

Policy for Split-Site Research Degree Student Arrangements



Policy owner	Graduate Studies	Approval date	18 th May 2020
		and body	ACEC

1. Purpose

This policy aims to address the needs of UCD students registered to research degree programmes who have, as part of their approved study plan undertaken to conduct significant elements of their research programme away from the University. It is also intended that this policy will safeguard the quality and academic standards of the University's research degree programmes.

2. Definitions

Split Site: Where a research student spends more than one continuous trimester carrying out their research at an organisation other than UCD.

3. Scope

The policy only refers to split-site arrangements for research degrees leading to a UCD award.

What's not covered by this policy:

- 3.1 Students undertaking short-term (i.e. less than one trimester) fieldwork or visits outside of the University as part of their research programme.
- 3.2 Arrangements for candidates registered for research degrees at other institutions who spend a substantial period of time at UCD.
- 3.3 Inter-Institutional Degree Programmes, where a PhD Degree is awarded jointly between UCD and one or more other institutions. Inter-Institutional Degree programmes and the process and procedures regarding the establishment and management of these, are part of a broader university strategic objective and are addressed via documentation available on the 'Collaborative Programmes' section of the [UCD Administrative Services website](#)
- 3.4 Individual Inter-Institutional Co-supervisory Agreements for PhD students. These types of arrangement are covered in the [Policy on Inter-Institutional Co-Supervisory Agreements \(including Co-tutelle\) for PhD Students](#)

4. Principles

This policy establishes a university-wide set of standards and general principles to be applied to all Split-Site arrangements for research degree students:

4.1 Split-site activities undertaken by candidates for research degrees will be facilitated, where deemed justified and appropriate, in accordance with *the UCD Academic Regulations* with a view to promoting both the increased mobility of candidates for research degrees and the development of strong inter-institutional relationships.

4.2 All institutional split-site PhD partnerships require formal approval and a written split-site agreement to be drawn up between UCD and the other institution/site. Such an agreement should specify the host institutions' obligations to students and to UCD in relation to health and safety legislation.

4.3 If a research student is based for longer than one continuous trimester off campus in an external organisation and an Approved Adjunct Supervisor is not in place, a member of staff of the external organisation must be appointed as an External Supervisor.

4.4 The research student's External Supervisor or Adjunct Supervisor must be familiar with the university academic regulations and policies for the supervision of research degree students

4.5 The quality and academic standards of the University's research degree programmes will be maintained; split-site arrangements will result in no reduction in academic rigour.

4.6 The *UCD Academic Regulations*, and Policies, apply to all candidates registered for research degrees at UCD undertaking split-site activities.

4.7 Split-site arrangements require advance agreement between UCD and collaborating institutions with regard to ownership of intellectual property. All research results will be handled in accordance with the [UCD Intellectual Property Policy \(2018\)](#).

4.8 **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion:** Accommodation of any split-site arrangement will, in so far as is possible, take into account the University's strategic commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. UCD provides a positive working, research and learning environment, which is open to all regardless of age, disability, gender, marriage or civil partnership, race (including ethnic or national origin, nationality or colour), religion or belief, sexual orientation, family status, membership of the travelling community, or socio-economic status

5. Roles and responsibilities

5.1 Governing Board

The Governing Board must approve, upon the recommendation of the School, any arrangement where a student is to spend more than one trimester off-site, in accordance with the *Regulations for the Research Degrees*.

5.2 Head of School

The Head of School must make the recommendation to the Governing Board for any arrangement where a student is to spend more than one trimester off-site.

5.3 Principal Supervisor

Even though the graduate research student is spending a significant period of time off-site, the Principal Supervisor remains the person with primary responsibility for the academic supervision of the student. Therefore, the Principal supervisor must make every effort to support the student to progress within their programme by ensuring regular contact with the student and provide advice.

5.4 External Supervisor

The External Supervisor is the formal point of contact for the student at the external institution. The external supervisor will ensure that the student has access to appropriate research facilities.

The External Supervisor does not replace the principal supervisor but will support the student supervisor relationship through membership of the student's RSP.

6. Related documents

- [Procedure for the Approval of Adjunct staff to Supervise](#)
- [Procedure for the appointment of External Supervisors](#)

7. Version history

Version	Date	Summary of Changes	Changed by
1.0	26/01/07	First draft (circulated to policy working group prior to first meeting)	Alan Baird
1.1	09/03/07	Revision of document based on first meeting of the policy working group on 06/02/07 (circulated to policy working group for comment by e-mail)	Lynn Foster & Vanda Clayton
1.2	16/04/07	Revision of document based on comments received by e-mail (circulated to policy working group for further comment by e-mail)	Lynn Foster & Vanda Clayton
1.3	18/04/07	Revision of document based on comment received by e-mail regarding intellectual property and input from Nova UCD (circulated to UGPB for discussion)	Lynn Foster & Vanda Clayton
1.4	02/05/07	Revision of document based on UGPB discussion (circulated to policy working group for noting and UGPB for approval)	Lynn Foster
1.5	15/04/11	Revision of document based on minor amendments to Academic Regulations	Lynn Foster
1.6	7/3/19	Revision of document based on amendments to Academic Regulations for implementation in 2019	Emer Cunningham
1.7	18.5.20	Revision of document to align with Policy Framework. Expansion on Roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder	Emer Cunningham

Appendix 1

Procedure for Establishment of Split-Site Research Degree Student Arrangements



1. Introduction

This procedure document should be read in conjunction with the UCD Policy for Split-Site Research Degree Student Arrangements

2. Approval of Split-Site Arrangements

The prior approval of the Governing Board must be sought if a student is to spend more than one trimester off-site, in accordance with *Regulations for the Research Degrees*. Applications for approval of split-site arrangements must be accompanied by the recommendation of the Head of School. All split-site arrangements are subject to an overall split-site agreement drawn up between UCD and the other institution/site. Such an agreement should specify the host institutions' obligations to students and to UCD in relation to health and safety legislation.

Candidates for research degrees should normally apply for permission to undertake split-site research at the application stage, justifying their reasons for opting for split-site arrangements. However, in some cases, the need for split-site arrangements may not emerge until research is underway. In these cases, the candidate should normally apply for permission as soon as possible, well in advance of commencing split-site arrangements, justifying their rationale for opting for split-site arrangements.

The School and Governing Board may consider the following, with regard to individual candidates' ability to undertake research off-site:

- Supervisor(s) recommendations regarding the candidate's ability to self-manage and to meet their research and professional development goals while off-site.
- Evidence that the candidate will have access to the facilities and resources required to undertake their research while off-site.
- Evidence that the candidate will have access to a named appropriately qualified, UCD Adjunct staff member approved to supervise or an External Supervisor who is familiar with UCD Research Degree Regulations
- There is an agreed plan in place as to how a PhD student will meet the 30 credit requirement of their programme.
- Opportunities for the development of formal relationships with other institutions.
- Whether the proposed arrangement supports the UCD Strategic Plan, in terms of research and teaching and learning.
- The School and Governing Board may consider the following, with regard to establishing inter-institutional partnership arrangements, which may be made on a case-by-case basis or by establishing formal mechanisms for inter-institutional mobility:
 - the reputation and standing of the partner institution.
 - the facilities and resources to be made available to UCD research

- students.
- the length and nature of the arrangement, e.g. once-off arrangements for individual students or arrangements for a significant cohort of students on a continuing basis.

3. Periods of Attendance At UCD

Requirements for attendance at UCD will be determined on a case-by-case basis and agreed by the relevant School. Those requirements will, normally, be indicated to the candidate at the time of acceptance for the degree. Options may include attendance at UCD, electronic methods e.g., e-mail or video conference, attendance at some other location agreed with the candidate or visits by appropriate staff, of the School in question, to the candidate's site.

The timing and length of periods of attendance at UCD will be decided by the individual School, following discussion between the candidate and the supervisor, and will be set out in a written agreement signed by the student and supervisor and Research Programme Coordinator if relevant.

Any changes to the agreed schedule of visits must be agreed with the candidate. Candidates who wish to register for research degrees in UCD and to avail of split-site arrangements will normally be required to make an initial visit to UCD on first registration in order to attend introductory course(s) and / or subject-specific skills training and to meet with their Principal Supervisor and Research Studies Panel, to facilitate the drafting and reviewing of their Research and Professional Development Plan (RPDP).

4. Arrangements of Research Supervision, Mentorship, Assessment and Training

Arrangements for research provision will be made in accordance with the *Regulations for Research Degree Students*. External Supervisors in must be approved by the Governing board and their names entered onto the Register of Approved External Supervisors.

If the student is carrying out their research in a third level institution, it is appropriate that the contact person in that institution is put forward for approval as an Adjunct member of UCD staff and subsequently approved to supervise. Adjunct staff must be nominated by the relevant Governing Board and approved by the University Programmes Board to act as supervisors and their names entered on the Register of Approved Adjunct Supervisors.

The School will need to pay particular attention to the demands placed on candidates while not in attendance at UCD and ensure that adequate supervision and support are available. The School will determine appropriate arrangements for supervision, including nature and frequency of contact, consistent with the provisions of the [Policy for Supervision of Research Degree Students](#).

UCD has established mechanisms and processes for mentorship and assessment, involving Research Studies Panels and Stage Transfer Assessment Panels. In the case of split-site research degrees, the expectation is that at least one member of each of these panels should be a permanent member of the academic staff of the University

The School will need to ensure that candidates are able to receive all necessary discipline specific training, research skills and generic/ transferable skills training at the appropriate time and meet the credit requirements of their programme. It is expected, as described above, that the initial training needs analysis, utilising the Research and Professional Development Plan (RPDP), will take place during an initial visit to UCD at the outset of the research degree programme. Subsequent training needs analyses will be conducted either face-to-face or by electronic means, depending on the schedule of visits to UCD agreed with the student.

5. Off-Site Supervisory Visits Sites

It is expected that the supervision of split-site research programmes meets the University's requirements and standards as outlined in the [Policy for the Supervision of Research Degree Students](#). Schools are encouraged to visit students off-site to provide supervision, support and training.

Research projects of a split-site nature may require the advance negotiation of funding arrangements to cover the costs of any off-site supervisory visits and this requirement should be indicated to the candidate and sponsor at the offer stage. It is the responsibility of the School to ensure that proper funding arrangements are in place to cover any off-site supervisory visits required, prior to granting final agreement to such split-site arrangements.

6. Access to Appropriate Academic Facilities

Schools will need to be satisfied that candidates will have adequate access to appropriate academic facilities at all times, taking into account the discipline, research topic and student's circumstances.

A formal agreement must be signed by a person in authority in the external institution confirming the student's right of access to facilities appropriate to their research project.

8. Related documents

- Procedure for the Approval of Adjunct staff to Supervise
- Procedure for the appointment of External Supervisors

9. Version history

[Provide details with regard to any updates/amendments made to the policy.]

Version	Date	Summary of Changes	Changed by
1.0	26/01/07	First draft (circulated to policy working group prior to first meeting)	Alan Baird
1.1	09/03/07	Revision of document based on first meeting of the policy working group on 06/02/07 (circulated to policy working group for comment by e-mail)	Lynn Foster & Vanda Clayton
1.2	16/04/07	Revision of document based on comments received by e-mail (circulated to policy working group for further comment by e-mail)	Lynn Foster & Vanda Clayton
1.3	18/04/07	Revision of document based on comment received by e-mail regarding intellectual property and input from Nova UCD (circulated to UGPB for discussion)	Lynn Foster & Vanda Clayton
1.4	02/05/07	Revision of document based on UGPB discussion (circulated to policy working group for noting and UGPB for approval)	Lynn Foster
1.5	15/04/11	Revision of document based on minor amendments to Academic Regulations	Lynn Foster
1.6	7/3/19	Revision of document based on amendments to Academic Regulations for implementation in 2019	Emer Cunningham
1.7	18.5.20	Revision of document to align with Policy Framework. Expansion on Roles and Responsibilities of each stakeholder	Emer Cunningham