**PGR STUDENT TRAINING POLICY**

Whilst all students and supervisors are located in an academic School in which excellent research and scholarship is rooted in the discipline, there is also a strong and longstanding University emphasis on innovative, impactful, multi-disciplinary and interdisciplinary research, supported by competitively awarded funding and institutional strategic investment.

The University seeks to embed students into its research environment and culture, through integrated strategic planning, training policies, development opportunities, and the provision of learning both within the local research environment and across disciplinary groups.

Supervisors, Schools and the Doctoral Academy work together and alongside student support services to ensure that research students have opportunities and encouragement to:

* learn about their specialism, and the nature, conduct and management of research, including requirements and protocols that are specific to their field
* interact and exchange ideas with other researchers and/or practitioners who are actively working in the field of study;
* engage with the wider community of Cardiff and GW4 research students, broadening their understanding of interdisciplinary research and developing peer-support networks
* benefit from and contribute to the research environment at different levels: within and beyond their research groups; in multidisciplinary contexts; and with external groups and regional, national, industry-led or global networks
* engage with the public and with society, disseminating their research and developing their impact

**The Role of the Doctoral Academy**

1. The Doctoral Academy is the hub of postgraduate researcher community activity at Cardiff University and supports creativity and ambition by sharing knowledge and providing education for the benefit of all. It acts to foster a community of highly employable Postgraduate Researchers, renowned for their research excellence.
2. Oversight of the activities of the Doctoral Academy is provided by its Steering Group, chaired by the Pro Vice-Chancellor for Student Experience and Academic Standards; its membership includes the Academy Director, the three College Deans of Postgraduate Research, the Dean of Research, Innovation and Enterprise, the Students’ Union Vice-President Postgraduate and the Academic Registrar. The Heads of Quality & Operations; Training & Environment; and Development are in attendance.
3. The Doctoral Academy Steering Group develops, monitors and reviews those elements of the University strategy as they apply to postgraduate researcher experience which are within its remit. Through its membership of Pro-Vice Chancellors, the Doctoral Academy Steering Group reports to the University Executive Board and Academic Standards and Quality Committee
4. The Doctoral Academy provides a locus for the discussion of matters relating to postgraduate research students. The work of the Doctoral Academy is supported by the PGR Network of School Directors of Postgraduate Research Studies and PGR Student Representatives.
5. A core function is the coordination and delivery of training and development opportunities for research students via the Doctoral Academy Programme, which provides research students with generic research skills, professional and transferable skills and career development opportunities. The Programme is intended to complement the discipline specific training delivered in Schools.
6. The Doctoral Academy is required to evaluate and report on its Programme on an annual basis, taking collective and individual student feedback into account as well as changes to research training strategies.

**Student Induction and Orientation**

1. All new research students should be able to start their studies with an understanding of the academic environment in which they will be working.
2. The Doctoral Academy provides a general induction programme ('Starting Out'). It is offered on multiple occasions at the beginning of the academic year, and further sessions coincide with the entry points of January, April and July.
3. 'Starting Out' introduces students to relevant University regulations and procedures, to the training and development opportunities available through the Doctoral Academy, and to the effective planning of skills training in order to support progress on the research project and wider professional development. The induction programme also includes discussion of students' responsibilities and reasonable expectations, as well as those of the supervisor, and it signposts University-wide services and information, including the Student Charter.
4. Each School is required to provide a complementary induction programme at the beginning of the academic year. Topics for School induction programmes typically include:

* the formal introduction of students to key School staff, including the Director of Postgraduate Research Studies;
* an introduction to the School's portfolio of research activities, infrastructure and facilities;
* relevant health and safety requirements;
* information on supervision and the monitoring of academic progress;
* the School's arrangements for communication and feedback with students;
* the School's policy for researcher development and skills training, and opportunities provided locally, including research seminar series and support for conferences;
* Signposting to local academic and pastoral support

11. Supervisors are also expected to be available to meet with their students at the commencement of studies, and Schools may choose to build first supervision meetings into welcome and induction schedules. In all cases, each student must be provided with an early opportunity to meet their supervisor, in person or on-line if necessary, to discuss their research goals and development planning.

12. Those students who are unable to attend the School's induction programme in person should be issued with written or online guidance -e.g. those students whose start dates do not coincide with the running of the programme, or, exceptionally, those studying part-time or at a distance from the campus.

13 . All new research students should be issued with written information appropriate to the School. This may be in the form of a hard-copy handbook or electronic format.

14. Students who belong to a consortium-based Doctoral Training Partnership may be required to attend additional induction. Their School should ensure that these students have been issued with clear written information about the aims and requirements of their training programme in addition to the standard School-based information.

**Learning and Personal Development Planning**

15. Key principles of Cardiff's approach to researcher development and skills training are:

* that the approach is needs-based, taking into account institutional frameworks, UKRI and research council frameworks, sector trends and student voice
* that supporting students in their development is embedded in our supervision and monitoring processes;
* that training is delivered in the broadest context appropriate in order to promote cross-disciplinary understanding and student networking.

16. It is the responsibility of the School, through the supervision process, to ensure that the development needs of all students are identified. Students are required to work with their supervisor to clarify their individual training needs, and they are encouraged to recognise the value of professional skills in enabling them to become effective researchers and to enhance their employability.

17. In early supervision meetings and in conjunction with defining the Research Plan, the student and supervisor should conduct a skills audit, known as the Development Needs Analysis, in order to agree and document the training and developmental activities in which the student will participate. The Research Plan and the Development Needs Analysis both form part of the record that demonstrates completion of the Initial Reporting, an element of the Research Student Progress Monitoring Procedure.

18. The Development Needs Analysis should be repeated when the student and supervisor discuss their Six-Monthly Reports and agree a revised Research Plan. At these points the student should provide for review a record of skills training and development activities undertaken over the period.

19. Each Development Needs Analysis should be conducted with due regard to the changing demands of the research project, to the student's prior experiences, skills gaps and developing professional needs, and to relevant external requirements, e.g. those of a particular Research Council, and should lead to the identification of appropriate skills development opportunities for the individual student.

20. Schools should make the core training and development requirements they have of their students clear at the outset of the research degree programme as part of their School-based induction and in the information issued to students (handbook or equivalent), and also make these requirements clear to supervisors.

21. Where a School identifies a particular skill as essential for all of its students, there should be a clear means of exemption for students who can demonstrate they have already acquired that skill.

22. The University expects students to engage with training and development opportunities throughout their research programmes. As a general rule, full-time research students are expected to undertake approximately ten days of professional training and developmental activity in each year of study. Supervisors should help students to plan their learning, bearing in mind their learning priorities at each stage of their progression through studentship

**Provision and Monitoring of Skills Learning and Personal Development**

23. Schools must ensure that their research students have access to the training appropriate to their individual research objectives -to enable them to undertake their research effectively, and to complete their programmes successfully and within time. To this end, Schools are responsible for delivering or procuring the research skills, methods and techniques that are specific to their discipline and local research context, and for integrating students in the research environment of the School, department and/or research group. Delivery of research training includes the essential role of the supervisor.

24. Some programmes (e.g. professional doctorates and programmes delivered through Doctoral Training Partnerships, or equivalent),and some individual PhD projects (e.g. industry-sponsored), may require students to undertake additional or bespoke development activities

25. Students are required to undertake the training agreed with their supervisor, and to comply with School skills training policies: participation in specified workshops and other activities, and/or engagement with training at a specified level, for example, through the accumulation of training 'points' on an annual basis.

The Doctoral Academy Programme provides generic skills appropriate to cross-disciplinary groups. It is organised to support four key stages of the PGR development journey:

* Transition: stepping into research, learning research essentials, mandatory training
* Acquisition: building research capabilities and communities, whilst developing personal effectiveness and transferable skills
* Completion: sustaining momentum and focus, developing personal resilience and research impact, skills for thesis production and assessment
* Employment: professional skills, career planning for the future, exploring opportunity for career fulfilment or progression

1. Programme components are also mapped to the four domains set out in the 'Researcher Development Framework'(developed by Vitae):

* knowledge and intellectual abilities
* personal effectiveness
* research governance and organisation
* engagement, influence and impact.

Detail on available sessions and online learning resources can be found at: http://cardiff.ac.uk/doctoral-academy

1. Supervisors should also direct students to complementary skills, personal and career development programmes, such as those run by Student Support & Wellbeing, Careers and Employability, The Student Development Service and the GW4 Alliance. Students should be encouraged to look beyond taught sessions as a means of training and development and to participate in experiential learning opportunity such as work experience, conferences, PGR community events, volunteering/civic mission, publications, coaching and mentoring, student-led activity etc. Supervisors should also facilitate access to and attendance at structured learning events and should discourage late drop-out at booked events.
2. Students should be encouraged to record and reflect on all forms of their learning experiences and form plans to apply acquired skills in their research or their personal and career development. Where appropriate, a record of personal and professional learning may be maintained in line with external or industry CPD frameworks, or the RDF framework or generic PDP resources available to all students.

29. Schools are expected to review the effectiveness of their training and development provision as part of the Annual Review and Enhancement process.