

**RESEARCH STUDENT SUPPORT STRUCTURE:
Overview of Research Student Support Structure for Covid-19 Impact**

Please note: Changes have been made in response to student and staff feedback to time and funding extension processes. Please read the guidance before completing your Stage 6 funding extension application.

From the start of lockdown, the University's approach has been to support students based on the impact that the pandemic has had on their research project or on their ability to progress their research project which balances the individual situation with the desire to support as many students as possible, and the need to consider pragmatic approaches to mitigating disruption to research projects. This applies regardless of a student's funding source, though some funding bodies have also provided support for extended periods of stipend payments.

The support structure for research students includes:

- Student-Supervisor Meetings

Students should be discussing their research plan and progress, level of impact of Covid-19 and proposed mitigations with their supervisory team on an ongoing basis, and recorded in the Research Student Lifecycle. Extension requests should be discussed with your supervisor where possible, who can provide advice on adapting your research, and help you explore options to manage your research and your personal circumstances (e.g. taking a temporary Leave of Absence, or if funding and visa conditions allow you to switch to part-time study), or connect you with support and advice relating to wellbeing, disability support, research skills, financial challenges and advice about funding terms and conditions. This is also a space to discuss any health or safety concerns relating to the way your research is undertaken. This includes recording any additional impacts, such as inability to access Citrix for an extended period of time.

- Annual Progress Review (APR)

APR meetings are also an excellent opportunity to reflect on the level of impact of Covid-19 on students' progress, and the appropriate proposed mitigations and updates to their research plan. APR panels are aware that this has been a challenging year for PGR students and will take this into account when assessing progress to ensure that this continues to be a supportive process for students.

- Extensions to study time and fee free period

The University has put in place support for all students registered at some point in the 2019-20 academic year (excluding new students starting a degree programme after 23 March 2020), on any registration status, to allow additional time without fees (a fee free period (FFP)). This is tiered support depending on how much additional time is needed and can only be requested when students are approaching the end of your 'normal' period of studies. Currently this is open to students who are due to complete their 'normal' period of studies or funded period on or before **31 March 2023**.

Students applying for funded extensions (stipend only) through the Stage 6 application process will have their time extension considered as part of this process.

Students who are not applying for a funded extension may request a FFP as follows:

- **FFP1:** up to a 3 month time extension (or 6 months for part-time students) with no additional fees. Students do not need to make a case for the FFP1, but need to make their School Postgraduate Research Committee (via their School Office) aware that they need it, and the School will request it is added to their student record. If you are applying for a funding extension, your School will be made aware of the need for a time extension/ fee free period by the Postgraduate Awards team.
- **FFP2:** up to a further 3 month time extension (or 6 months for part-time students) with no additional fees. To request FFP2, students must outline a case for impact due to Covid-19. The relevant form to complete can be obtained by contacting the School Office. If you are completing an application for a funding extension, this information will be shared with your School to endorse your request for additional time, and will be used by the Quality Assurance and Regulations team to consider your concession to maximum study time. If your request is endorsed by the School Postgraduate Research Committee (SPRC), it is then considered by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for approval.

See **Appendix 1** for an overview of the eligibility and process for students at different stages of research degree.

The University regulations establish a maximum cumulative period of temporary withdrawals (Leaves of Absence) of 2 years. Leaves of Absence (LOA) that were taken due to Covid-19 impact between March and November 2020 do not contribute to this maximum. Where a student now takes a LOA due to ongoing Covid-19 impact, and subsequently reaches the 2 year LOA maximum, it is likely that a concession will be approved following the normal process for extensions to LOA period, unless there are specific circumstances relating to the research project.

- **Stipend Extensions**

Stage 6 funding support applies to students registered on a PhD (or other agreed degree pathway, e.g. EngD) whose funded period (i.e. within the period agreed by your funding body to provide you with funding) or the [‘normal’ study period](#) of full-time or part-time research for those without funding is due to end **on or before 31 March 2023**. The Guidance below will help students to determine if they are eligible to be considered under Stage 6. The University continues to seek additional funding to support research students whose research has been impacted by Covid-19 and cannot be sufficiently adapted to move to writing up at the end of the standard funded timeframe / normal period of studies.

Approval of additional registration time does not mean that additional stipend funding has been approved, and approval of a stipend extension does not mean that additional time without fees has been agreed.

If you are not able to gain a stipend extension for the period of time extension agreed, you may wish to shorten your time extension period, which should be discussed with your Supervisor and your School Postgraduate Office informed.

QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY BELFAST
Stage 6 Funding Extension Guidance

This Guidance outlines who is eligible and how to apply for Stage 6 Stipend Funding Extensions at Queen's University Belfast for research students impacted by Covid-19.

- A. Who can apply for Stage 6 Funding Extensions**
- B. Criteria to Prioritise Allocation of Funding**
- C. Queries**
- D. Application Procedure**
- E. Who will be making Decisions**
- F. Timeline for Decision-making for Stage 6 Funding**
- G. Complaints or Appeals**
- H. How we will protect your information**

To date, the following processes have taken place:

Funding Body	Who was eligible	Who was responsible
UKRI Stage 1	UKRI funded students due to complete funding by 31 March 2021	DTP / CDT
DfE Stage 1 & 2	DfE-funded students due to complete funding by 31 March 2021	PG Awards
Santander Hardship Funds for PGR Students	Any self-funded student / student funded by body that did not offer extension with funding or normal period of study due to end between 1 March 2020 and 31 March 2021	Scholarship Panel
Queen's Stage 3 (including UKRI Stage 2 and DfE Stage 3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UKRI-funded students due to complete funding by 30 September 2021, or have needs priority considerations DfE-funded students due to complete funding by 30 September 2021 Students funded by other funding bodies where funding extension was not granted, due to complete funding by 30 September 2021 Self-funded students due to complete normal period of studies by 30 September 2021 	Institutional Panel
Queen's Stage 4	<p>DfE-funded students due to complete funding by 31 March 2022</p> <p>Students funded by other funding bodies where funding extension was not granted, due to complete funding by 31 March 2022</p> <p>Self-funded students due to complete normal period of studies by 31 March 2022</p> <p>Students part of the ESPRC or NINE Doctoral Training Partnerships due to complete funding by 31 March 2022. Other Research Council (UKRI) DTP students should speak to their DTP co-ordinator.</p>	Institutional Panel
Queen's Stage 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DfE-funded students due to complete funding by 30 September 2022 Students funded by other funding bodies where funding extension was not granted, due to complete funding by 30 September 2022 Self-funded students due to complete normal period of studies by 30 September 2022 <p>Students part of the ESPRC or NINE Doctoral Training Partnerships due to complete funding by 30 September 2022. Other Research Council (UKRI) DTP students should speak to their DTP co-ordinator.</p>	Institutional Panel

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A. Who should apply for Stage 6 Funding Extensions?

Research students who can demonstrate the criteria set out in Section B and who meet the following eligibility:

- Full or Part-time PhD or EngD students who are due to complete their 'normal' period of studies or have a funding end date before **31 March 2023** who are not on Thesis Only status.
- Full or part-time PhD or EngD students who were registered in the 2019-20 academic year up to 23 March 2020 (excluding new students starting a research degree programme after 23 March 2020) and have had approved leave of absence(s) or other programme changes (e.g. change to part-time study), you should apply for funding in Stage 6 if your **original** (not revised) funding end date, or if self-funded your normal period of studies would have been due to end on or before 31 March 2023.
- Stage 6 is open to all PhD/EngD students who satisfy the criteria above except for those who are part of a DTP or CDT who should contact the DTP or CDT Administrator (includes Northern Bridge DTP, PIADS CDT, QUADRAT DTP). EPSRC DTP or NINE DTP students please refer below).
- EPSRC DTP or NINE DTP students should ensure they submit an application for funding extension through the Queen's Stage 6 process provided they satisfy the criteria.
- **If you submitted an application for a funding extension as part of the Stage 5 process, and you were told that you were ineligible due to your funding end date, or normal period of studies if self-funded, ending after 30 September 2022 please submit a new application and/or updated research plan for Stage 6 if your current funding end date is on or before 31 March 2023 and you satisfy the criteria.**

All students, including research students and those on Thesis Only status, may also apply to the [University's student support or hardship funds](#), which provide financial support for students experiencing financial difficulties. Students can apply for this support at any time, and can apply multiple times. For support in making an application, contact Advice SU (studentadvice@qub.ac.uk).

Students who are not eligible to apply for Stage 6 Funding Extensions:

- Students who started a PhD or EngD research degree programme on 23 March 2020 or later are not eligible for consideration in Stage 6. **An update is expected in October 2022.**
- Students not registered on a PhD or EngD in the 2019-20 academic year.
- Students who have moved to Thesis Only status or Thesis Resubmit.
- Students who received (or receive at any point in the future) a funding extension from their funding body. If you do not have an outcome from your funding body for their funding extension process, you must make the PG Awards team aware when you have an

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outcome. Your application may be deemed ineligible at that point, even if the amount awarded by Queen's was higher than the amount by your funding body. Case by case consideration will be given to students who make successful Needs Priority cases whose funding body has not taken these factors into account.

If you are funded by more than one funding body, please contact the PG Awards team and a determination of your eligibility will be made on the basis of the criteria set out by your funding body.

Extension stipend / financial support cannot exceed the standard level of support established by UKRI / DfE (i.e. this funding cannot support 'top ups' or higher stipend payments), and will not include extension of Research Training and Support Grants.

The link to the Application Form and process for applications is set out under **Section D Application Procedure**.

B. Criteria to Prioritise Allocation of Funding

To maximize the number of students able to be supported with a limited resource, it is expected that the majority of students who make a successful case for impact due to Covid-19 will be allocated a maximum of 3 months' stipend extension, and that stipend extensions beyond 3 months will be in very exceptional cases related to Needs Priority factors (see section B below). Applicants should be outlining time needed to complete research after putting in place mitigations in their research plan.

Allocation of additional stipend / funding support will be based on:

- the need for an extension has resulted from the Covid-19 disruption, either because the disruption has affected the project directly or the student's ability to progress the project¹,
and
- mitigation is not possible or cannot be sufficient to allow a student to complete their studies to the required standard in the study period due to the disruption.

As the funding available is limited, applications will be assessed in relation to what is ***essential in order to successfully complete your research prior to going thesis only or submitting your thesis***. Please ensure your research plan indicates whether you intend to be in a position to submit your thesis at the end of the requested extended period.

¹ This reference includes difficulties due to additional factors such as disability, long-term condition, neurodivergence, caring responsibilities.

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Impact of Covid-19 on your research	<p>Must outline how impacts have contributed to very significant delays, multiple impacts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant well-being impacts (physical or mental health, bereavement); • Significant and/or sole carer with full-time caring responsibilities (e.g. children or vulnerable groups); • Specific impacts on research/data gathering/fieldwork due to exceptional elements (e.g. research is seasonal or reliant on specific event or activity which did not happen in 2020) • Indicate dates of disruption
Identification of adaptations and opportunities to mitigate impact of delays	<p>Demonstrate that mitigation / adaptation not possible or sufficient to allow studies to be completed to the required standard</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attempts to mitigate impact have been identified and implemented • Focus on quality of outcome, not quantity • Student demonstrates that they understand that additional funding request is not to replace 'time lost', but to complete research to a doctoral standard. • Reasons for mitigations not being sufficient demonstrate exceptional occurrences / elements of their research project OR explanation is related to needs-priority (opportunity to provide further information in Needs Priority Form)
Evidence of additional time requested as relates to revised research plan and extension time requested	<p>Demonstrate that even with mitigation / adaptation, work to be undertaken cannot be completed in original study period</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Realistic and feasible plan for achieving outcomes, demonstrating use of time where further delays incurred to progress other elements of research. • Highlighting ongoing delays as opposed to those which have been resolved • Indicate when you anticipate being in a position to submit your thesis
<p>Demonstration that student has experienced additional disruptions that have made adapting research or mitigating Covid-19 impact more difficult.</p> <p>In order for this criteria to be applied, you must make a successful case through the Needs Priority process, using the Needs Priority application form (see Section D) in addition to a research impact application.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the Needs Priority Form, student outlined additional disruptions or challenges in adapting research which requires priority consideration for additional funding support; for example, disabled students, those with long-term illness, who are neurodivergent, or who have caring responsibilities. • Impact of disability, condition or caring responsibilities on inability to adapt research to mitigate impact must be demonstrated.
If all of the above criteria are demonstrated, the Institutional Assessment Panel may choose other factors or criteria to enable prioritisation of funds to those in greatest need, which may include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritise those closest to their funding end date • Duration of initial funding period • Level of stipend support throughout research degree • Some funding is aimed at students in particular disciplines

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Needs Priority Consideration

The funding extension due to CV19 is to not to cover time lost but rather fund time needed to complete research prior to thesis submission or going Thesis Only. Where possible, the University has prioritised consideration of students facing additional factors which may make adaptation of research more difficult, such as students managing disabilities, long-term illnesses, who are neurodivergent or have caring responsibilities. Guidance on how Needs Priority is defined can be found in **Appendix 2**.

Queen's students with a disability or long term condition are encouraged to register with the University's Disability Service to ensure their individual needs are assessed and relevant support recommendations are put in place for their chosen course of study and wider participation in University life – refer to <https://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/sgc/disability/>

To be considered on the basis of Needs Priority, you will need to complete the additional application form, outlined in section D. This has been kept separate from the general application, to ensure that the personal and sensitive information is only accessible to a restricted group of staff within the Graduate School and Disability Services.

A case for consideration of a funding extension on the basis of Needs Priority must be in addition to completion of an application form for a funding extension. If you completed an application form for a funding extension in a previous stage (i.e. Stage 5) but did not make a case for Needs Priority consideration, and have not moved to Thesis Only status, the Panel may consider a Needs Priority application in Stage 6. The Panel may also consider Needs Priority funding for students who have received a funding extension of 3 months or less from their funding body. This is subject to availability of funding, with the Institutional Panel decisions being guided by how to support to as many students as possible.

C. Queries

For queries about articulating the impact of Covid-19 on your research, adapting your research or mitigating delays, please ensure you have had a conversation with your Supervisor.

For queries about time extensions to your study period, please contact your School Postgraduate Office.

For questions specific to funding extensions or your funding body's terms and conditions, please contact the Postgraduate Awards team (pgawards@qub.ac.uk).

For information / support relating to managing the impact of a disability or long-term medical condition, please contact Disability Services (disability.office@qub.ac.uk).

D. Application Procedure

APPLICATION FORM

Deadline: 16 June 2022. Please ensure you have submitted your application by this date (allowing time for submission), or the Panel may not be able to consider your application.

Application Form Section 1

Student and Programme Details

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Application Form Section 2

Request for Funding Extension

To be completed by any student who meets eligibility criteria for this round of funding, who wishes to be considered for a stipend extension or funding support.

Needs Priority Form

Can be completed by any student who meets eligibility criteria for this round of funding, or students who have made previous case for funding but not Needs Priority Case, who wishes to outline additional prioritisation under the 'needs prioritisation' criteria (i.e. disability, long-term condition, neurodivergence or caring responsibilities). See Appendix 2 for guidance.

What you will need to complete your application form:

You can access a template of the application form on the website. This will give you a way to complete the answers and save them in a timeframe that works for you, and you can then copy and paste them into the application form before the deadline. Please note that the question numbering on the document may not correspond with the question numbering of the online form due to "branching" ie for the online form you will be directed to relevant questions based on answers given.

- Ensure that you have discussed your revised research plan, and how you will articulate the impact of Covid-19 on your research project, with your supervisor.
- You will need to know your month and year that you first registered for your research degree programme, the month and year that your current funding ends / normal period of studies ends, name of your funding body or sponsor, how much funding you receive annually, what your funding covers (e.g. fees, stipend or both).
- If you have had any periods of temporary withdrawal, you will need to give start and end dates (month and year) of these periods.
- You will be asked to answer two questions about impact of Covid-19 on your research and how you are mitigating the impact on your research, within 250 word maximum. It is recommended that you write these in a Word document first, and then copy them into the form. This will also ensure you have a copy of your statements.
- An updated research plan with timelines revised to reflect the amount of time you are requesting. This can be uploaded as a Word, Excel or Pdf document.
- If you are completing the Needs Priority form, you have an option of giving permission for the Panel to access your Student Support Agreement from Disability Services, or to upload any evidence that is concise and easy to understand, that may help the Panel in understanding the impact of your disability or long-term condition. You will also be asked to outline the impact of your situation or circumstances on your ability to adapt your project or put in place mitigations, within 250 word maximum. This will also ensure you have a copy of your statements. If you have indicated that you have impacts due to caring responsibilities, you will be asked to describe your caring responsibilities within 250 word maximum. It is recommended that you write these in a Word document first, and then copy them into the form.

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Step 1:	<p>Discuss your application with your supervisor, and record these discussions on Qsis Research Student Lifecycle. You will be asked to confirm that this has happened on the application form. You should use your Annual Progress Review to update the panel on your progress and research plan.</p> <p><i>Ensure that your updated Research Plan* is set out in document that can be uploaded with your application (Word, Excel or Pdf) and that the file name follows this naming convention:</i></p> <p><i>*School_Lastname_Firstname_StudentNumber</i></p>
Step 2:	<p>Review Guidance, especially eligibility and criteria. Ensure you have relevant information to complete the application, and that your files you are uploading use the appropriate file naming convention.</p>
Step 3:	<p>Complete the application form(s) as outlined above. You have an option to receive a copy of what you submit.</p> <p>School Postgraduate Research Committees will review applications to ensure consistency between research students, reasonability of case for impact and accuracy of revised research plan.</p>
Step 4:	<p>SPRCs will submit their endorsements for funding extensions to the Postgraduate Awards team, for consideration by the Institutional Assessment Panel.</p> <p>Schools may use information submitted as part of the Stage 6 extension application in supporting requests for time extensions. Where possible, we will seek to achieve agreement for time extensions as part of the funding extension process.</p> <p>If you indicate that you are part of a Doctoral Training Programme, the School will need to share your application with the relevant DTP co-ordinator within Queen's, and share the outcome in terms of time allocated with the DTP administration, who may not be based within Queen's.</p>
Step 5:	<p>An Institutional Assessment Panel, with representation across Faculties and including a member of the PG Awards and team member from Student Disability and Wellbeing, will make decisions about stipend funding extensions and funding support that can be allocated.</p> <p><u>Outcomes from the Institutional Assessment Panel may be:</u> Not eligible for consideration, Not eligible at this time, Further information required, Period of stipend extension applied for is granted, some of the period applied for is granted, stipend extension not granted or contribution to living costs granted.</p> <p>Outcomes from funding extension processes, and any time extensions agreed as part of the funding extension process, will be communicated to applicants.</p> <p>Outcomes from the funding extension process will be shared with your School. If you are part of a Doctoral Training Programme, the Postgraduate Awards team will need to share the outcome of your funding application with the DTP administration, who may not be based within Queen's</p>

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E. Who will be making Decisions

School Postgraduate Research Committee

This is an existing mechanism for considering and supporting student progress. As is normal practice, the SPRC determine if a request for a concession to maximum study time is required, and make updates to your student status / seek concessions to maximum study periods where relevant.

The SPRC will review the case for funding extensions, including your research plan and adaptations and mitigations in place, and will ensure that requests are reasonable, accurate, timely and complete. They may challenge the proposal and ask for amendments.

The SPRC must review a student's application in order for a student's application to be considered by the Institutional Assessment Panel for funding.

Institutional Assessment Panel

This has been established for the purpose of overseeing allocation of funding allocated to support research students. It is chaired by the Dean of Postgraduate Strategy, with one representative per Faculty as nominated by the Faculty Dean for Graduate Studies / Research, representation from Graduate School, Student Disability and Wellbeing services. The Institutional Assessment Panel will assess whether a student requiring additional study time that is agreed by SPRC is eligible for funding available, and allocate funding based on meeting criteria and other priority considerations. It will also report on research student impacts to other University bodies and Funders.

Chair of Education Committee (Quality and Standards) or Nominee

The Chair of the Education Committee (Quality and Standards), or nominee, will consider applications for additional time beyond the initial FFP1 period (3 months FTE).

F. Timeline for Decision-making for Stage 6 Funding

Applicants will be informed about any unanticipated delays to receiving their outcomes of funding extension requests.

31 May 2022	Stage 6 Funding Extensions application form is live on Graduate School webpage. This will be emailed to PGR Directors, Administrators and all PGR students.
16 June 2022	Deadline for eligible students to submit Stage 6 PGR Application for Funding Extension due to Covid-19 Impact
17-20 June 2022	School Postgraduate Research Committee (SPRC) to consider student applications for additional funding, seek further information or clarification as required, and put forward endorsements to the Institutional Panel. SPRC submit their outcomes to the Institutional Assessment Panel by 20 June 2022
w/e 08 July 2022	Institutional Assessment Panel to consider all applications, apply additional prioritization criteria and determine source / duration of funding allocated.
29 July 2022	Outcomes of the stipend allocation process communicated to applicants by Postgraduate Awards.
12 August 2022	Deadline for Appeals or Complaints

G. Complaints or Appeals

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Complaints can be submitted if you are dissatisfied with an element of service provision, to the relevant service provider. See the University's Student Complaints procedure [here](#).

Appeals will be considered on the grounds that the published institutional process has not been followed. The procedure and form to submit an appeal can be found by accessing Stage 6 information using link (bottom of page) [here](#).

H. How we will protect your information

Queen's University holds any personal information which you provide to us in accordance with data protection regulations (GDPR). Your information will only be shared with those who require it in order to make a decision relating to your time or funding extension. If you are funded by a funding body, they may have requirements for the University to share information about students they fund.

Disclosure will only take place with your consent. You have the right to withdraw your consent to disclose information at any time. You can do this by informing us in writing or emailing pgawards@qub.ac.uk.

If you wish to view more details about how and when we will use your data, please refer to the University's Student Privacy Notice.

Appendix 1

Overview of Time and Funding extensions for Research Students			
Student Status?	Eligible for?	When?	How?
Funding Extensions (stipend only)			
Funding / Normal period of study due to end by 31 March 2023, funded by DfE	If not in receipt of extension from another body and meets eligibility, can apply in Stage 6	31 May – 16 June 2022	Online Form
Funding / Normal period of study due to end by 31 March 2023, funded by another funding body or self-funding	If not in receipt of extension from another body and meets eligibility, can apply in Stage 6	31 May – 16 June 2022	Online Form
Funding / Normal period of study due to end 01 April 2023 or later due to a leave of absence (LOA) and started Research Degree Programme before 23 March 2020	If not in receipt of extension from another body and meets eligibility, can apply in Stage 6	31 May – 16 June 2022	Online Form
Funded by following UKRI Research Councils EPSRC DTP and ESRC NINE DTP	If not in receipt of extension from another body and meets eligibility, can apply in Stage 6	31 May – 16 June 2022	Online Form
Funded by UKRI, ie Research Councils (excluding EPSRC DTP and ESRC NINE DTP)	Depends on funding body guidance and funding available	Speak to DTP / CDT Co-ordinator	Speak to DTP / CDT Co-ordinator
Started Research Degree Programme 23 March 2020 or later	Discuss your research plan with your Supervisor and ensure you are recording impacts and mitigations due to Covid-19	Impacts and adaptations to projects will be reviewed. An Update is expected in October 2022	Record impacts on Research Student Lifecycle and through APR
Time Extensions / Fee Free Periods If you have applied for a funding extension, your time extension will be taken forward as part of the funding extension process. If you think you will need 6 months additional time/fee free period (ie both FFP1 and FFP2) to complete your research before submitting your thesis or changing to thesis only, please indicate that on the extension application form.			
Student Status?	Eligible for?	When?	How?
Normal period of study due to end by 31 March 2023	Time extension without additional fees or other charges of up to 6 months (or 12 months for part-time students)	Now	FFP1: Up to 3 month time extension / fee free period, student to request from School, and School to email pgr.records@qub.ac.uk unless you have applied for a funding extension FFP2: Up to further 3 month time extension / fee free period, requested through the relevant RDP

Appendix 1

			Extension Request Concession Form, unless you have applied for a funding extension. QAR Team notifies School and PGR Records of the outcome.
Normal period of study on or after 01 April 2022 due to a leave of absence (LOA) and started research degree before 23 March 2020	Time extension without additional fees or other charges of up to 6 months (or 12 months for part-time students)	3 – 6 months ahead of funding / normal period of study ending	<p>FFP1: Up to 3 month time extension / fee free period, student to request from School, and School to email pgr.records@qub.ac.uk</p> <p>FFP2: Up to further 3 month time extension / fee free period, through the relevant RDP Extension Request Concession Form. QAR Team notifies School and PGR Records of the outcome.</p>
Students who started research degree after 23 March 2020	Expectation of adapting research plan to complete within expected timeframe. Update expected October 2022	Impacts and adaptations to projects will be reviewed.	Record impacts on Research Student Lifecycle and through APR
Completing 12 months Thesis Only and yet to avail of FFP1 and/or FFP2	If a student is completing their Thesis only year and has not availed of FFP1 and/or FFP2, they are eligible for the time extension without additional fees or other charges of up to 6 months.	On completion of the Thesis Only year	<p>FFP1: Up to 3 month time extension / fee free period, student to request from School, and School to email pgr.records@qub.ac.uk</p> <p>FFP2: Up to further 3 month time extension / fee free period, requested through the relevant RDP Extension Request Concession Form. QAR Team notifies School and PGR Records of the outcome.</p>

Appendix 2

Needs Priority Guidance

In Northern Ireland legislation defines 'Disability' as:

"A physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities."

'Long term' for this purpose means that the substantial adverse effects of the impairment must have lasted, or be likely to last, for at least 12 months.

Conditions automatically covered by legislation and that do not need to satisfy the definition of long-term or substantial impact are: cancer, multiple sclerosis and HIV infection. These conditions are deemed to be qualifying disabilities from the point in time that a person develops one or other of them.

Students registered with Disability Services will already have provided medical evidence of a disability/long-term condition eg:

- Physical and mobility difficulties
- Visual impairments
- Hearing impairments
- Medical conditions
- Specific learning difficulties e.g. dyslexia
- Mental health difficulties
- Autistic Spectrum Conditions

The following issues do not fall within the legal definition of a disability but are considered Wellbeing concerns:

- Bereavement (unless it develops into a long-term mental health condition)
- Stress at home eg due to financial pressure
- Exam stress
- Addiction
- Caring for a disabled relative
- Short-term conditions or injuries eg broken leg
- Post-natal depression/pregnancy

Further information on the range of support available through Disability and Wellbeing Services can be found online:

<https://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/sgc/disability/>

<https://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/sgc/wellbeing/InformationforStudents/>