

# Joint and Double Research Degree Framework

## 1. **Scope and Purpose**

- 1.1 This Framework defines and outlines the key functions and activities required for the management and day to day operation of Joint and Double Research Degrees that the University of Southampton (referred to from hereon as “Southampton”) enters into with a partner institution.
- 1.2 In some cases, the roles and responsibilities for managing the delivery of partnership may vary from the standard Framework as set down within this document and any variations must be defined in the University-level Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) signed by both parties.

## 2. **Definitions and Principles**

### 2.1 **Joint Award**

- 2.1.1 Southampton’s [Education Partnerships Policy](#) defines a Joint award as:

*An arrangement under which the University and one or more partner with degree-awarding powers together provide a programme leading to single award made jointly by both, or all, awarding bodies.*

- 2.1.2 As stated in its Charter (Article 13b), Southampton is legally entitled to confer an award jointly with another higher education institution. The partner must also be legally entitled to confer an award jointly with another institution.

- 2.1.3 A Joint Research Degree partnership results in the award of a single certificate bearing the crests, or logotype, of both institutions. This indicates that the degree is jointly awarded by Southampton and the partner institution.

### 2.2 **Double Award**

- 2.2.1 Southampton’s [Education Partnerships Policy](#) defines a Double Award as:

*An arrangement where the University and one partner provide a jointly delivered programme (leading to separate awards (and separate certification) being granted by both the University and the partner. N.B. Double awards share the same characteristics as a joint award other than certification. They are offered where the partner is not legally constituted to award a joint degree with another institution.*

2.2.2 A Double Research Degree is the same as a Joint Research Degree in that the programme is jointly designed, delivered and assessed by two institutions but instead leads to two separate award certificates, one issued by each partner institution. Students must therefore meet the requirements of both institutions to receive either award.

2.2.3 Southampton's default position is for a Joint Research Degree partnership agreement. However, it may consider entering into a Double Research Degree with a partner institution where the partner institution meets the criteria set out in 2.3.1 of this document, and only where the partner does not have the legal capacity to enter into a Joint Research Degree.

## 2.3 Principles

2.3.1 The key goal to establishing Joint or Double Research Degree is to develop and strengthen existing links with strategic partners around the world. There are many potential benefits including; access to high quality research environments for participating students; additional research outputs; opportunities to access new sources of funding and deepen valuable research relationships with colleagues globally. However, Joint and Double Research Degrees are complex to establish and require a commitment from the School and Faculty to manage the partnership over the lifetime of the agreement. These types of arrangements must be sustainable and this will be a factor in deciding on approval. Proposals for a Joint or Double Research Degree must therefore be assessed in line with the University's strategy and will only be approved where at least one of the following criteria is satisfied:

- a. The proposed partner institution has been identified as a strategic partner for the University or the lead Faculty. These will be

institutions similarly or more highly ranked than Southampton who show high potential for existing links to be strengthened and deepened.

- b. The proposed arrangement will deepen existing research links and lead to significant additional research activity.
- c. The collaboration has the capacity to involve foreign industry and/or government partners and/or access to new or additional sources of funding.

2.3.2 A Joint or Double Research Degree cannot be established with more than one partner. Each Joint or Double Research Degree will involve two awarding bodies, Southampton and the partner institution.

2.3.3 A Joint or Double Research Degree must not be set up for an individual research student as establishing a Joint or Double Research Degree can be a complex and lengthy process and suitable timescales need to be considered by both parties. A Joint or Double Research Degree may be set up for a single cohort (normally at least 3 students) or for multiple cohorts, recruited over a number of years. The cohort size and number of recruitment rounds must be specified, and will be taken into account during the approval process, to ensure that the arrangement will be sustainable.

2.3.4 As a Joint or Double Research Degree is a collaborative undertaking with another institution, an institutional-level MoA must be agreed and signed by Southampton and the partner institution before any arrangement commences. An Individual Doctoral Agreement (IDA) is also required for each student undertaking the programme. Periods of time to be spent at each institution will be clearly specified in the MoA and/or the IDA for each student. The tuition fees payable at each institution and the funding splits (where applicable) will also be clearly specified in the MoA and/or the IDA for each student.

2.3.5 A Joint or Double Research Degree will normally be one of full-time study although part-time study could be possible in some circumstances. There may be visa implications for overseas students so this must be considered at an early stage to ensure that students are visa compliant in the countries of both institutions.

- 2.3.6 At Southampton, each Joint or Double Research Degree programme will have its own programme code. Any newly proposed research degree to be delivered at Southampton and which contains a taught element (e.g. an integrated PhD or professional doctorate) will be subject to Southampton's process of programme validation. Further guidance on this process can be found in Southampton's [Quality Handbook](#).
- 2.3.7 As stated in the Quality Assurance Agency's (QAA) [UK Quality Code for Higher Education](#), Southampton is responsible for the academic standards of any awards granted in its name, including all Joint or Double Research Degree programmes. Southampton must ensure that the standards of any Joint or Double Research Degree programme is equivalent to the standards set for other awards that it confers at the same level. As far as possible, the Joint or Double Research Degree programme should comply with Southampton's [Regulations for Research Degrees](#), the [Code of Practice for Research Degree Candidature and Supervision](#) and the [Regulations for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy awarded with a partner institution \(Joint or Double PhD\)](#) but with the recognition that exceptions to Southampton's regulatory requirements (including in the area of assessment) may need to be approved to align with the partner institution's requirements. In order to satisfy Southampton's or the partner institution's requirements it may mean that, in certain partnerships, the academic standards that are set exceed the standards and requirements normally obtained in one of the institutions. Both Southampton and the partner institution must be prepared to compromise to reach agreement and any variations must be set out in the MoA.
- 2.3.8 **Lead Institution** - For the purposes of administering the Joint or Double Research Degree, one institution is identified as the lead institution. The lead institution is normally responsible for administering the admissions, enrolment, and other student-related processes. The lead institution will be agreed during the collaboration approval process and this institution should remain as the lead institution throughout the duration of the agreement unless there is a mutual agreement to change.

2.3.9 **Host Institution** - The institution where the student spends the majority of their candidature is known as the host institution. This may not be the same institution as the lead institution. The student's main supervisor (as referenced in paragraph 9.2 of this document) would normally be employed by the host institution.

### 3. **Education Partnership Approval**

3.1 The procedure for approval of a Joint or Double award is set out in Southampton's [Education Partnerships Policy](#). Education partnership arrangements including those for a Joint or Double Research award programme are normally approved for a maximum period of five years.

3.2 Following the approval of a Joint or Double Research Degree, the lead institution's legal department will liaise with the partner's legal department to prepare the University-level MoA. The MoA must only be signed by Southampton's President and Vice-Chancellor, or their authorised representative, and must also be signed by the authorised representative of the partner institution participating in the award. The MoA should be signed by both parties before any students are enrolled on the programme.

3.3 In addition to the MoA, each research student shall enter into an IDA. The IDA will be signed by the student, agreed by the student's Main Supervisor from the host institution and one supervisor from the partner institution and then approved by the relevant Faculty Director of the Graduate School at Southampton and the equivalent role in the partner institution. No student will be enrolled onto a Southampton Joint or Double Research Degree until the IDA is agreed and signed.

### 4. **Education Partnership Review and Renewal**

4.1 Education partnerships are reviewed every five years in order to enable Southampton to satisfy itself that the arrangements for the partnership as set out in the MoA continue to be met. Following the review and re-approval of the Joint or Double Research Degree, the MoA must be renewed. Where the MoA is in place for a period longer than five years, a review is still required to take place every five years. The requirements

for the review and renewal of Joint or Double awards are set out in the [Education Partnerships Policy](#).

## 5. **Governance and Management Structure**

### 5.1 **Joint Management Committee**

5.1.1 A Joint Management Committee (JMC) must be established to oversee the management of the Joint or Double Research Degree programme. Please go to Appendix 1 of this document for the standard JMC Terms of Reference and Membership which can be adapted as required for the specific partnership. The agreed JMC Terms of Reference and Membership should be included in the MoA.

5.1.2 The minutes from each JMC meeting must be reported to the relevant committee at each institution. For Southampton, this is the Faculty Graduate School Subcommittee of the lead Faculty.

5.1.3 Administrative support for the JMC will be provided by the lead institution. Meetings can be held in person or with the use of a videoconference platforms. The administrative secretary to the JMC is responsible for arranging the meetings, preparing, collating, and circulating the agenda and papers and for preparing and circulating the minutes.

### 5.2 **Staff Roles**

#### 5.2.1 **Collaboration Sponsor**

5.2.2 The Collaboration Sponsor is a member of academic staff in a School with appropriate experience of education partnerships. They will take the lead on the partnership approval process and ongoing partnership monitoring. They may also hold the role of Programme Lead. The collaboration sponsor is responsible for managing the proposal for a new partnership through the relevant partnership approval process, including ensuring that the correct approval documentation and process has been completed and followed. The collaboration sponsor must ensure that relevant stakeholders are consulted or informed. They are not responsible for approving the academic programme or the business plan, and so this role cannot normally be held by an Associate Dean (Education) or Associate Dean (International).

### 5.2.3 **Supervisory Team**

The supervisory team must be constituted in accordance with the requirements set out in section 9 of this document and should include at least one supervisor from the partner institution. The individual identified as the Co-ordinating Supervisor (referenced in section 9 paragraph 9.3 of this document) should act as the primary point of contact between Southampton, the partner institution, and the student.

### 5.2.4 **Professional Service Staff**

Both partners must nominate and confirm an individual, or team, with responsibility for liaising with the partner on a day-to-day basis in relation to administrative matters. At Southampton, this will be the Doctoral College (Faculty) Team.

## 6. **Admission**

6.1 The procedures for admission should be agreed by both parties and will be specified in the MoA. However, the principles that should be applied are set out in this section.

6.2 Prospective students should submit their application for the Joint or Double Research Degree programme to the lead institution who will make arrangements for the application to be considered by staff from the partner institution. The lead institution must ensure that the prospective student is aware that their application will be shared with the partner institution.

6.3 Admissions decisions will be made jointly by the partners in accordance with the regulations in force at each institution which govern acceptance to a research degree programme. Prior to acceptance onto the Joint or Double Research Degree programme, the applicant must first meet the standard minimum entry requirements agreed by both partner institutions as specified in the MoA. Southampton's regulations for the selection and admission of research students are set out in the [Code of Practice for Research Degree Candidature and Supervision](#).

6.4 The lead institution will be responsible for issuing the formal offer of a place to study and will ensure that any student participating in the Joint or Double Research Degree programme is informed about the roles of

the awarding institutions, appropriate points of contact at each institution, confirmation of the supervisory team, tuition fees, arrangements for progression, examination, and award, and about the processes for student complaints and academic appeals.

- 6.5 Should an applicant submit a complaint about an admissions decision made by one of the partners responsible for the Joint or Double Research Degree programme, the lead institution's admissions complaints policy and process should be followed. Where Southampton is the lead institution, its [Regulations Governing Complaints from Applicants](#) will be applied.

## 7. Candidature

- 7.1 Unless otherwise specified in the MoA, the minimum and maximum candidature duration shall be that specified for a *PhD – Standard Route* as specified in Southampton's [Regulations for Research Degrees](#).
- 7.2 The student must undertake a period of study at each of the partner institutions. As specified in Southampton's policy on [Research Degrees that include Periods of Off-Campus Study](#), the student must spend a minimum of 12 months at Southampton, although not necessarily over a continuous time period. As this is a Joint or Double Research Degree, it is recommended that the student spends at least 12 months at the partner institution.
- 7.3 The student and their supervisory team must agree how the programme of study is to be delivered between each of the partner institutions and attendance arrangements must be specified in the MoA and the IDA. Such agreement must consider the needs of the research project and the individual circumstances of the student.
- 7.4 The student will normally be enrolled at both partner institutions throughout their candidature unless otherwise specified in the MoA. If the student is not enrolled at both institutions, periods of separate enrolment at either of the partner institutions shall be counted as equivalent for the purpose of determining the overall duration of candidature. This must be specified in the MoA.



7.5 The University of Southampton's general regulations for [Transfer, Pause in Study, Withdrawal and Termination of Study](#) will apply unless otherwise specified in the MoA. In addition, research students in candidature for a Joint or Double Research Degree will be subject to the [Procedures for circumstances that may lead to termination of postgraduate research degree candidature](#) (unless otherwise specified). These procedures cover the following circumstances:

- termination of candidature is proposed as a result of a recommendation from a Progression Review;
- termination of candidature is proposed as a result of failure to undertake the expected responsibilities of a research student;
- termination of candidature is proposed due to lack of contact or failure to return from a period of approved pause in study;
- termination of candidature is proposed as a result of failure to submit a thesis by the end of the maximum period of candidature.

## 8. Induction

8.1 The student should receive a full induction from each partner institution. Where the student does not immediately commence their studies at Southampton, mechanisms must be in place to ensure that they are provided with Southampton's induction materials. Appendix 1 of the [Code of Practice for Research Degree Candidature and Supervision](#) provides guidelines on the information which should be provided to Southampton's students at induction.

## 9. Supervision Arrangements

9.1 Supervision arrangements should be clearly specified in the IDA. The supervisory team must be chosen to provide adequate academic expertise. The composition of the supervisory team should comply with the criteria as set out in Southampton's [Regulations for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy awarded with a partner institution \(Joint or Double PhD\)](#) and must include the roles of Main Supervisor and Co-ordinating Supervisor (referenced in section 9, paragraphs 9.2 and 9.3 of this Framework). The supervisory team for students in candidature for a Joint

or Double PhD Research Degree must consist of at least one supervisor from each institution. The supervisory team may include other supervisors, internal or external to the partner institutions, to provide additional support and the team should normally include at least one additional member from the institution at which the student is physically located at the time. Appointments to the supervisory team must satisfy the academic criteria of both institutions and be approved by the normal academic route in both institutions.

- 9.2 The **Main Supervisor** is responsible for the supervision of the design and progress of the student's research project and for providing them with academic advice. The Main Supervisor must be employed by the host institution and must have an employment contract valid for at least the typical period of doctoral candidature.
- 9.3 The **Co-ordinating Supervisor** is responsible for ensuring that the administrative processes for the student are completed in a timely manner throughout their candidature. The role of Co-ordinating Supervisor will typically be undertaken by the Main Supervisor. If the individual undertaking the role of Co-ordinating Supervisor is not the Main Supervisor, this individual must also be employed by the host institution.
- 9.4 The responsibilities of the supervisory team and of the student are set down in Southampton's [Code of Practice for Research Degree Candidature and Supervision](#).
- 9.5 The supervisory team is required to maintain regular contact with the student in accordance with the arrangements established at the outset of the student's candidature. The frequency of meetings will depend upon the stage and nature of the research and the particular needs of the student but it is expected that these meetings should take place at least once a month, and more frequently at the start of candidature. It is good practice to take and share notes of supervisory meetings so that key discussion points and actions (including those resulting from the identification of problems or issues) are recorded. At Southampton this should be recorded in PGR Manager (as referenced in section 11, paragraph 11.3 of this Framework). A joint meeting between the full

supervisory team and the student must take place at least once every three months. The meetings can take place in person or held virtually using a suitable platform.

- 9.6 The supervisory team will consult regularly with each other regarding the progress of the student's research project and raise any issues with the appropriate authority/Professional Service.
- 9.7 The supervisory team is collectively responsible for ensuring that both partner institutions are immediately notified if a supervisor is likely to be unavailable to supervise for a substantial period (normally one month or more). The supervisory team, in consultation, with the student, should then collectively assist the partners to designate a temporary or permanent replacement, and in making handover arrangements.
- 9.8 A request for a change of supervisor can come from a member of the supervisory team or from the student and consultation between all parties should occur at an early stage to identify a replacement. Changes to any member of the supervisory team must be approved by both partner institutions and a record must be kept of the reason for the change. Suitable handover arrangements must be implemented and the new supervisory relationship monitored by the partners. If there is a dispute between the institutions over changes to the supervisory team, the lead institution would make the final decision.

## 10. **Research and Transferable Skills Training**

- 10.1 The supervisory team must assess a student's personal and professional developmental needs, including transferrable skills, within three months of their entry to the Joint or Double Research Degree programme. At Southampton, this process is known as the **Academic Needs Analysis** and the [Code of Practice for Research Degree Candidature and Supervision](#) provides guidance on the specific matters that should be considered. Once the student's training needs have been identified these should be clearly set out in writing. It should be agreed where and when any training will take place (i.e. at Southampton or at the partner institution), and, if relevant, when training is to be assessed.

10.2 The student must have access to a suitable programme of research skills and transferable skills training. A range of mechanisms, sufficiently flexible to address individual needs, should be available to support the student's learning. The training programme should support the student's research, comply with any funding requirements, and help the student to prepare for their subsequent career. The IDA must specify clearly both of the institutions expectations and it should be noted that, at Southampton, a student will not be confirmed in doctoral candidature following the Second Progression Review (referenced in section 11 of this Framework) should any mandatory training requirements remain unfulfilled.

## 11. Progression Monitoring and Review

11.1 Arrangements for progression monitoring and review must be agreed by both partner institutions and detailed in the MoA. In addition to regular supervisory meetings (referenced in section 9, paragraphs 9.6 and 9.7 of this Framework), a student on a Joint or Double Research Degree programme is required to undertake formal progression reviews at fixed points during the course of their candidature. It is the responsibility of each institution, through the supervisory team, to ensure that a student's progress is appropriately monitored and supported and that any issues or problems are promptly identified and documented in order that appropriate action to rectify such concerns can be agreed and implemented.

11.2 Southampton's requirements are that three formally assessed progression reviews, each including a *viva voce*, must take place as specified in the [Regulations for Research Degrees](#) and [Code of Practice for Research Degree Candidature and Supervision](#). Responsibility for the review and approval of progression review outcomes rests with both partner institutions.

11.3 At Southampton, PGR Manager must be used to record all supervision and progression review meetings. External supervisors must be registered as a Southampton Staff Visitor and be assigned a unique Southampton ID so they can access the system.

11.4 Should a student's progress on a Joint or Double Research Degree programme prove unsatisfactory, consultation between the partner institutions may result in a recommendation for termination of candidature. Such recommendations must be approved by both institutions, following their normal procedures for termination of candidature. In exceptional circumstances, and if permitted by the conditions specified in the MoA, provision may be made for a student to transfer their candidature to the degree of Master of Philosophy (MPhil) at the University of Southampton or to an appropriate research degree at the partner institution.

## 12. **Academic Responsibility and Conduct**

- 12.1 The education partnership approval process (referenced in section 3 of this Framework) must determine which institution's regulations and procedures should be followed for investigating a suspected breach of academic responsibility and conduct. Southampton will only agree to using a partner institution's regulations on academic responsibility and conduct if it is satisfied that the partner's regulations and procedures meet or exceed Southampton's expectations. Details of the regulations and procedures to be used must be specified in the MoA.
- 12.2 Where it is agreed that Southampton's regulations and procedures will be used, the [Regulations Governing Academic Responsibility and Conduct](#) will apply to all students on the Joint or Double Research Degree programme. Students can obtain free, independent, and confidential advice on the academic responsibility and conduct regulations and procedures from Southampton's [Students' Union Advice Centre](#).
- 12.3 Each institution should keep the other partner fully informed of any suspected breach of academic responsibility and conduct and any proposed penalty. Where the proposed penalty will impact on the student's continued enrolment or on their eligibility for the final award, both partners must be involved in the final decision.

## 13. **Special Consideration**

- 13.1 The collaboration approval process (as defined in section 3 of this Framework) must determine which institution's regulations and procedures should be followed when reviewing a student's request for special consideration due to extenuating circumstances. Southampton will only agree to using a partner institution's special considerations regulations if it is satisfied that the partner's regulations and procedures are equivalent to Southampton's. Details of the regulations and procedures to be used must be specified in the MoA.
- 13.2 Where it is agreed that Southampton's regulations and procedures will be used, the [Regulations Governing Special Consideration and Pause in Study for Postgraduate Research Degree Students](#) will apply to all students on the Joint or Double PhD programme. Students can obtain free, independent, and confidential advice about making a request for special consideration from Southampton's [Students' Union Advice Centre](#).
- 13.3 Each institution must notify the other partner of any request for special consideration and both partners must be involved in the final decision. The other partner must also be provided with a copy of the student's submission (maintaining confidentiality of the circumstances presented).

## 14. **Nominal Registration (Writing Up)**

- 14.1 Nominal registration is a process that must be requested by the student and supported by the Main Supervisor. Periods of nominal registration count towards the maximum period of candidature. Southampton's criteria for approving a request for nominal registration are set out in [Regulations for Research Degrees](#) and will apply unless otherwise stated in the MoA. As stated in Southampton's [Regulations for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy awarded with a partner institution \(Joint or Double PhD\)](#), if there is no provision for transfer to nominal registration, the student must remain in supervised candidature until the thesis is submitted for examination.

## 15. **Pause in Study**

- 15.1 A student may request a pause in study due to extenuating circumstances or for situations such as attendance at a fixed-term work placement that supports the research degree or short and limited time employment commitments (where an employer requires more time than usual to be dedicated to employment). The maximum pause in study period allowed must be stipulated in the MoA and will normally be in accordance with Southampton's general regulations for [Transfer, Pause in Study, Withdrawal and Termination of Study](#).
- 15.2 Each institution must notify the other partner of any request for a student to pause their studies and both partners must be involved in the final decision. The other partner must also be provided with a copy of the student's request (maintaining confidentiality of the circumstances presented).
- 16. Extension of Candidature**
- 16.1 The minimum and maximum periods of candidature must be strictly adhered to (referenced in section 7, paragraph 7.1 of this Framework). An extension to candidature will only be permitted where extenuating circumstances have been demonstrated by the student and reviewed and approved through the Special Considerations process (referenced in section 13 of this Framework).
- 17. Thesis Submission**
- 17.1 The procedure to be followed by a student when giving notice of intention to submit their thesis for examination will be specified in the MoA. After completion of the required period of candidature as defined in the MoA, the thesis shall be submitted to the host institution unless otherwise specified in the MoA.
- 17.2 The decision to submit the thesis must be the student's own. The student should take note of supervision advice but this advice should not be taken as an indication that the final thesis will fulfil the requirements of the examiners.
- 17.3 The standard length and format of the thesis must be agreed by the partner institutions and will be specified in the MoA, taking due regard

of Southampton's requirements as specified in its [Regulations for Research Degrees](#).

17.4 The student will be required to write their thesis in English unless approval for it to be written in a language other than English has been given by both partners and specified in the IDA.

17.5 The research student must comply with the provisions of the [Regulations for Research Degrees](#) (section 13, *Submission of Thesis*) regarding access to their thesis unless otherwise specified in the Memorandum of Agreement. Research work submitted as a thesis for a Joint or Double Research Degree should be openly available and subject neither to security classification nor to restriction on access unless an embargo period has been approved.

## 18. Examination

18.1 A single examination (*viva voce*) will be conducted simultaneously by both institutions as set out in the Southampton's [Regulations for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy awarded with a partner institution \(Joint or Double PhD\)](#). The partner institution may require a public defence of the thesis and, if this is required, this must be part of the examination process. The examination will normally be held at the host institution and responsibility for its scheduling and arrangements rests with the host institution. If the examination is to be held via videoconference the host institution is responsible for making the arrangements. The requirements for the examination will be clearly set out in the MoA and the IDA.

18.2 As stated in Southampton's [Code of Practice for Research Degree Candidature and Supervision](#), videoconference (or other suitable technologically-based communication) arrangements can be made for the conduct of the *viva voce*, provided all parties agree to these arrangements and all necessary safeguards are in place to facilitate the smooth running of the examination. Further information can be found in the guidance document *Conducting a viva voce as a videoconference* in Southampton's [Quality Handbook](#).



- 18.3 The composition of the examining team will be agreed and approved by both institutions and specified in the MoA. As stated in Southampton's [Regulations for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy awarded with a partner institution \(Joint or Double PhD\)](#) the following principles must be applied:
- No member of the supervisory team may be appointed as an examiner; nor may they take part in the judgement of the thesis under consideration in any other way.
  - The examining team must consist of at least three examiners: an internal examiner from each of the partner institutions, and an external examiner who is independent of Southampton and the partner institution.
  - The examining team may include additional members should this be considered necessary.

- 18.4 The *viva voce* must be chaired by an Independent Chair appointed by the host institution. The role of Independent Chair should be filled by an academic member of staff who is employed by either Southampton or the partner institution and who has substantial experience of supervising and examining research students. The Independent Chair is not provided with a copy of the thesis and is not part of the examining team. The role of the Independent Chair is to ensure that:
- the examination is conducted according to the arrangements as detailed in the MoA;
  - the research student is treated fairly and appropriately;
  - the process was appropriate and the outcome of the examination represents fairly the views of the examiners.

Following the *viva voce*, the Independent Chair will provide a report to the Faculty Director of the Graduate School and to the equivalent role at the partner institution. Should there be any reported concerns, the Faculty Director of the Graduate School and the equivalent role at the partner institution should take steps to engage the examiners in discussion with a view to satisfactorily resolving the matter. A record of all discussions should be made and retained with the examination documentation.

- 18.5 External examiners should be independent to both institutions and the lead institution's criteria for appointing external examiners should be followed. Where Southampton is the lead institution, or where the lead institution does not normally use external examiners, Southampton's criteria for appointing external examiners for research degrees should be used as set out in its [Code of Practice for Research Degree Candidature and Supervision](#). Further guidance on the appointment of external examiners for research degrees is available in Southampton's [Quality Handbook](#).
- 18.6 Where the programme involves an overseas partner, both institutions should consider what provisions need to be in place for the examination process to address:
- the necessary language skills of internal and external examiners;
  - the examining team's experience and understanding of the UK and the partner's country higher education systems.
- 18.7 The outcome of the examination will be as specified in Southampton's [Regulations for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy awarded with a partner institution \(Joint or Double PhD\)](#) unless otherwise specified in the MoA. The examiners' recommendation for award must be approved by the relevant academic authorities at both institutions. For Southampton, the award will be made by Senate on the recommendation of the Faculty Education and Student Experience Subcommittee.

## 19. **Award Certificates and Graduation**

### 19.1 **Award Certificate and Diploma Supplement**

#### 19.1.1 **Joint Research Degree**

A student who successfully completes the Joint Research Degree programme will be awarded a single certificate bearing the crests of each partner institution to indicate that the degree has been jointly awarded by Southampton and the partner. The degree certificate and diploma supplement (where applicable) will be issued by the lead institution.

19.1.2 The wording of the award certificate (and diploma supplement where applicable) must be agreed during the collaboration approval process. The format and design of the certificate template which will be used when issuing a Joint Research Degree award must be approved by Southampton's Head of Exams and Awards, who may seek approval from the Academic Registrar before the final template is confirmed. A copy of the Joint Research Degree award certificate template should be included in the MoA. In addition, a copy of the certificate awarded to each student should be lodged with Southampton's Exams and Awards team.

19.1.3 A Joint Research Degree certificate indicating an award from Southampton should include as a minimum:

- The University's Crest
- The University's Name
- The name of the award recipient (the student)
- An indication of where the award recipient has studied
- The name of the award
- The date of the award
- The signature of Southampton's President and Vice-Chancellor

19.1.4 The certificate should include security features to prevent tampering or counterfeiting. For certificates issued by Southampton, this will include an embedded hologram, particular printing features and a watermark. Joint award certificates printed and issued by the partner institution may include different security measures which must be approved by Southampton as part of the collaboration approval process and detailed in the MoA.

#### 19.1.5 **Double Research Degree**

A student who successfully completes the Double Research Degree programme will be awarded a certificate from each partner institution. Each partner is responsible for issuing its own award certificate and diploma supplement (if applicable). Each partner must include a statement on the award certificate and/or diploma supplement

confirming the Double Award and stating the partner institution involved.

## 19.2 **Graduation**

### 19.2.1 **Joint Research Degree**

Students will normally attend a graduation ceremony held at the lead institution but can apply to attend graduation at the host institution.

### 19.2.2 **Double Research Degree**

Students can attend the graduation ceremony at both of the partner institutions.

## 20. **Academic Appeals**

20.1 The education partnership approval process (as defined in section 3 of this Framework) must determine which institution's regulations and procedures should be followed when reviewing a student's academic appeal submission. Southampton will only agree to use a partner institution's academic appeals regulations if it is satisfied that the partner's regulations and procedures are equivalent to Southampton's. Details of the regulations and procedures to be used must be detailed in the MoA.

20.2 Where it is agreed that Southampton's regulations and procedures apply, the [Regulations Governing Academic Appeals by Students](#) will apply to all students on the Joint or Double PhD programme. Students can obtain free, independent, and confidential advice about submitting an academic appeal from Southampton's [Students' Union Advice Centre](#).

20.3 The institution responsible for administering the academic appeals procedure must inform the partner institution of all academic appeal submissions. The other partner must provide all information that is required to ensure due consideration can be given to the academic appeal.

20.4 The panel constituted to consider an appeal will normally include at least one representative from each institution. Both partners must approve the final outcome of the appeal before the student is notified of the decision.

- 20.5 As a Southampton student, dissatisfied appellants who have exhausted the agreed academic appeals procedures have recourse to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) in England even if the appeal has been considered by an overseas partner institution. In such instances, Southampton will issue a Completion of Procedures letter to the student which will enable them to submit a complaint to the OIA should they so wish. If the institution considering the academic appeal is a member of the OIA scheme, e.g. is another UK institution, it is that institution's responsibility to issue the Completion of Procedures letter. Each partner shall be expected to co-operate fully with the OIA's processes.
- 20.6 Mechanisms must be in place to ensure students and supervisors are made aware of the procedures and processes for addressing academic appeals.

## 21. **Student Complaints**

- 21.1 Any non-academic student complaints (e.g. estates issues, facilities, treatment by partner staff not directly related to the programme) should follow the complaints regulations and procedures of the partner institution providing the service against which the complaint is made. Where such complaints are made with respect to services provided by Southampton, its [Regulations Governing Student Complaints](#) will apply.
- 21.2 The education partnership approval process (referenced in section 3 of this Framework) must determine which institution's regulations and procedures should be followed when reviewing a student complaint that is related to the Joint or Double Research Degree programme. Southampton will only agree to using a partner institution's student complaints regulations and procedures if it is satisfied that the partner's regulations and procedures are equivalent to Southampton's. Details of the regulations and procedures to be used must be detailed in the MoA.
- 21.3 Where the MoA sets down that Southampton's regulations and procedures will be used, the [Regulations Governing Student Complaints](#) will apply to research students on the Joint or Double PhD programme. Students can obtain free, independent, and confidential advice about

submitting a complaint from Southampton's [Students' Union Advice Centre](#).

- 21.4 The institution responsible for administering the student complaints procedure must inform the partner of all student complaint submissions which concern the Joint or Double Research Degree programme. The other partner must provide all information that is required to ensure due consideration can be given to the student complaint.
- 21.5 The panel constituted to consider a complaint will normally include at least one representative from each institution. Both partners must approve the final outcome of the complaint before the student is notified of the decision.
- 21.6 As a Southampton student, dissatisfied complainants who have exhausted the procedures of the lead institution have recourse to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) in England even if the complaint has been considered by an overseas partner institution. In such instances, Southampton will issue a Completion of Procedures letter to the student which would enable them to submit a complaint to the OIA should they so wish. If the lead institution is a member of the OIA scheme, e.g. is another UK institution, it is that institution's responsibility to issue the Completion of Procedures letter. Each partner shall be expected to co-operate fully with the OIA's processes.
- 21.7 Mechanisms must be in place to ensure students and supervisors are made aware of the procedures and processes for addressing student complaints or grievances.

## 22. **Student Discipline**

- 22.1 Students will be subject to the discipline regulations of the institution at which they are physically located at the time of the suspected offence. Each institution will inform the other if a student is subject to misconduct/disciplinary procedures and will advise the outcome to the partner institution. When based at Southampton, students will be subject to the [Regulations Governing Student Discipline](#).
- 22.2 Where the circumstances of the case may result in the termination of the student's candidature, all efforts should be made to consult with the

partner institution prior to any decision being taken. The partner will be expected to provide any information required and to co-operate fully to ensure due consideration of any student discipline matter.

## **23. Quality Assurance Processes**

### **23.1 External Review**

23.1.1 The partner institution will assist Southampton with any reviews required by external agencies such as the Office for Students (OfS). Likewise, Southampton will assist the partner institution with any reviews required by its external agencies.

### **23.2 Partner Review**

23.2.1 Please go to section 4 of this Framework.

### **23.3 Annual Monitoring**

23.3.1 Annual monitoring of the programme will follow Southampton's procedures as stated in its [Quality Handbook](#). In addition to the standard reporting requirements in place at Southampton, completed reports should also be submitted to the JMC alongside any annual monitoring reports completed by the partner institution.

### **23.4 Education Partnership Annual Reports**

23.4.1 In addition to the annual monitoring of postgraduate research degree provision, Southampton requires the completion of an Education Partnership Annual Report for each Joint or Double Research Degree arrangement. Southampton's Collaboration Sponsor is responsible for completing the Education Partnership Annual Report using the template published in Southampton's [Quality Handbook](#). The purpose of this report is to confirm the overall health of the partnership by evaluating the partner's ability to manage the academic standards and quality of learning opportunities of provision leading to the Joint or Double Research Degree award.

23.4.2 The completed Education Partnership Annual Report should be submitted to the Faculty Graduate School Subcommittee for consideration. Following Faculty approval, each Education Partnership Annual Report will be reviewed by the Education Partnerships

Subcommittee on behalf of the Education and Student Experience Committee.

- 23.4.3 Southampton's Collaboration Sponsor should liaise with their counterpart at the partner on the completion of Southampton's Education Partnership Annual Report. Likewise Southampton must contribute as required to the partner's monitoring and reporting mechanisms. Alternatively the partner institution may wish to use Southampton's Education Partnership Annual Report for their monitoring processes.

## 24. **Student Feedback**

- 24.1 Students in candidature for a Joint or Double Research Degree award must have the opportunity to contribute to all Faculty and institution-level student feedback mechanisms at each institution.

## 25. **Learning Resources**

- 25.1 Each institution is responsible for providing appropriate learning resources, facilities, and equipment to support students' research when the student is based at that institution. The minimum requirement is set out in Southampton [Code of Practice for Research Degree Candidature and Supervision](#).

## 26. **Student Support**

- 26.1 Students should have access to each partner's welfare and support services whilst based at that institution. Mechanisms should be in place to ensure students are aware of the facilities and services available to them at each partner institution.

## 27. **Published Information and Marketing**

- 27.1 Southampton is responsible for ensuring that it has effective control over the accuracy of all public information, publicity, and promotional activity regarding its Joint or Double Research Degree programmes.
- 27.2 All publicity and promotional materials must be agreed in writing by the institutions in advance of publication. Neither institution may use the



other institution’s logos, marks, or other Intellectual Property in relation to any publicity and promotional materials without the prior written consent of that other institution. The JMC should have oversight of all published information and marketing material for the Joint or Double PhD programme.

27.3 The Faculty should check publicity and promotional materials on a regular basis, including spot checks of any websites. The Faculty must keep a record of when approval and any checks have been carried out. Southampton’s Education Partnership Annual Report Form requires confirmation of this.

27.4 Information published by the partner about the nature of the Joint or Double Research Degree programme should:

- be approved by the Faculty, on behalf of the institution;
- define clearly the nature of the collaborative arrangement; and
- outline the respective responsibilities of the parties involved.

<b>Document Information</b>	
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# APPENDIX 1

## JOINT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (JMC) TERMS OF REFERENCE

### **Terms of Reference**

1. To monitor and identify any trends in the progress of research students on the Joint or Double Research Degree programme;
2. To identify any generic issues relating to the Joint or Double Research Degree programme and report these to the relevant committees at each institution;
3. To oversee the academic administration of the Joint or Double Research Degree programme including admissions, examinations, and graduation as well as the assignment of supervisors and advisors, and to liaise and consult with the relevant administrative authorities in each institution as required;
4. To ensure, at the appropriate time, that the relevant quality assurance procedures for reviewing collaborative arrangements in place for the Joint or Double Research Degree are initiated and complied with throughout the lifetime of the arrangement;
5. To ensure that the published information and marketing material for the Joint or Double Research Degree arrangement is accurate;
6. To share relevant institutional level developments; and other matters of common interest that may impact upon the partnership.

### **Membership**

A minimum of two members from each institution involved in the Joint or Double Research Degree programme, including appropriate representation from Professional Services/Administrative staff from each institution. The members will be appointed by the relevant committee for each institution.

There will always be an equal number of members from each institution and the JMC will appoint its own Chair from within the membership.

Secretarial support will be provided by the lead institution.

**Quorum**

The JMC will be quorate with at least one representative from each institution present.

**Frequency and Timing**

The JMC will normally meet at least twice per annum. The meetings can take place via video conferencing if appropriate.

**Reporting Requirements**

The minutes from each JMC meeting must be reported to the relevant committee at each institution. For Southampton, this is the Faculty Graduate School Subcommittee.