Imperial College London

GUIDANCE NOTES – Late Stage Review (LSR)
Between 18 and 24 months for full-time students/between 30 and 36 months for part-time students[1]

1.1.   The College requires that, 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)

1.2   For those students studying at a Partner Research Institution (PRI) the LSR must take place at a College campus in the UK. For those students registered for a Split-PhD, the LSR must take place in the UK.

2.   The Late Stage Review (LSR)

2.1.   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.

2.2.   The form of review is determined by the student's department[2] 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 (PRIS) or for split PhDs, for Joint PhDs [unless a variant has been explicitly negotiated], and to staff registered for a research degree. See the College's Academic & Examination Regulations [3.4].

2.3.   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.

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[1] Please note the milestones for students registered part-time may differ from those listed. Part-time students should check the timing of their milestones with their department.

Additionally, the timings of some milestones may vary for some CDT students and some EngD students on four year programmes. Students are advised to check the timing of their milestones with their department.

[2] Any reference to "department" or "departmental" includes schools, institutions, centres or divisions, as appropriate.

2.4. 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 note: Full-time MPhil students must submit their thesis for examination within 24 months of the date of the initial degree registration.

2.5. 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.

2.6. 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 the College's Academic & Examination Regulations [4.2].

For students registered on or before 30th September 2012, the Late Stage Review must ask whether a student has completed the professional skills development requirement as follows:.

Doctoral Students (PhD, MD[Res] and EngD): The College requires all doctoral students to achieve a minimum of four Graduate School credits, plus the online doctoral plagiarism awareness course. The online Plagiarism Awareness Course is compulsory, but does NOT count towards the minimum credit requirement which is set out below:

Doctoral students are required to accumulate a minimum of 4 credits by the Late Stage Review (LSR) as follows:

- By the Early Stage Assessment (ESA) – 2 credits
- By the Late Stage Review (LSR) – a further 2 credits

Course Type	Number of Credits
Online courses	1
Face-to-face workshops	1
Webinars	1
1 Day Retreat	1
2 Day Retreat	3
5 Day Global Fellows Programme	4

MPhil Students: those who are direct entry MPhil, or those being awarded with an MPhil degree having first registered for a PhD, must complete a minimum of two credits by the ESA. The LSR professional development credit requirement does not apply to MPhil students.

If the student has not completed the professional skills development requirement by the date of his/her Late Stage Review, and provided the student agrees and there is sufficient time remaining to complete the requirement by 24 months (full-time students) or 36 months (for part-time

students), the student can continue with his/her PhD. If the student has not completed the professional skills development requirement by 24 months (full- time) or 36 months (part-time), 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.

2.7.   The Late Stage Review must also consider whether the student needs additional English language support.

2.8.   The Head of Department[3] (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.

2.9.   The standard Late Stage Review form can be found at: http://www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/academic-policy/research-programmes/

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

3.   Guidance on completing each section of the form

3.1   Section A

3.1.1   To be completed by the students and Department ahead of the LSR. Section A also includes confirmation from the Department that the student has met the College's professional skills requirements.

3.1.2   The Graduate School (graduate.school@imperial.ac.uk) will provide Departmental administrators with a report confirming what professional skills courses students have completed. Alternatively, students may present their administrator with a copy of their professional skills attendance certificate as evidence.

3.2   Section B

3.2.1   To be completed by the independent assessors. Departments are reminded that it is not good practice to appoint members of staff who are also responsible for providing pastoral care to students as independent assessors of those students.

3.3   Section C

3.3.1   To be completed by the supervisor following the LSR. Both the supervisor and

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student are then asked to sign the form to confirm the conversation has taken place.

3.3.2 The College wishes to provide its research students with an outstanding and world-class experience whilst at College. This includes the provision of excellent support and guidance from supervisors. It is recognised that supervisors will provide students with regular informal feedback but the LSR is an opportunity for supervisors to provide formal feedback to students.

3.3.3 Supervisors and assessors are also reminded that students are asked to comment on the quality of supervision that they receive at College as part of the national Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES), an important benchmarking tool. Students will be asked to comment on whether they are supported by their supervisors and receive regular feedback on their research activities.

3.3.4 Section C has been developed in order to facilitate broader discussions between students and supervisors not just on academic progress but the wider developmental needs of students. Supervisors should also take the opportunity to support students through honourable exit following an outcome of transfer to MPhil.

3.4.5 When considering what professional, technical and other training students may need as they progress through their PhD, Supervisors are reminded that a fulllist of Graduate School courses is available at: http://www.imperial.ac.uk/study/pg/graduate-school/professional-skills/doctoral/. It may also be possible for students to attend technical and other taught courses offered by departments. To access this information, supervisors are advised to search the College's Timetabling software and contact departments directly to see if venue capacity will permit additional attendees.

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