



Prifysgol Cymru
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
University of Wales
Trinity Saint David



University of Wales Trinity Saint David

Doctoral College Handbook

2025- 2026



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Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg ac yn Saesneg |
This document is available in Welsh and English



Welcome to the Doctoral College

Welcome

Dear Doctoral Students
We are delighted to welcome you to the UWTSD Doctoral College.

The Doctoral College is the central hub for our doctoral students allowing you to access information, resources, events and networks across the University. As the College develops it will enable you to take your place as part of this vibrant community of scholars.

We are home to a range of programmes and different doctoral routes but all with the same goal of developing excellent researchers able to make a significant contribution to knowledge in their chosen discipline or professional practice. Our students come to us at all stages of their professional lives from their first work roles to being senior leaders from a variety of sectors based around the globe. Some of our students will have only a short time at our campuses before returning to their home and work whilst others will have the opportunity for more residential programmes. Whatever route you take we want to ensure that you have access to the research environment that will really foster your development.

I know I can speak for all our tutors and supervisors when I say we are really looking forward to working with you and facilitating your research journey.

Dr Malcolm MacLean
Acting Academic Director of
the Doctoral College

This handbook

This handbook is designed to help provide you with an outline of the University's structures and processes to help you settle into your doctoral studies. Regardless of your location or mode of study, this guide offers advice and further information to all new and existing doctoral students.

As well as academic advice, this handbook also contains information on University services and facilities. We would encourage you all to explore and investigate what is on offer to you across the University to help you get the most out of your studies.

Although this guide is set out to inform all students, for subject specific guidance and advice your Institute will be able to offer additional support along with your supervisory team.

We hope that you will find this guide useful but if you need any further support, please let us know.

The Doctoral College
doctoral.college@uwtsd.ac.uk

Introduction to The Doctoral College

Research and scholarship are at the heart of UWTSD and we are proud to be a historic, research led University developing internationally acclaimed research. We offer flexible doctoral study to both residential and distance learners over a range of research degree pathways. Because of the diversity and growing numbers of doctoral students coming to UWTSD to complete their studies, the Doctoral College has been established to oversee all matters relating to postgraduate research students.

The Doctoral College is designed to oversee all Postgraduate research (PGR) students' activities and training, making the Doctoral College a one stop shop for our PGR students. Our aim is to develop the training provision, PGR research community and visibility, and opportunities for our students. Moving forward the Doctoral College will be implementing a number of new initiatives and ideas to improve the research environment across UWTSD and the opportunities for all our PGR students.

We are here to make your doctoral experience easier and enjoyable, and to support you along the way, so please get in touch with us about any thoughts or ideas you may have.



Your Doctoral Experience

The Doctoral College is here to support your research journey in a number of ways. We offer training courses and workshops throughout the year which are open to all our students. We also host an annual student conference and summer school which is a wonderful chance to meet others and talk about your research. All of our events are run as hybrid, so whether you are campus based, distance or international you can still join in. The Doctoral College also has regular student drop in sessions and supports students through a grant scheme to attend academic conferences and events.

The Doctoral College also hosts dedicated web pages designed to keep all our PGR students and supervisory staff up to date with information, discussion and events. We also have recently streamlined the administrative processes by introducing the MyTSD portal, which allows all important forms and documentation to be uploaded directly online to the Doctoral College.

As well as supporting PGR students, the Doctoral College also work to ensure everyone gets the best experience possible. This includes participation in University strategy and planning as well as supporting and hosting supervisory staff training.

In addition to the Doctoral College the University offers a whole host of additional opportunities. We encourage you to get involved and make the most of your time at UWTSD.

Support and Guidance

Library and Learning Resources

Library and Learning Resources aim to support all University students, staff and researchers by providing access to high quality learning resources and information services. Included in this support are dedicated staff for postgraduate researchers, who will be able to offer you specialist help. Library and Learning Resources also offer a InfoSkills Programme to help improve your information and digital literacy, including everything you need to know about copyright, referencing and how to access your online resource lists. More information can be found on the Doctoral College web pages or on the UWTSD Library and Learning Resources web pages.

International Office

The International Office offer help and guidance to international students studying at UWTSD. This includes information regarding visas and current employment regulations. Further details are found on the guidance section of the Doctoral College web pages and on the International Office web pages.

Student Wellbeing

All Student Wellbeing services are available for doctoral students within UWTSD. They offer a variety of support including wellbeing advice and counseling services. For more details on how to contact Student Wellbeing look on the Doctoral College web pages or on the Student Wellbeing web pages.

The Doctoral College expands our research horizons through various types of online and offline lectures, and the annual Student Conference provides an ideal platform for us to engage in academic communication and dialogue.

Chuandai, Prof Doc Student

Meet the Doctoral College Staff

Dr Malcolm MacLean

External Supervisory Pool Manager

As well as supporting the general operations of the Doctoral College, I draw on nearly 20 years as a research degrees supervisor and examiner as well as researcher and supervisor trainer to help train and develop research degree supervisors. This is part of the College's work to ensure that UWTSD provides students with high quality academic and research environments. I work mainly with staff (although you'll see me at various events) drawing on my work on researcher development in the UK and elsewhere to help give you the best possible experience.

Professor Kyle Erickson

Director of Academic Experience

I help to support the Doctoral College and ensure students get the best experience possible whilst at UWTSD. I am also chair of the Research Degrees Committee and have a responsibility to oversee decisions relating to postgraduate research.

Dr Nina Sharp

Researcher Developer

I work within the Doctoral College to support its overall operations, with a focus on ensuring the research environment enables all UWTSD students have access to training, guidance, networking and events to support and enhance their studies. I understand doctoral studies can be challenging and I hope we can work together to improve what UWTSD has to offer for you, your fellow students and those to come.

Steven Davies

Senior Academic Quality Officer

I work in the Doctoral College, and I am here to make your student journey as smooth as possible. Along with your supervisors I am here to advise you on regulatory processes and to support you in completing the relevant forms and to help you reach each of your milestones. I can help you navigate the Code of Practice, Doctoral College portal and act as your central point of contact. We look forward to welcoming you, and supporting you through your journey as a postgraduate research student of the University.

Julia Davies

Senior Registry Officer (Postgraduate Research Students)

I work in the Doctoral College as a member of the Registry team. I'm often the first point of contact in your research journey when an initial expression of interest in following a programme of research is made and I am here to guide you through the admission process, to assist with annual re-enrolment and other Registry functions right through to your graduation.

Megan Hughes

Registry Officer/ Administrative Officer

I work full-time in the Doctoral College in two part-time roles. I aim to provide you with excellent administrative support throughout your PGR journey. I love those 'a-ha' moments of serendipity that students experience when learning, and I hope my behind-the-scenes support will help enable you to develop insights and breakthroughs in the areas of study that you love. Welcome to the Doctoral College!

Thanks to Doctoral College team I sorted out all of my individual questions in the blink of an eye.

Nicole, PhD Student



The Doctoral Process & Expectations

The Doctoral College is here to support all applicants and students throughout the admissions, induction and research stages of your degree. The following provides general guidance and advice with further information available in the **Code of Practice for Research Degrees** or by contacting the Doctoral College for more information.

Application and enrolment

Step 1: Enrolment or progressing onto a research degree

As a new research student your first step is to complete the enrolment process. After you have accepted your offer of study through MyTSD, you will receive an email with information on how to enrol approximately two weeks before your studies begin. Upon enrolment you will be responsible for the payment of any fees.

For those progressing from a programme where they have completed the taught Part 1, you will automatically progress to Part 2. As part of the progression you need to re-enrol into Part 2 of your studies.

For Part 2 students the nomination form for your supervisory team (PG3) needs to also be completed and approved to ensure that the correct staff are allocated to support your research project.

You must enrol each year. Enrolment occurs on an annual basis on the anniversary of your course start date. When you are contacted by the University to re-enrol for your studies please do so, as a failure to follow this process can lead to you being withdrawn from your programme of study.

Step 2: Induction

As part of the process of getting started, you will be expected to attend an induction event from both your Institute and the Doctoral College. These will either be held in person or online.

The induction sessions aim to provide you with important information about your Institute as well as introducing you to the doctoral processes. They can be a good opportunity to learn more about the expectations of doctoral students as well as meet staff and fellow students.

Expectations

As a doctoral student of UWTSD you will be responsible for meeting the following university expectations:

- To annually enrol with the University on the anniversary of your course start date. You will also need to re-enrol when moving from Part 1 to Part 2 of your studies. Partner students will complete enrolment with their primary institution only, not UWTSD;
- To pay all fees required to the University;
- To be in regular contact with your supervisory team (more below);
- To ensure that the final version of your thesis is submitted by the maximum submission date;
- To follow the requirements for thesis submission;
- To make your supervisory team aware of any specific needs or circumstances which may affect your work;
- To familiarise yourself with the University regulations and guidelines, processes and procedures for doctoral study;
- To complete all necessary forms and processes used by the University to monitor progress;
- To take ownership of your research plan and your training needs;
- To attend any mandatory training sessions/lectures/seminars/workshops that make up part of your research programme.

Throughout your doctoral study your supervisory team, Institute and the Doctoral College will be on hand to support you and offer additional advice where needed.



Milestones

You will also be required to complete certain milestones during your registration. As a guide, these milestones include:

| Milestone | Form prefix | Title of form | When to complete |
|------------------------------|-------------|---|--|
| Full Research Proposal | PG1 | Full Research Proposal | FT – 3 months after registration PT – 6 months after registration |
| Ethical approval | PG2/E1 | Ethics form | FT -6 Months after registration PT 12 Months after registration |
| Annual Progress review | PG5 | Annual Progress Review | On request each year (or sooner if deemed necessary) |
| Probationary Period for PhD* | PG7B(2) | Student Submission for Probation Period | FT – no later than 12 months after initial enrolment PT – no later than 24 months after initial enrolment |

*If enrolled on a PhD degree

To see the full details on processes and regulations relating to research degrees, check out the Code of Practice for Research Degrees and the Academic Quality Handbook. Links to these are below in the appendix and on the Doctoral College web pages.

Full Research Proposal

You will be required to complete a full research proposal (PG1) and submit it to the MYTSD Portal for approval by your supervisory team, the Institute Research Committee and the Research Degrees Committee. This proposal should include a fully developed research proposal including methodology and timescales for completion. This is an important step in helping you ensure you have an adequate plan for progression through your study.

The research proposal can be subject to any changes or suggestions made by the Research Degrees Committee. If you have any concerns about this process and what it specifically entails for you, speak to your supervisory team.

Ethical Approval

As part of your doctoral studies you will be required to gain ethical approval for your research. Once your full research proposal has been approved, the next step is to gain ethical approval.

Your ethics form (PG2) will need to be submitted via the MyTSD Portal within three months after your research proposal (PG1) has been approved. Although not a long process, you should allow adequate time for your ethics to be approved and it should be included in your work plan. Your supervisory team is available to help guide you through this process and resources relating to ethics can be found on the Doctoral College web pages and on the University webpages.

Progress Monitoring

You should meet with your supervisory team on a formal basis at least ten times each year, as well as meeting with your supervisors on a regular basis. After each meeting you should complete the PG4 form with your supervisor and upload it to the MyTSD Portal to record your progression. You should liaise directly with your supervisors to set up these meetings and factor them into your work plan.

In addition you will need to complete an annual review (PG5) each year which will be monitored by the Research Degrees Committee. This form is submitted via the MyTSD Portal. This process is the opportunity for the University to check in on progress with your studies. For more details, including outcomes from progress review, please refer to the Code of Practice for Research Degrees documentation.

PhD candidates will also need to pass a probationary period after their first year of study (two years for part time students). This PG7 form should be submitted via the MyTSD Portal and further guidance on this can be found in the Code of Practice and from discussing with your supervisory team.

Changes to your study

We understand that things often don't always go to plan and you may need to make changes to your mode of study. To accommodate this, we have a number of measures in place to help you with changing circumstances.

If you feel you need to make changes to your study, we suggest you speak to your supervisory team in the first instance, as they will be able to support you through the process of making alterations.

Please note that changes to studies must receive official approval. Changes can also take place during the correction and re-submission periods. If you require any further support during or before undertaking the process of changes to your studies please look over the Code of Practice for Research Degrees and contact the Doctoral College for more information.

1. Extensions to Maximum Time Limit

One way the university can support changes in circumstance is to offer an extension to the period of study. The grounds under which these are usually granted as follows:

- Health or medical;
- Compassionate;
- Exceptional professional commitments.

To request an extension a 'Request for Extension to Candidature' form must be completed and submitted, along with supporting evidence. The form must also be accompanied by a statement from your Director of Studies and Institute or collaborative partner institution.

The Doctoral College will then usually make a decision based on the evidence and inform you the outcomes. In some specific circumstances, the application will be passed on to the Research Degrees Committee for a decision.

2. Interruption of Studies

It may be possible to be granted a period of leave, or interrupted study, to accommodate your circumstances. If you want to apply for interrupted studies should firstly speak to your Director of Studies and/or other relevant members of staff in your Institute or Partner Institution. International students should also consult the International Registry.

The grounds for interrupted studies are as follows:

- Health or Medical;
- Maternity, paternity or adoption leave;
- Compassionate (including bereavement and serious domestic difficulties);
- Financial;
- Exceptional Professional Commitments;
- Opportunities which contribute to academic development;
- Exceptional circumstances outside your control that seriously compromises your ability to continue with studies.

An application must be made and the application form must be submitted with supporting evidence and a statement from the Director of Studies or collaborative partner institution.

Applications are normally considered by the Doctoral College, but in some circumstances may be referred to the Research Degree Committee. The Doctoral College will inform you of the decision.



3. Changes to Mode of Study

Changes can be made to your mode of study when you are still within your minimum period of study. Changes can be from part-time to full-time or vice versa. Changes to study are normally only permitted on the anniversary of your enrolment, and for part time students on even years of study.

To make a change in your mode of study, it should firstly be discussed with your Director of Studies or relevant staff. Any sponsor to your studies must also agree to these changes. Once you have discussed these then an application can be made to the Doctoral College which will be considered by the Research Degrees Committee.

4. Transfer of Award

A transfer of award from/to either a higher or lower level must be done within the minimum period of study in order to be considered. The request to transfer degree form must be completed along with an updated research proposal done with the support of your supervisory team.

Applications can be sent to the Doctoral College and will be considered by the Research Degrees Committee.



5. Suspending Studies

Under some exceptional circumstances, a students may be required to suspend their studies due to academic, disciplinary or financial reasons. This will be classed as a suspension to studies. In these circumstances, a student will be directly informed of this and given the reasons for the suspension. Suspension can also take place if the university agrees that continuation of studies is not within the best interests of the student's health. In the event of a suspension, the student has a right to request a review of the decision.

6. Voluntary Withdrawal

If you decide to withdraw from your studies at UWTSD, you should first discuss this with your Director of Studies so potential alternative courses of action can be considered. If you do decide to withdraw, you will need to complete a formal notification with the Notification of Withdrawal form and submit it to the Doctoral College.

Need Help?

The Doctoral College is here to support you every step of the way so if you require any further support on any of the above issues, please contact the Doctoral College. All necessary forms can be found on the MyTSD Portal.



Submitting Your Thesis

A number of steps are involved in submitting your final thesis. Full guidance can also be found within the Code of Practice and on the Doctoral College web pages.

When you are clear on a submission date for your thesis, an Intention to Submit form (PG8) and an abstract must be submitted to the Doctoral College via the MyTSD Portal no less than 3 months prior to the expected date. Once this form has been received, then preparations will begin to arrange your examination.

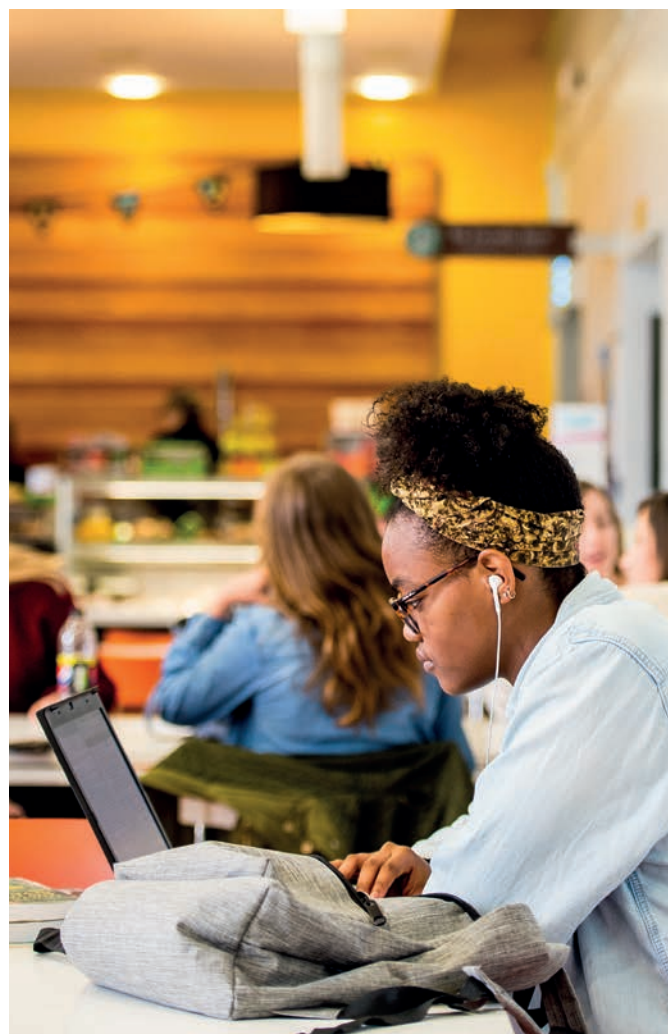
With regards to general layout and structure details can be found in the Code of Practice for Research Degrees and should also be discussed with your supervisory team.

Your Thesis should be submitted between the completion of the minimum period of study and prior to the maximum submission date. Your thesis should be submitted in an electronic copy only to the Doctoral College via the MyTSD Portal. It is important to note that once submitted, the thesis cannot be amended. Once received it, will be uploaded to Turnitin and passed on to the examiners.

In some cases, your thesis can be submitted early, before the end of the minimum study period. If you do submit early, please be aware that you will still be eligible to pay your remaining fees until the end of the period of minimum study. If you are considering submitting early, you should first discuss this with your supervisory team.

It is great to have a structure ...it is reassuring to know that there is a monitoring system to check we are on track in terms of formal requirements.

Ruth, PhD Student



APPENDIX

Useful Dates

Some useful dates are listed below. Further information can be found at UWTSD Calendar.

Term Dates 202 / 202

Autumn Term 202
Beginning of term – 22 September 2025
End of Term – 12 December 2025
Spring Term 2026
Beginning of term – 5 January 2026
End of term- 27 March 2026
Summer Term 2026
Start of term - 20 April 2026
End of term- 5 June 2026

Public Holidays and University Closure Days

Christmas Day– 25 December 2025
Boxing Day– 26 December 2025
Closure Day – 29 December 2025
Closure Day- 30 December 2025
Closure Day – 31 December 2025
New Year's Day – 1 January 2026
Good Friday – 3 April 2026
Easter Monday - 6 April 2026
May Bank Holiday – 4 May 2026
Spring Bank Holiday – 25 May 2026
August Bank Holiday – 31 August 2026



Useful Links

Below is a range of links to various University services and resources which you may find useful. These can also be found listed on the Doctoral College web pages.

The Doctoral College Web Pages

[Link here](#)

MyTSD Portal

[Log in to the portal](#)

Student Hwb

[Students » Hub](#)

Library and Learning Resources

[Library and Learning Resources | University of Wales Trinity Saint David](#)

Students Union

[UWTSD Students' Union](#)

Careers Service

[Careers Service | University of Wales Trinity Saint David](#)

Student Wellbeing

[Student Services | UWTSD](#)
[Study Skills Support | UWTSD](#)

International Students

[International Students | University of Wales Trinity Saint David](#)

Accommodation Office

[Student Accommodation | University of Wales Trinity Saint David](#)

Student Fees and Finance

[Student Fees and Finance | University of Wales Trinity Saint David \(uwtsd.ac.uk\)](#)

Campus facilities

UWTSD has three main campuses in Wales; Carmarthen, Lampeter and Swansea. As well as campuses in Birmingham and London and learning centres in Cardiff. To find out more about the facilities on each campus, centre or location check out the following link [Campuses, Centres and Locations](#)