GUIDANCE NOTES – Late Stage Review (LSR)
Between 18 and 24 months for full-time students/
between 30 and 36 months for part-time students*

The College requires that, following the Research Plan Confirmation (RPC), a student’s progress during PhD registration must be formally monitored at two key stages after the date of initial registration:

(i) at 9 months for full-time students and at 18 months for part-time students
(Early Stage Assessment)

and

(ii) between 18 and 24 months for full-time students and between 30 – 36 months for part-time students (Late Stage Review)

The Late Stage Review (LSR)

1. The College requires that a review of a student’s PhD research ability must be undertaken between 18 and 24 months (between 30 and 36 months for part-time students) after the date of initial registration.

2. The form of review is determined by the student’s department** and has been approved by the College. Typically, as a minimum, students should submit a research plan by 24 months for completing the programme by 36 months (or equivalent for part-time students). These arrangements apply to all students whether full-time or part-time, registered under the Partner Research Institute Scheme (PRI) or for split PhDs, or for Joint PhDs [unless a variant has been explicitly negotiated], and to staff registered for a research degree. See 3.4 of the Regulations for the award of PhD and MPhil.

3. The purpose of the Late Stage Review is to confirm that the student (a) has an adequate understanding of the research problem, (b) has the capacity to pursue research, (c) has a critical awareness of the relevant literature on the subject and (d) has a realistic research plan and schedule for completion within the registration period.

4. If the College determines that the student’s progress is such that they cannot continue, the student may be required to withdraw from the College at this stage; alternatively the College may transfer their registration to the degree of MPhil and require the student to write up for the MPhil degree. The date of MPhil registration will, in such cases, be backdated to the date of the initial PhD registration. Please

*Please note, milestones for students registered part-time may differ from those listed. Part-time students should check the timing of their milestones with their department
**Any reference to “department” or “departmental” includes schools, institutions, centres or divisions, as appropriate.
note: Full-time MPhil students must submit their thesis for examination within 3-6 months of the date of their initial Late Stage Review.

5. A student has one opportunity to repeat the Late Stage Review if required to do so by the department, and this must be within 3 months of the date of the initial Late Stage Review.

6. All PhD students are expected to complete a programme of professional skills development training as prescribed by the Graduate School. Failure to complete the requisite training may result in a student’s registration being transferred from PhD to MPhil or in a student being barred from entering the PhD (or MPhil) examination. See 4.2 of the Regulations for the award of PhD and MPhil.

For students registered on or before 28th September 2012, the Late Stage Assessment must ask whether a student has completed the professional skills development requirement. For details of this requirement see the Graduate School Professional Development Skills website.

If the student has not completed the professional skills development requirement by the date of his/her Late Stage Review, the College may transfer the student’s registration to MPhil. If the student subsequently fulfils the professional skills development requirement, and has otherwise successfully completed the Late Stage Review, the student’s department may request a transfer of registration from MPhil to PhD. The date of PhD registration will, in this case, be taken as the date of the initial PhD registration. Alternatively, the department may prevent the student from entering the PhD (or MPhil) examination until such a time as the requirement has been completed.

For students registered on or after 29th September 2012, the minimum professional skills development attendance requirement should have been completed by the Early Stage Assessment (ESA).

7. The late stage review must also consider whether the student has met the College Postgraduate Research English requirement, based on a satisfactory score on a Centre for Academic English test.

8. The Head of Department (or nominee) and all supervisors concerned should sign the Late Stage Review form. The independent assessors must also be named on and sign the form.

9. The standard Late Stage Review form is available here.

10. Departments are responsible for confirming to the Registry that a review has been completed for every student.

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