervisors report on SkillsForge have to be presented to the panel at least 7 days before the meeting to give the panel sufficient time to review them.

The confirmation panel may question the student about the status of data collection as well as issues arising from the literature review and presentation. Feedback from the panel on the literature review may be provided in written form (i.e., electronic comments on the document) or orally during the meeting. The goal of this meeting is to confirm that the student is capable of performing at the level expected of a postgraduate researcher and that they are likely to meet the challenges of the next two years. The Progression panel/TAP panel will provide the student and supervisor with formal feedback on the student's performance after the meeting recorded on SkillsForge.

At 21 months:

Written evidence (including supervisor report) must be submitted at least one week before the meeting. The student will present a written report of an empirical study, written in the style of a journal article and a revized version of the literature review that has taken into account the comment from the progression panel from the first progression meeting. The student will also present a plan for the remainder of the PhD period, e.g., data to be collected, analyses to be run. This should include a plan for writing up and submitting the thesis within three years. The supervisor will be asked to provide a progress report on the student's performance. The meeting style will be similar to that of a viva, to allow the student to be more familiar with the viva format.

The student should present

1. **Literature Survey** - which should be quite comprehensive and will form the basis for the first chapter of the thesis
2. A **written report of the first empirical study**, written in the style of a journal article. NB It is acceptable to use a paper that has been prepared together with co-authors for submission to a journal, and/or that utilises data acquired by others, as long as the PhD student did the bulk of the analysis and writing, and as long as the text clearly states the contribution of other researchers.
3. **A detailed plan for the remainder of the PhD period**, e.g., data to be collected, analyses to be run. This should include a plan for writing up and submitting the thesis within three years.
4. **They should also have a pass mark on all of the core training modules** (see above) unless student is exempt

The confirmation panel may question the student about the status of data collection as well as issues arising from the empirical study and presentation. The goal of this meeting is to confirm that the student is capable of performing at the level expected of a postgraduate researcher and that they are likely to meet the challenges of completing their experiments and writing a thesis by end of their third year. The Progression panel/TAP panel will provide the student and supervisor with formal feedback on the student's performance after the meeting recorded on SkillsForge.

Note that the student is now required to present experimental results at this point, with the confirmation panel seeking reassurance that an experimental programme is well finished by the end of year 3. The literature review revised version, written report of an empirical study and the supervisors report on SkillsForge have to be presented to the panel at least 7 days before the meeting to give the panel sufficient time to review them.

At each meeting, the panel must decide whether the quality of the documents presented and the students understanding of their research area are appropriate for postgraduate level of study. Students who fail a confirmation meeting (either at 9 months or at 21 months) will have one additional chance to retake the confirmation. This must be done within three months. Students who fail to pass two confirmation meetings in a row must leave the course. Students who leave before one year will receive no academic qualification. Students who leave between 21 and 24 months may be eligible to receive a masters-level qualification.