

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Protocol for Handling RDP Exception Requests

The [Study Regulations for Research Degree Programmes](#), regulation 4 outlines the minimum, normal and maximum periods of study for a student completing a Research Degree Programme (RDP). These periods exclude approved temporary withdrawal periods, in line with regulation 5.

In exceptional circumstances, students/Schools may request a concession to the regulations to seek an extended period of temporary withdrawal, or an extended registration period and thesis submission date by completing the appropriate RDP Exception Request form:

- i. RDP Exception Request - Temporary Withdrawal.
- ii. RDP Exception Request - Registration and Thesis Submission.

The following describes current practice for handling RDP Exception Requests:

1. Schools submit requests by email to gar@qub.ac.uk, with the relevant RDP Exception Request form attached. Requests typically include some personal and/or sensitive information in relation to the student's case, but should not include medical evidence of the extenuating circumstance as this will have been reviewed at School-level.
2. The Chair of the Research and Postgraduate Committee (or nominee) considers requests for concessions to the Study Regulations for RDPs. Academic Affairs sends an email to the Chair summarising the request (which does not include personal/sensitive details but indicates, for example, that the student has cited personal or health issues), and the RDP Exception Request form.
3. The Chair replies to Academic Affairs with a decision.
4. Academic Affairs sends an email to notify the School of the Chair's decision which normally includes the summary request from Academic Affairs (but not any attachments) back to the School contacts included in the original email.

This response email is copied to the clerical support officer for PGR matters in Academic Affairs in order to record the concession on the relevant database for later report to the Research and Postgraduate Committee; and to thesis@qub.ac.uk for Student Registry records.

5. The email and relevant password protected database outlined under 4 above, and any pertinent attachments are stored on the Academic Affairs' secure network and destroyed at the end of the academic year in which the concession was considered +10 years. This allows these records to inform decision-making during the student's registration at Queen's.
6. Concessions are reported to the next meeting of the Research and Postgraduate Committee without student identifiers, or personal/sensitive details leading to the request.