

Attendance Requirements for Research Degrees

1. The Senate has approved recommendations from the Quality and Academic Review Committee (now disbanded) which modified certain elements of the attendance requirements for research degree students and this note summarises those changes which came into effect from January 2007.
2. The current Public Research Institutions/Industrial Research Laboratories (PRI) scheme has been superseded by the Partner Research Institution (PRI) Scheme: unlike the old PRI/IRL scheme the new PRI scheme can include hospitals and other universities.
3. The attendance requirement for students registered under the PRI scheme will be a minimum of 2 months each year regardless of whether the PRI is based in the UK or overseas: this attendance period is designed to facilitate attendance at the required Graduate Schools' transferable skills courses. Where a Department or Division wishes to register a student under the PRI scheme with attendance that was less than 2 months a case has to be made on an exception basis to the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee.
4. The minimum attendance requirement for students registered under the split PhD scheme remains at 12 months over the duration of the normal 36 month registration period; but the requirement that the first 3 months and the last 3 months must be spent at the College has been removed. Previously special permission had to be obtained from the Graduate Schools for a student [whether a split or normal PhD student] to spend the first or last 3 months away from College: it remains necessary for departments to apply for study leave for these periods but approval is delegated to Registry. Departments and Divisions must explain how they will handle the induction and initial research plan arrangements for a student who may not be present, at the College, during the first 3 months of registration.
5. The Graduate Schools have affirmed that: the objective of the PRI scheme is to enable PhD projects to benefit from specialised facilities and/or expertise at partner research institutions and at Imperial; the PRI scheme also acts as a platform that helps Imperial and industry to come together to develop joint programmes through PhD research; the objective of the split PhD scheme is to enable projects of particular relevance to the PhD student's country to be conducted through in-country research combined with work at Imperial; the definitions of the PRI scheme are still valid given the extension of the scheme to include universities and hospitals.
6. The MPhil/PhD transfer examination for all students must take place at a College campus in the UK.
7. The prescribed minimum registration period for all truly part-time students, including part-time PRI students will be 48 months: fees for such students will be charged at the relevant part-time fee rate.

8. PRI students will usually be registered as part-time students but those pursuing their studies on a full-time basis should be prescribed a minimum registration period of 36 months: fees for students registered under the PRI scheme as full-time will be charged at the full-time rate.
9. The minimum attendance requirement at the College for all truly part-time students, which used to be considered on a weekly or monthly basis, will now be set at no less than 40 days per year.
10. The minimum registration requirement for College staff registered for a PhD is 33 months.

Approved by Senate
December 2009

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