

SECTION A3

APPROVAL OF RESEARCH PROPOSAL

Approval of Research Proposal

- 3.1 All registered students for the award of MPhil, PhD and MD (Res) are required to seek approval of their research proposal by the following deadlines:

Month of Registration	Research Proposal Deadline	
	<i>Full-time candidates</i>	<i>Part-time candidates</i>
September	28 October	28 November
January	28 February	28 March
April	28 May	28 June
June (no longer in use)	28 July	28 August

All candidates for the award of a Professional Master's and a Professional Doctorate are required to seek approval of their research proposal normally no later than 12 months full-time and 24 months part-time after initial registration.

- 3.2 Any candidate missing the relevant deadline stipulated in Regulation 3.1 will be treated as a resubmission and the procedure in Regulation 3.9 below will apply.
- 3.3 All candidates are required to submit their Research Proposal to Turnitin and discuss the originality report with their First Supervisor prior to application.
- 3.4 The candidate's supervisors are formally appointed when the Research Proposal is approved.

Scrutiny of Research Proposal

- 3.5 Appropriate academic judgement is brought to bear on the viability of each candidate's research proposal as soon as the candidate and their First Supervisor (or programme director for Professional Doctorate candidates) are ready, but in accordance with the timescales indicated in 3.1 above. The research proposal will be reviewed by a minimum of two suitably experienced academics who have attended the relevant training provided by the Doctoral School. The reviewers will be independent of the student and supervisors. A candidate for a postgraduate research degree, except those submitting for a PhD by

Published Work, shall be ineligible to act as a reviewer. The consideration of the research proposal will take into account:

- (a) the viability of the proposed research within the permitted timescale;
- (b) the content and clarity of the research proposal;
- (c) the suitability and experience of the proposed supervisory team (as defined in these regulations);
- (d) the candidate's understanding of the ethical implications of their research;
- (e) if our University or Associate College is able to provide appropriate research facilities;
- (f) the identification of any required researcher development activity.

Approval of the research proposal may be subject to attendance at Stage 1 of the Researcher Development Programme (see Regulations 2.35-2.44 above).

- 3.6 The reviewers will produce a joint report for the FRDSC within 10 working days of agreeing a recommendation.
- 3.7 The reviewers will make one of the following recommendations to the FRDSC:
 - the research proposal is approved;
 - the research proposal is not approved.
- 3.8 The candidate will be informed of the recommendation of the reviewers and supplied with a copy of the joint report but the final decision rests with the FRDSC.
- 3.9 If a research proposal is not approved on first submission the student is allowed one opportunity to revise and resubmit it. The resubmission must occur within two months of the date of the letter notifying the student of the decision. The student will be provided with a statement of the deficiencies of the research proposal (the reviewer's joint report).
- 3.10 If the research proposal is not approved at second attempt the FRDSC will discontinue the student.

- 3.11 If a student fails to submit their research proposal by the required deadline this will be reported to the relevant FRDSC. If this failure to submit the proposal is at first submission the student will be treated as 'not approved' and will be required to resubmit. If the failure to submit the proposal is at resubmission the FRDSC will discontinue the student.
- 3.12 Where the reviewers are unable to reach a joint recommendation the research proposal itself, and the reviewer's reports, will be considered by the relevant FRDSC which will reach one of the conclusions stated in Regulation 3.7 above.
- 3.13 A candidate who subsequently needs to make a significant change to the focus, or context, of their approved research should seek the support of their First Supervisor before applying to the relevant FRDSC for re-approval using the procedure outlined in this Section. Where a significant change is occurring to the approved research late in the course it may be appropriate for the candidate to withdraw and reapply for admittance as outlined in Section 2.

Research Ethics Approval

- 3.14 Candidates need to consider ethical issues at an early stage and should consult the relevant web pages for further advice: <http://www.anglia.ac.uk/researchethics>.
- 3.15 A Research Proposal Ethics Checklist must be submitted with the Research Proposal. Submission of the checklist does not constitute applying for ethical approval, which is a separate process.
- 3.16 A Stage 1 Research Ethics Application Form must be completed by all researchers, including those carrying out desk-based or secondary research¹. This will help determine the risk category of the research.
- 3.17 Where completion of the Stage 1 form indicates that institutional ethical approval is required, candidates should refer to the Research Ethics Policy and the relevant sections of the *Code of Practice for Applying for Ethical Approval at Anglia Ruskin University*. If the Stage 1 form indicates that institutional ethics approval is not required, the Stage 1 form must be submitted to the relevant Departmental Research Ethics Panel to demonstrate compliance with Institutional ethics procedures.

¹ There is a separate version of the Stage 1 form for research involving Animals and Habitats.

- 3.18 Candidates may need to apply for ethical approval on more than one occasion to cover different components of their research programme.
- 3.19 Approval from other entities (e.g. NHS, Ministry of Defence) is in some cases regarded as equivalent to our own. For further information please refer to the Stage 1 Research Ethics Application Form and Code of Practice for Applying for Ethical Approval, available from the Anglia Ruskin Research Ethics webpage.
- 3.20 Candidates must determine if their research is of such a nature to require additional insurance.
- 3.21 Candidates may also be required to complete a Risk Assessment and apply for Anglia Ruskin travel insurance if conducting research outside the UK.