

Exceptional regulations for Summer 19/20: Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) and MPhil (UNNC)

The University recognises that the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the research activities of many of its Postgraduate students (PGRs) and that as a result they may not be able to complete by their final submission date.

These regulations should be read in conjunction with all existing regulations, including the Exceptional Guidance to Extenuating Circumstances Panels attached to the Policy on Circumstances Affecting Students' Ability to Study and Complete Assessments, as well as the Exceptional Regulations on Extenuating Circumstances (ECs) and the Exceptional Regulations for UKRI funded Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) students.

All UNNC PhD and EdD students: one-month extension or one-month late submission fee waiver will be entitled automatically without application to research period students or thesis pending period students, respectively. Students who wish to have a longer extension or late submission fee waiver, up to a **maximum of 3 months (six for part time PhDs)**, is required to submit an application to UNNC Graduate School before 4pm, June 30th.

These extensions will be the exception rather than the rule. This is one-off submission and the same reason applied to COVID-19 will not be considered for future possible extension application. More detailed information and application forms are available on [UNNC Graduate School Moodle page](#).

MRMP1. Alongside the measures described below, University of Nottingham (UofN) PGRs except those at UNNC) due to complete within the period of 1st March 2020 to 31st March 2021 may

- a) submit after their final agreed submission date **without an application process or any late fee penalty**, for a period of up to one (1) calendar month, or
- b) apply for an extension to registered study and/ or thesis pending of up to six (6) months, for which the standard fees will be waived¹.

MRMP2. Plans and attempts should be made to both continue appropriate research activity and minimise the impact of COVID-19 on the doctoral progress. These plans and attempts should be recorded through the supervision process. These should include activities that are necessary for continued progress to meeting Doctoral Outcomes, such as reorganisation of research plans in the light of this unforeseen problem, restructuring the timing of outputs/deliverables (project conceptualisation and design), developing and designing new ideas, literature research (acquisition of new knowledge and understanding), data analysis and interpretation (creation and interpretation of new knowledge), writing the thesis, or publications, or undertaking online training.

¹ Fee waiver approved by UEB Tuesday May 6th

MRMP3. PGRs should continue to work towards completion of their degree by their current submission date where possible.

MRMP4. If, despite appropriate risk management and mitigation, the PGR judges that they will not be able to complete submission of the thesis by the submission date or within one (1) calendar month of their final agreed submission date, they may apply for an extension of their final submission date.

MRMP5. All applications should be submitted with the information listed below, to Student Services or equivalent at UNM/UNNC for consideration on behalf of Quality and Standards Committee.

MRMP6. Requests for extensions will only be considered under this policy for circumstances that have occurred between March 15th 2020 and the PGR's current final submission date, and only for circumstances that can be attributed to effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. For other circumstances, PGRs should otherwise make use of pre-existing policy.

MRMP7. The request may be to allow either an additional period of registered study and/or an extension to Thesis Pending of up to 6 months, depending on the need and the case made.

MRMP8. Additional periods of registered study and extensions are exclusively for the completion of doctoral work, including thesis finalisation.

MRMP9. The thesis should be submitted as soon as it is ready for examination.

MRMP10. All applications should include:

The University COVID-19 impact statement, containing;

- a statement of whether the application is for an additional period of registered study, and extension to Thesis Pending or for both.
- information as requested to justify the extension type and length, and what has been achieved to date in the period of COVID-19 impact.
- confirmation that the impact statement has been completed and submitted with the approval of supervisors or an appropriate member of PGR support staff.
- a simple plan including
 - the work completed before any COVID-19 impact.
 - work remaining to be done in the requested time to enable the PGR to meet the Doctoral Outcomes.
 - a timeline with milestones for completion of the thesis in the time remaining plus the requested extension.
 - Revised date for thesis submission

MRMP11. The following criteria will be used in the decision on whether to approve an additional period of study or an extension of up to 6 months due to COVID-19:

Circumstances as detailed in the PhD and MPhil Regulations:

- New occurrences of illness (mental or physical), hospitalisation or accident: for instance, periods of medical leave of absence other than those already considered and accommodated under the usual EC process.
- maternity/paternity leave other than those already accommodated under existing policies and processes;
- death of a close relative
- illness of a close relative where the PGR is the carer;
- Illness or death of a partner;
- requirement for a student to undertake military service other than those already accommodated under existing policies and processes;

Additional COVID-19 related circumstances

- An impact on your supervisory team that has affected your supervision or progress of either research or writing, such as illness.
- Redeployment to work on COVID-19 related research or other action but only where the redeployment time has not already been accommodated under other policies.
- Postponement of critical activities (including fieldwork or placements) where alternatives are not available, and impact cannot be mitigated.
- Caring responsibilities
- Specific impact resulting from remote working as a result of a disability or being at higher risk of coronavirus;
- Lack of access to mental health support if needed;
- Financial impacts, either personal or on the research activity;
- Impacts related to any protected characteristics;
- Other considerations that can be specifically attributed to COVID-19 and evidenced in the case.

MRMP12. The following are examples of circumstances or occurrences that would not normally warrant an additional period of study or an extension under these Regulations:

- Taking up employment
- Voluntary service overseas
- Taking a placement that is part of/within a funded programme (e.g. Professional Internship for PhD Students (PIPS)) and is unrelated to the research activity;
- Volunteering activity or paid secondment for the national COVID-19 effort, for which a voluntary interruption of studies was taken.
- The University closure in and of itself, without any evidence of mitigation attempts or detail of impact
- Where the impact described does not affect the ability to demonstrate the achievement of the Doctoral Outcomes.