

Guidelines for Late Case Requests for PhD, MPhil, MD[Res] and EngD candidates

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This document provides guidance to departments and candidates on the College's late case request procedure for candidates enrolled on a postgraduate research programme.
- 1.2. The late case request procedure is available to candidates in cases where mitigating circumstances have affected their progress towards their final submission deadline.

2. General Principles

- 2.1. The College requires postgraduate research candidates to submit their thesis for examination within the agreed timeframe noted in the Academic Regulations (<http://www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/regulations/>). This is normally 48 months from the programme start date for full-time candidates.
- 2.2. The late case request procedure is available for postgraduate research candidates to request an extension to the final thesis submission deadline. As part of a late case request, candidates are expected to detail the mitigating circumstances affecting their progress over the course of their registration.
- 2.3. Prior to the submission of a late case request to the Registry, departments are advised to consider whether an Interruption of Study would be appropriate and in the best interest of the candidate. Please note that this is only applicable to **registered** candidates, **and those in the 12 month Completing Research Status**.
- 2.4. For further guidance on the College's Interruption of Study procedure, please refer to the [Guidelines for Interruption of Studies for Research Students](#). Tier 4 students and their supervisors are reminded to contact the International Student Support Office immediately if they are considering taking an interruption.
- 2.5. The approval of a late case request will extend the candidate's thesis submission deadline, and will not result in a registration extension. **International students on a Tier 4 visa are advised to contact the International Student Support Office if they have any queries about the impact of this on their visa.**
- 2.6. Should the late case request for a revised submission deadline be approved, candidates are reminded that the submission will nevertheless be recorded as "late" on the College's formal record since the thesis will have been submitted after the end of the maximum period of study. Therefore, the

candidate will be recorded as a "non-submitter" as far as the College's Performance Indicators are concerned.

- 2.7. One late case request is expected to be sufficient, and departments should ensure that the proposed deadline is realistic and achievable for the candidate. Candidates are reminded that any subsequent late case requests may not be approved.

3. Late Case Request Procedure

- 3.1. All late case requests will be made using the appropriate Late Case Request Form which is available to view under the [Research Degree Examinations](#) section of the Registry's website.
- 3.2. All late case requests should include a supporting statement from the candidate's primary supervisor. A detailed and agreed plan for completion should accompany the late case request, along with a proposed new submission deadline for consideration.
- 3.3. All late case requests should be submitted in advance of the thesis submission deadline. In cases where this has not been possible, the department will be asked to comment on the circumstances leading to the retrospective late case request.
- 3.4. Late case requests resulting in over a year's extension to a candidate's original thesis deadline must be accompanied by an independent statement from an expert in the field confirming that the research is still novel and valid.
- 3.5. All late case requests are subject to departmental approval by the Director of Postgraduate Studies prior to submission to the Registry. Following departmental approval, all late case requests should be submitted to the Research Degrees Team (research.degree@imperial.ac.uk) for processing.
- 3.6. It is expected that the majority of late case requests will be made in the writing up period (Writing Up In College or Writing Up Away from College), or in the final year of student registration.

For further guidance on Imperial College's writing up policy, please refer to (<http://www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/administration-and-support-services/registry/academic-governance/public/academic-policy/research-degree-examinations/Writing-up-period.pdf>).

- 3.7. Should it be necessary for a candidate to submit a late case request on health grounds, it is expected that the department will have had sight of any supporting evidence relating to the late case (i.e. medical certificates).
- 3.8. Upon submission of a late case request to Registry, the request will be submitted to the Special Case Panel for review and approval on behalf of the Postgraduate Research Quality Committee. Information relating to late case requests will be reported to the Postgraduate Research Quality Committee annually.

- 3.9. The Special Case Panel will comprise of the Director of the Graduate School and the Deputy Director of the Graduate School (or nominees).
- 3.10. The role of the Special Case Panel will be to consider the mitigating circumstances relating to the late case request, and to confirm final approval.
- 3.11. In some cases, additional information may be required from the department before the panel is able to reach a decision.
- 3.12. The confirmed outcome will be communicated to the departmental postgraduate administrator by the Research Degrees Team.
- 4. Appealing the outcome of a late case request**
- 4.1. Candidates are reminded that the rejection of a retrospective late case request may result in their withdrawal from the programme.
- 4.2. All students required to withdraw have the right of appeal through the Academic Registrar to an Appeal Committee of the Senate. The right of appeal relates only to the withdrawal decision and not to the results of any examination or academic assessment on which the decision may be based.
- 4.3. For further information on the relevant appeal procedure, candidates should refer to [Appendix 1](#) of the *General Regulations*.

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