Joint and Collaborative Precept Review: 2012-2013

1. The joint and collaborative precept review is part of the Postgraduate Research Quality Committee’s quality enhancement role. The purpose of the review is to measure the research programme against the joint and collaborative precepts. The process will highlight examples of good practice, and where problems are identified, will offer solutions.

2. This review process asks you to provide information which will demonstrate your compliance with the College precepts governing procedures for higher degree registration. The review form which follows is based on "precepts" which describe the procedures which departments are required to follow. These precepts have been supplemented with additional requirements with which joint and collaborative programmes are required to comply. These supplementary joint and collaborative precepts appear on the review form in bold type. The internal College precepts appear in parenthesis, so that the joint and collaborative precepts are seen in perspective.

3. The reviewer will evaluate the material provided and indicate whether, in their opinion, the programme is compliant with the College precepts. The reviewer's appraisal is sent back to the academic lead for a response. The completed review is considered by the Postgraduate Research Quality Committee (PRQC) who may wish to add to the reviewer's comments, and will confirm the final outcome. Therefore, the outcome for each precept and consequently the higher degrees procedures for the programme as a whole, will be given as 'compliant' (and, if applicable 'demonstrates good practice') or 'non-compliant'. Where a programme is found to be not fully compliant but demonstrates that action is being taken to ensure procedures become compliant, then the PRQC may decide on an outcome of 'moving towards compliance'.

4. The PRQC will agree the final outcome of the review, together with any follow up action and confirmation of when the next review should take place.

5. Please complete and return the form electronically, expanding each section to fit your answer as necessary. If your joint/collaborative degree programme postgraduate student handbook/material describes any or all of your responses to the agreed precepts, then you may wish to refer to the relevant page/section of your handbook rather than responding to the individual questions.

---

1 The review conducted in 2013-2014 is intended to capture students who have completed between 2012-2013 and therefore will have normally started between 2008-2009. The reporting period is extended to include a period up to four years before the review month – i.e. if the review date is February 2014 then the reporting period will be October 2008 – February 2010 and includes all full-time and part-time students who started within that period.

2 The Senate endorsed the current precepts in January 2013. The current Precept 16 was added with effect from January 2014. The complete set of current precepts can be seen at Research Degree Precepts.
6. Please also provide:

- A copy of, or link to, your joint/collaborative degree programme postgraduate student handbook/material
- Copies of examiners’ reports for all students who commenced their study between October 2008 and February 2010 inclusive.
- First destination statistics for students who completed during the previous two years [October 2011 – September 2013]
- Procedures for the appointment of research thesis examiners
Title of Research Degree Programme: [insert title]

Academic Lead: [insert name]

Precept 1 [Interviewing]

The interview procedures for entry into joint and collaborative programmes should normally be the same as those which students applying directly to the College are subject to.

[All prospective students must be interviewed before an offer of a place is made. Interviews may be conducted as a videoconference or teleconference if it is not possible for the candidate to visit the department. The Selection Panel must comprise at least two members of staff and will normally include the Director of Postgraduate Studies or nominee. Staff not experienced in student selection or recruitment should attend a relevant recruitment and selection workshop before participating in an interview. All staff involved in interviewing students must keep up to date with current legislation and the College’s admission policies and policies to promote equal opportunities and widening participation.]

Please give details of the interview process:

Precept 2 [Offers/Admissions]

The admissions procedures for entry into joint and collaborative programmes should normally be the same as those which students applying directly to the College are subject to.

[Only appropriately qualified and prepared applicants should be accepted. No offers should be made unless a student can be provided with an environment which is supportive of their research achievement; this includes only appointing supervisors who have sufficient time to carry out their supervisory responsibilities satisfactorily as well as access to necessary facilities and equipment.]

Please give details of the selection process:
Precept 3 [Supervision]

Supervisors at the partner institution/organisation must normally have previous supervisory experience (primary responsibility for the supervision of a successful student) before taking on joint supervisory duties. However, if this is not possible, for example if the collaboration is with an industrial partner, then inexperienced supervisors must have undergone training and mentoring comparable to that expected at Imperial before taking on a joint supervisory role.

[Inexperienced supervisors (who have not had primary responsibility for the supervision of a successful student), including inexperienced clinical supervisors and/or those acting as second supervisors, must attend the “Introduction to Supervising PhD students at Imperial” workshop http://www3.imperial.ac.uk/edudev/workshops/introductory/supervisingphdstudents (or equivalent) and comply with the requirements as laid out in the College Guidance Note ‘Eligibility for Research Degree Supervision’ http://www3.imperial.ac.uk/registry/proceduresandregulations/policiesandprocedures/examinationassessment.]

Please describe the arrangements for the nomination and appointment of supervisors, and give details of training for inexperienced supervisors:

Precept 4 [Non-Imperial staff who supervise]

Supervisors at the partner institution/organisation must be fully aware of the College regulations, procedures and standards relating to research degree supervision and of their key responsibilities.

[Departments must have mechanisms to ensure those supervisors working in industry or professional practice or a Partner Research Institution are aware of all College rules, regulations and procedures relating to research degree supervision. These supervisors should also be offered the opportunity to engage in developmental and other activities relating to the support of their research students.]

Please give details of the support and training provided to supervisors at the partner institution/organisation:

Precept 5 [Continuing professional development & support for students]

Supervisors at the partner institution/organisation must be offered appropriate development opportunities, to equip them to support research students.
All supervisors are expected to engage in continuing professional development activities. All supervisors should be aware of their responsibilities.

Please give details of training and development opportunities offered to supervisors at the partner institution/organisation:

Precept 6 [Supervisory Arrangements]

All students must have appropriate supervisors at both Imperial and at the partner institution/organisation and there must always be a “lead supervisor” identified for each student studying a collaborative research degree. In most cases the lead supervisor will be an experienced member of Imperial College academic staff or, in the case of joint degrees, an experienced academic located at the institution/organisation where the student first commences study.

Supervisors at the partner institution/organisation must normally have previous supervisory experience (primary responsibility for the supervision of a successful student) before taking on joint supervisory duties.

Clear lines of communication must be established and agreed between the student and supervisors at both locations.

Supervisors must maintain frequent (normally every 2 weeks) contact with students throughout the programme of study, whilst at Imperial and at the partner institution/organisation. The pattern and method of maintaining good communication must be agreed by students and their supervisors, and confirmed with the Academic Lead at the time of submitting the Research Plan Confirmation. Provision must be made for supervisors to visit the student while he/she is away from their respective institution.

[All students must have a supervisor who is identified as the main single point of contact and it must be made clear to the student who is their alternative contact if that individual is unavailable. The main supervisor must ensure that adequate contact with and support for their research student(s) is maintained throughout the research degree programme. Where a student has more than one supervisor, it is important that the student understands their respective roles.]

Please give details of the systems in place and how these are communicated to students:

Precept 7 [Induction]
The induction programme for new students on collaborative programmes should include the procedures and requirements for their particular programme, including the timelines for completion of the various stages of the research degree and the professional skills development and English language requirements, and details of the relevant members of staff involved, both at Imperial and the partner institution.

[Each department must have an induction day/programme for new students and must make provision for late arrivals, either in the form of a second induction day/programme or through arrangements whereby students meet individually with key staff to complete the induction programme. Students should be made aware of their responsibilities and entitlements (including financial) at early and/or appropriate stage in their research degree programme.]

Please provide information concerning the specific arrangements for the induction of new students on joint/collaborative programmes:

Precept 8 [Student Handbooks]

Students on joint and collaborative programmes must receive the postgraduate student handbook of the departments in which they are based at Imperial and at the partner institution/organisation. Students must also receive supplementary information, agreed by both partners, which describes the specific arrangements of the joint/collaborative programme.

[Each department must have a postgraduate student handbook, either in hard or electronic copy which contains, but is not limited to, information listed in the College’s guidelines for handbooks document.]

Please submit a copy of the supplementary information concerning the specific arrangements of the joint/collaborative programme:

Precept 9 [Cohort Building]

Each joint/collaborative programme must facilitate cohort building activities and events.

[Departments must make provision to allow research students to interact with their peers and should facilitate the existence of a collegial/scholarly community.]

Please give details of the arrangements for cohort building:
Precept 10 [Research & Professional Skills Development]

Students on joint and collaborative programmes must complete the Graduate School’s Professional Skills Development requirement, unless an alternative approach is agreed by the Postgraduate Professional Development Committee.

[All students must be made aware of the Graduate School’s Professional Skills Development requirement during their induction (http://www3.imperial.ac.uk/graduateschool/currentstudents/professionalskillsresearch). All students should be supported in completing this requirement. Furthermore, all students should have the opportunity to engage in further activities and training to enhance their research and professional skills and receive careers advice.]

Please give details of arrangements which are made for students to identify their development needs and to attend any development opportunities (research-related or other) that are identified, including details of the systems in place for students to complete the Graduate School’s Professional Skills Development requirements:

Precept 11 [Management/Organisation]

Each joint/collaborative programme must have a Joint Management Committee (EngD Boards, Joint PhD Academic Boards etc) which meets at least annually to review procedures, student progress, good practice etc.

[Each department must have a Postgraduate Committee (with a minimum composition of 3 members including the Director of Postgraduate Studies and Postgraduate Tutor) chaired usually by the Director of Postgraduate Studies, to oversee the format and quality of the higher degree programme including recruitment, admissions, induction, registration, progression, assessment, student feedback, complaints, training, proposal of external examiners, submission and completion rates. The Committee must report to the Head of Department and meet regularly. There should be a written record kept of all meetings which is accessible to the staff and study body.]

Please give details of joint management committees, including terms of reference and membership of the committees and minutes of the meetings in 2011-12 and 2012-13:
Precept 12 [Assessments / Appeals and Complaints]

All students on joint and collaborative programmes are subject to the same assessment procedures as programmes based solely at the College unless an alternative approach is agreed by the Postgraduate Research Quality Committee and/or Senate, as appropriate.

Departments at the partner institution/organisation must have a suitable protocol which should include directions to staff and students about the appropriate channels for raising particular concerns, complaints and appeals. There must also be appropriate disciplinary procedures in place. Students on joint and collaborative programmes, including those programmes with industrial partners, must be made aware of the protocol at both institutions. It must also be made clear to the students which procedures they should follow and when.

[Assessment procedures and the mechanisms for complaints and appeals should be clearly communicated to research students, supervisors and examiners. Students and supervisors should have a clear and mutually understood mechanism to raise concerns at a departmental level.]

Please give details of the systems in place and how these are communicated:

Precept 13 [Research Plan Confirmation]

All students on joint and collaborative programmes are subject to the same assessment procedures as programmes based solely at the College unless an alternative approach is agreed by the Postgraduate Research Quality Committee and/or Senate, as appropriate.

[All students should produce an initial plan of study within 6 - 12 weeks of registration, and the study plan must be reviewed by at least one independent assessor. Assessors can only be selected by the Director of Postgraduate Studies, Postgraduate Tutor or Postgraduate Committee, who can choose to ask for suggestions from the supervisor.]

Please give details of arrangements for meeting the Imperial College 6-12 week milestone, including selection of assessors:
Precept 14 [Early Stage Assessment]

All students on joint and collaborative programmes are subject to the same assessment procedures as programmes based solely at the College unless an alternative approach is agreed by the Postgraduate Research Quality Committee and/or Senate, as appropriate.

[Assessment of students' research ability to determine whether registration for the PhD degree can continue will involve a confirmation examination held in the 9th month (18 months for part-time students) after the date of initial registration. This is to be assessed by at least one independent assessor but normally two. Assessors can only be selected by the Director of Postgraduate Studies, Postgraduate Tutor or Postgraduate Committee, who can choose to ask for suggestions from the supervisor. Where a student fails the confirmation examination, written feedback should be provided to the student (with a copy to Registry) within one month of the examination date. Students who have been asked to re-submit must do so by 11 months of initial registration. Any decision* to transfer to the MPhil degree must be made within one year of the date of registration.

*A student can also be required to withdraw from the College.]

Please give details of arrangements for meeting the Imperial College 9 month milestone, including selection of assessors:

Or give details of alternative approaches agreed by the Postgraduate Research Quality Committee and/or Senate and how they are met:

Precept 15 [Late Stage Review]

All students on joint and collaborative programmes are subject to the same assessment procedures as programmes based solely at the College unless an alternative approach is agreed by the Postgraduate Research Quality Committee and/or Senate, as appropriate.

[A further review of a student's research ability will be undertaken between 18 and 24 months (between 30 and 36 months for part-time students) after the date of initial registration. The form of review will be determined by the student's department and...]

January 2014
V.February 2014
must be clearly communicated to students. Where a student fails to satisfy the assessors at this stage, written feedback should be provided within one month of the review date. Students who have been asked to re-submit* should do so within 3 months of their initial Late Stage Review.

* A student can also be required to withdraw from the College.

Please give details of arrangements for meeting the Imperial College 18-24 month milestone, including selection of assessors:

Or give details of alternative approaches agreed by the Postgraduate Research Quality Committee and/or Senate and how they are met:

Precept 163 [Writing Up Stage]

All students on joint and collaborative programmes are subject to the same monitoring arrangements as programmes based solely at the College unless an alternative approach is agreed by the Postgraduate Research Quality Committee and/or Senate, as appropriate.

[All students who have not submitted their thesis within their 36 month registration period (or equivalent) will be subject to a monitoring point at 36 months to ensure that they have a realistic plan for submitting the thesis within 48 months (or equivalent) of their start date. By 36 months, students should submit a timetable of remaining work to be done in order to complete the thesis within the required time. A key outcome of the monitoring point at 36 months is to confirm whether the student will enter the completing research period or whether they will be writing up away from College.*

* A student who still has experimental work to perform at this stage cannot move into the completing research period and will continue to pay full fees.]

Please give details of arrangements for meeting the Imperial College 36 month monitoring point:

Or give details of alternative approaches agreed by the Postgraduate Research Quality Committee and/or Senate and how they are met:

Precept 17 [Student Representation]

3 New precept introduced with effect from January 2014
Suitable mechanisms must exist at both partner institutions/organisations for obtaining feedback on the programme from supervisors and from students at appropriate intervals during the programme. Academic partner institutions/organisations must offer students on joint and collaborative programmes the opportunity for representation on postgraduate academic forums whenever possible.

[Each department should have a staff/student committee in which postgraduate research students are represented to discuss postgraduate issues. This can be the Postgraduate Committee [Precept 11] or a separate forum. A meeting including student representatives should normally take place at least three times per year. There should be a written record kept of all meetings and this should be made accessible to students and staff.]

Please give details of feedback mechanisms and representation forum including the terms of reference/remit and membership of the forum and minutes/notes of meetings in 2011-12 and 2012-13:

Precept 18 [Evaluation]

Joint and collaborative programmes are subject to the same review and evaluation mechanisms as programmes based solely at the College.

[Regular evaluation of the department’s research programme(s) should be carried out internally. All stakeholders should have the opportunity to provide their feedback (and in confidence if appropriate). Evaluations should be considered openly and the results communicated appropriately with any decisions made by the department to implement (or not) any changes resulting from this feedback communicated clearly to all stakeholders.]

Please give details of mechanisms for seeking, analysing and acting upon feedback and for communicating the results to all those involved:

Supplementary Information

Partnership agreement

Please give the date on which the partnership agreement was first signed and the date on which it is next due for renewal. Please provide details of any changes in the agreement which have been made between the partner institutions/organisations.

Date on which the partnership agreement was first signed:

Date on which the partnership agreement is next due for renewal:
Please provide details of any changes in the agreement which have been made between the partner institutions/organisations:

Quality Enhancement

Departments are required to specifically comment on changes introduced that relate to enhancement.

Please document any instances of good practice in your department and comment on specific enhancement initiatives and innovative practices:

Periodic review of research degree training

Departments are required to provide a report, outlining action taken to address any recommendations highlighted by the periodic review panel members.

Please provide a report of action taken as a result of the recommendations made by external assessors during the last periodic review of your departmental research degree training:

Student Statistics

Please also supply the following statistics for the joint/collaborative programme:

- A breakdown of completion rates for full-time and part-time students who commenced their studies between October 2008 and February 2010 inclusive, and provide an explanation if the completion rate has fallen below 80%.
- Figures for the percentage of students who have completed the Early Stage Assessment within the 9 month deadline.
- Figures for the percentage of students who have completed the Late Stage Review within the 24 month deadline.
- Details of any special cases made [for admissions or during registration] during the previous two years [October 2011 – September 2013].
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document title:</th>
<th>Joint and Collaborative Precept Review: 2012-2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Version:</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date:</td>
<td>February 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approved:</td>
<td>Senate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective from:</td>
<td>February 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Originator:</td>
<td>Registry Quality Assurance &amp; Enhancement Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact for queries:</td>
<td>Senior Assistant Registrar (Quality Assurance &amp; Enhancement)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross References:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes and latest changes:</td>
<td>Formatting changes made on 11 April 2016</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>