A Practical Guide to Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Research Students (PGRs):

What you need to know?

Michael Frain: Doctoral College

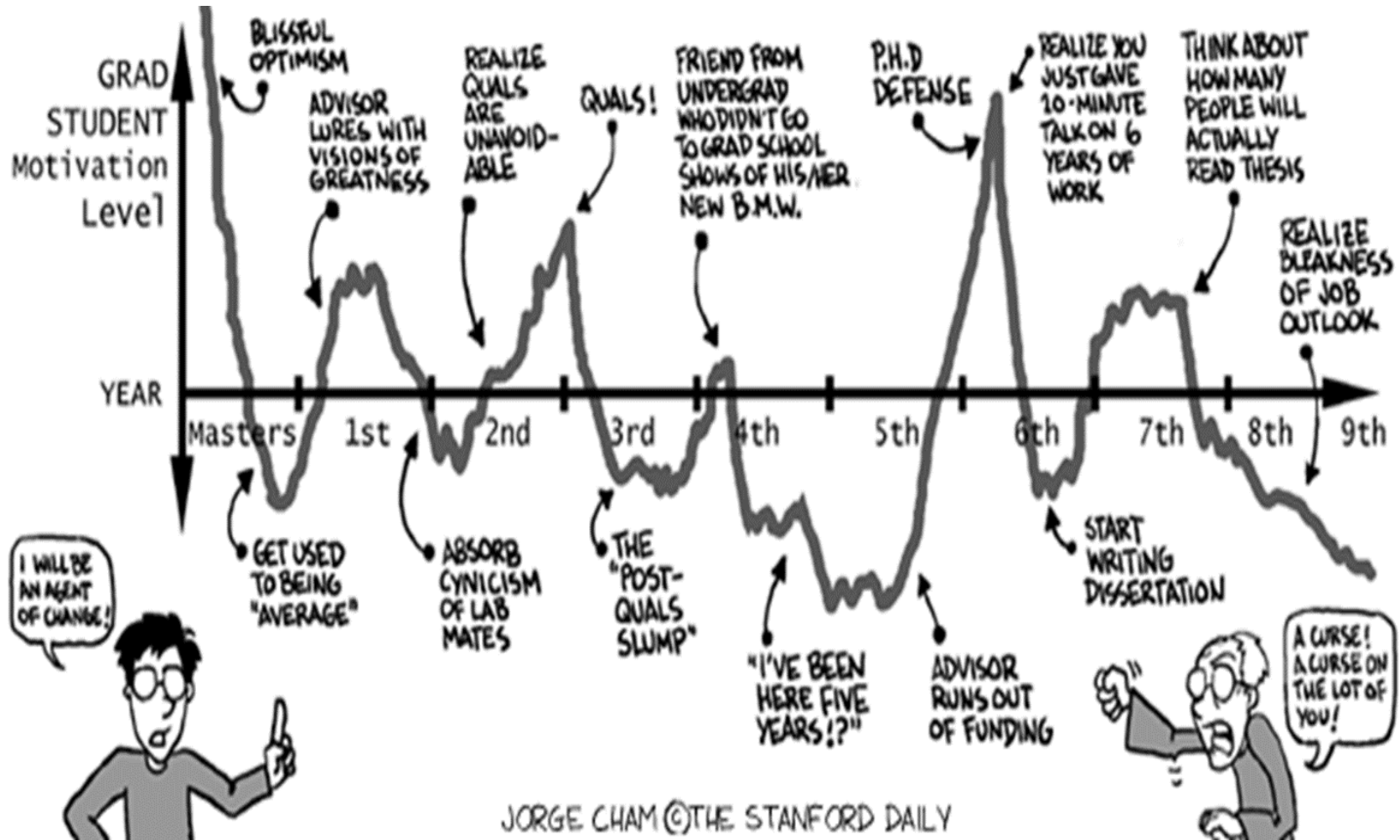https://www.ul.ie/research/doctoral-college

General Queries Email:
DoctoralCollege@ul.ie

PGR Thesis Submission Email:

PGRThesisSubmission@ul.ie

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The Journey to a PhD.

Postgraduate Research Registrations AY 2024-2025 9(Oct 2024)

Total PhD
Approx 875
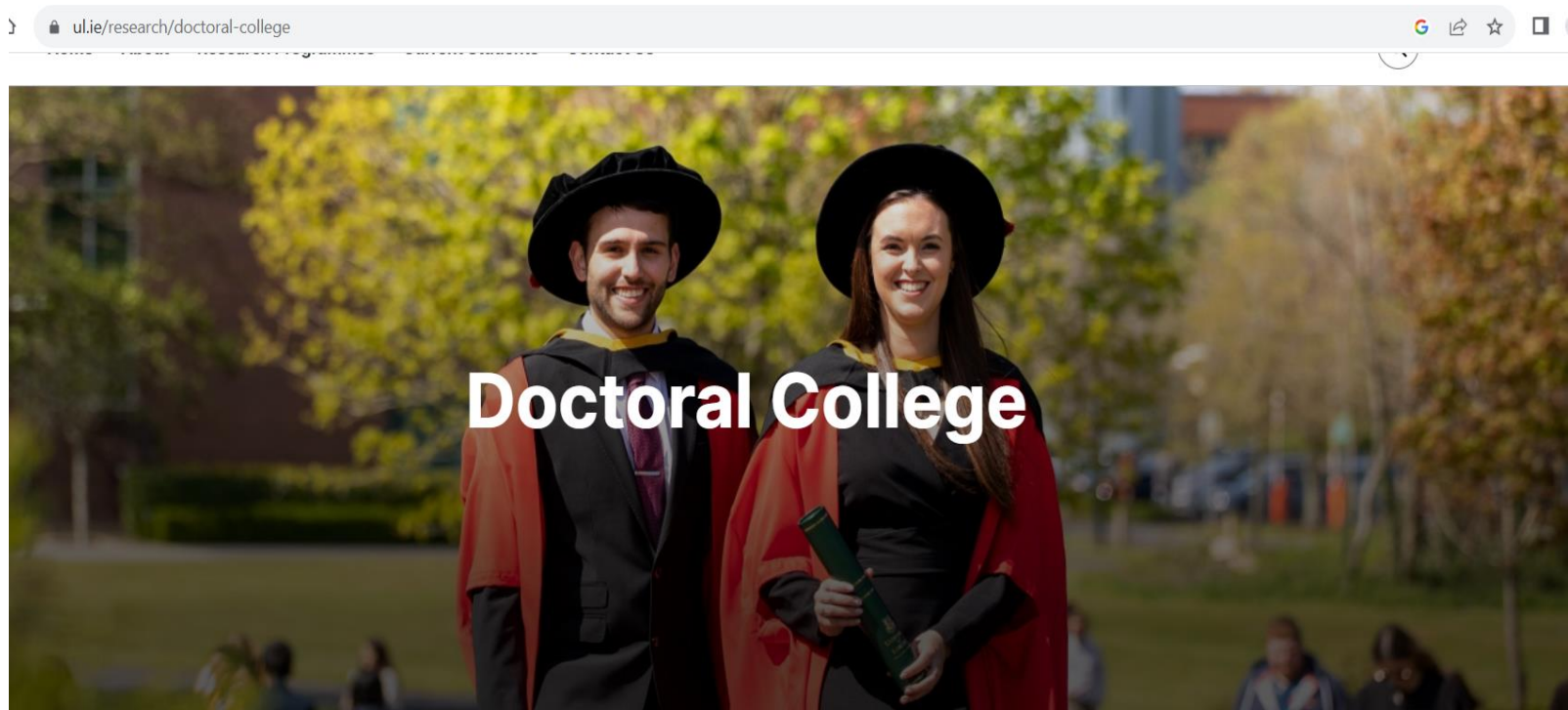
Total Res Master's
Approx 65
Overall Total
Approx 940

PGR Students from approx. 74 different countries

90% of PGR students are F/T

Doctoral College

https://www.ul.ie/research/doctoral-college

Doctoral College PGR Handbook

Doctoral College Handbook is live on the DC Website at the links below

https://www.ul.ie/research/doctoral-college/current-research-students/postgraduate-research-induction

https://www.ul.ie/research/doctoral-college/current-research-students/codes-of-practice-and-regulations

The colour PDFs is a quick navigation document which allows users to select the appropriate section in the handbook

The handbook does not replicate the detailed information available in related resources that are updated on an ongoing basis (available from the Doctoral College and UL Policy Hub).

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Doctoral College Webpage

ul.ie/research/doctoral-college/current-research-students/codes-of-practice-and-regulations

- Guidelines: Submission of a Postgraduate Research Thesis
- Guidelines for the Appointment of External Examiners for Postgraduate Research (PGR) Degrees by Research & Thesis
- Guidelines on the use of Video Conferencing (VC) to undertake Viva Voce Examinations for Research Students
- Financial Aid Form for Postgraduate Research Students
- Handbook of Academic Regulations and Procedures (Linked to UL Policy Hub)
- Health and Safety Guidelines/Policies
- Key Principles for University-awarded Funded Scholarships: Postgraduate Research Students
- Postgraduate Research Students Taught Module Academic Progression Requirement Process
- Research Postgraduate Agreement
- Research Ethics - Application Forms and Information
- Research Review Panel- Code of Practice
- Research Confirmation Panel - Code of Practice
- Research Progression Appeal Panel - Code of Practice
- Student Charter
- Student Complaints Policy and Procedures

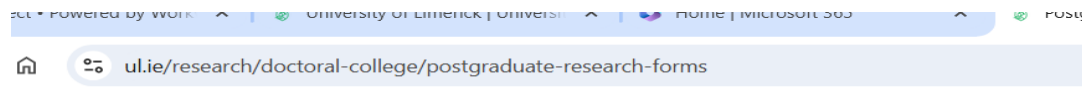**The most up to-date version of the codes of practice are live on the webpage.**

Please ensure that you are not using an older version.

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Doctoral College-PGR Forms

ul.ie/research/doctoral-college/postgraduate-research-forms

Nomination of Examiners' for Master's by Research & Doctoral Level Programmes (PG

Master's Qualifer-MQ5000 (PGR-2)

Research Confirmation Panel (PGR-3a)

Research Confirmation Panel Report Form (PGR-3a.1)

Research Progression Appeal Panel (PGR-3b)

Research Progression Appeal Panel Report (PGR-3b.1)

Submission of Thesis for a Higher Degree by Research (PGR-4)

Postgraduate Research Thesis Embargo Declaration Form (PGR-4a)

Postgraduate Research Thesis Embargo Renewal Form (PGR-4b)

Examiners' Report- Masters Degree by Research (PGR-5)

Examiners' Report- Doctor of Philosophy Degree (PGR-6)

Alteration to Postgraduate Research Degree Supervisor (PGR-7)

Extension to the Duration of a Postgraduate Research Degree (PGR-8)

Postgraduate Research Progression Form (PGR-9)

Leave of Absence Application Form

The most up to-date version of the forms are live on the webpage.

Please ensure that you are not using an older version.

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Handbook Academic Regulations and Procedures

Ch.5: Research Postgraduate Academic Regs version dated Aug/Sept 2024

Please ensure you are viewing most up to date version.

https://www.ul.ie/policy-hub/ contains specific section with student policies

Overview

- **Supervisor/Student Relationship**

- **Monitoring & Progression**

- **Article –Based PhD**

- **Fees & Continuation Fees**

- **PGR Student Status**

- **Student Complaints Policy & Procedures**

- **Final Stages**

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Supervisor/Student: An Evolving Process

Director	:	Follower
Master	:	Servant
Guru	:	Disciple
Teacher	:	Pupil
Expert	:	Novice
Guide	:	Explorer
Project manager	:	Team worker
Auditor	:	Client
Editor	:	Author
Colleague	:	Colleague
Friend	:	Friend

Responsibilities of the Student

- Be responsible for your own research activity – only you can write your PhD

- Be responsible for your own personal career development

- Be aware of academic rules, regulations, ethical guidelines & grievance procedures

- Maintain regular contact with your supervisor, agree & keep deadlines

- Report on progress & keep your own a written record of meetings

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Responsibilities of the Supervisors

- Explain what is involved in undertaking a PhD

- Agree the ground rules – find out what your supervisor expects from you,

- Joint Supervisor(s) should avoid 'mixed messages'

- Agree a schedule of formal meeting/deadlines

- Keep a written record of meetings & progress

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Working Together

- Maintain a Professional working relationship.

- Importance of Supervisory meetings
  - Agree as schedule of formal meetings
  - Written reports - measure your progress
  - Ask for feedback - should be positive
  - Types of Feedback Technical v Substantive
  - Listen to your supervisor
  - Make sure you understand the feedback
  - Review your progress with your Supervisor(s)

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Working Together

- Group meetings / departmental presentations/student research forums

- Agree on training needs & skills development

- CV development / awareness of profession / networking

- Conferences / publications

- Avoid academic isolation

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Two interdivtations!

Monitoring & Progression

Stage 1: Research Student Progression

Research Review Panel (RRP): formed on an annual basis to review the progress of all research candidates within the department, research and taught modules, research integrity, plagiarism,

Where the Research Review Panel (RRP) is **Not Satisfied** that the student is making adequate progress, RRP refer the student to the **Research Confirmation Panel**, where the student will be required to present and defend their work

Master's to PhD Transfer via Res Confirmation Panel

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Monitoring & Progression

Stage 2: Research Confirmation Panel

PGR students referred by the Research Review Panel complete written and oral presentation via the Confirmation Panel

- Demonstrate suitability for doctoral level work.

- Clear evidence that the candidate has the innate ability to understand the topic deeply enough.

- Ability to undertake independent research work successfully appropriate to doctoral level.

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Monitoring & Progression

Depending on the outcome arising from Research Confirmation Panel

Stage 3: Research Progression Appeal Panel.

Students have the right to appeal the decision of the Research Confirmation Panel to the Research Progression Appeal Panel.

See Academic regulations 5.6, 5.6.7 and 5.6.8

https://www.ul.ie/research/doctoral-college/current-research-students/codes-of-practice-and-regulations

Structured PhD

- Candidates on Structured PhD programmes

    - Must agree the required taught modules with their supervisor

    - Must register for the relevant requisite taught modules

    - Do not register for elective modules that realistically you may not complete

    - Forms must be to be submitted to Academic Registry return PGRProgression Contact point https://ul.topdesk.net/

    - Performance in modules reviewed at annual research review panels and during the relevant grading cycles, deficient grades

    - Record of G&T Skills training as a Personal Dev Plan

Structured PhD

- Candidates on Structured PhD Programmes

- Research starts in Yr.1, not after completing taught modules

- The taught modules are an enabler for your research.

- Completion of the modules does not imply the award of a PhD

- Your research is key requirement

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Monograph v Article-Based PhD Format

- **Monograph style** is the conventional style in which a thesis is presented in series of chapters, typically following this structure: introduction, literature review, methodology, results, discussion and conclusions.

- Alternatively, a monograph-style thesis may be presented within a structure where the relevant chapters are set out in a pre-publication format that facilitates the submission of the relevant chapters for publication.

- Decide early if this is your preferred route is Monograph or Article Based PhD

  - See Ch.5, Appendix 2 of Academic Regulations

Article Based PhD

- Articles must be published or accepted for publication while the candidate is registered as a research student.

- a number of interrelated but independent research articles (at least three and usually four or five) that are produced by the PhD candidate while registered as a research student.

- Various academic conventions associated with each discipline in terms of (i) authorship; (ii) the minimum number of articles required; and (iii) the appropriate word count.

- Some faculties or departments may have specific guidelines that must be adhered to by candidates.

- Articles that are in draft form are excluded.

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Article-Based PhD

- The articles must be published, pending publication or accepted for publication in peer-reviewed academic journals or peer reviewed academic books

- 'pending publication' is defined as an article that has been verified by a letter from the journal editor stating that the article has been accepted in a final form and is awaiting publication in a specified forthcoming issue/volume

- The signed letter of verification must be included as an appendix in the thesis

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Article-Based PhD

- An article that is 'accepted for publication' is defined as an article that has been reviewed by the journal editor and deemed to be suitable for publication at a future date subject to minor corrections. A signed letter confirming the status of the article must be included as an appendix in the thesis.

- Conference papers cannot be included. Publications that essentially report the same data or findings to separate readerships are considered as a single publication.

Article-Based PhD

- Joint and co-authorship is encouraged as a general principle. However, the publications should demonstrably be based on the candidate's research and reflected through first authorship of at least half, and ideally the majority of the publications

- Select in consultation with your Supervisor, the appropriate Peer-reviewed Journals within your academic discipline

- Be aware of potential Journal 'time lags' in terms of articles being accepted for publication and published

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Duration of Research

- Minimum period of registration for a master's degree by research is one year and PhD degree by research is three years

- For students transferring to University of Limerick, the PGR Committee shall determine the year of study subject to a minimum period of registration of one year at the UL

PG Research Fees and Continuation Fees

- (Full fees) EU and non-EU fees

- Masters two years full fees, PhD four years full fees per annum

- Continuation Fees: Students are liable for an annual continuation fee from Yr.3 (Masters) or Yr.5 (PhD)

- For student fee queries, email student.fees.office@ul.ie

- Please include your Student ID No. in formal correspondence

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PG Research Fees and Continuation Fees

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- Please include your Student ID No. in any correspondence.

- https://www.ul.ie/finance/about-finance/finance-documents#studentfees

ul.ie/finance/about-finance/finance-documents#studentfees

Student Fees Documents

- Fees Schedule– Academic Year 2023/2024 All Courses
- Fees Schedule – Academic Year 2024/25 All Courses
- Undergraduate Fees Walkthrough
- Fee Classification Undergraduate students Flowchart
- Fee Classification Postgraduate/Graduate Entry students Flowchart
- How to Pay Fees
- Online Fee Payment Terms & Conditions
- Fee Regulations
- Simplified Guide to HEA Free Fees Scheme&
- Brexit Advice and Tips

Fee Classification Flowchart: Research Students

- December Exam Board
- January Exam Board
- June Exam Board
- September Exam Board
- November Exam Board
- February Exam Board

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Leave of Absence

- In special circumstances (e.g. financial, medical or personal reasons), a student may be granted a period of one year's leave of absence off the register. In exceptional circumstances, this period may be extended.

- Complete a LOA form, must be approved by their supervisor and Head of Dept/School,

- There may be funding implications?

- LOA application, return the signed form to Academic Registry, PGRProgression Contact point https://ul.topdesk.net/

Leave of Absence, Withdrawal from Studies

- LOA readmission/recommencement form completed the candidate must review in detail work to date with their supervisor(s).

- In instances where the candidate's research or data has been superseded or any required facilities/resources are no longer available, the supervisor(s) and Head of Department will review any revised research proposal.

- Withdrawal from Studies?

- Make an informed decision, Talk to and take advice from someone

- Submit for a Masters by Research…

- In exceptional circumstances students may wish to withdraw, an exit form must be completed.

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Student Complaints Policy & Procedure

- Matters relating to an academic progression issue namely, grading, progression are dealt with in-line with the academic regulations

- Where the complaint pertains to the adequacy of supervision, Student Complaints Policy & Procedure is the mechanism

- https://ulsites.ul.ie/executive/student-complaints

- https://www.ul.ie/provost/functions-processes/student-complaints

- https://www.ul.ie/policy-hub/

- The student complaints procedure sets out both the informal and formal process.

- Complaints not be considered once a thesis has been submitted for Examination

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Student Complaints Policy & Procedures

Definitions

- 'Complaint' is defined as any expression of dissatisfaction with the standard of service provided by UL or with the actions or lack of actions by UL or members of staff.

- Any complaint against a named member of staff will be addressed as a complaint against UL.

- Grounds for complaint might include:

    - *Dissatisfaction with the standard of academic or service provision (e.g. course design, curriculum, structure, assessment arrangements & information, student support mechanisms, resources & facilities)*

- Dissatisfaction with the quality of supervision or tuition

- Issues of inappropriate conduct by a member of staff

Note: Complaints Procedures cannot be used to challenge academic Judgement pertaining to annual progression or to appeal against the process of an Examination Panel

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Complaints

- The exact nature of the complaint needs to be established from the outset.
    - what is adequate supervision?
    - There are two sides to every story…

- Informal complaint

- Documented paper trail confirming nature of the complaint to the appropriate contact point, namely the head of department

- The resultant informal outcome should be agreed and documented.

- Advice or guidance on any aspect of this procedure from your Postgraduate Students' Union or the Complaints, Discipline & Vetting Unit. If you require more information, please email ULStudentcomplaints@ul.ie

Complaints

Adequacy of Supervision:

Complaints about the adequacy of supervision will not be considered once the thesis has been presented for examination.

Informal- discussion between the Supervisor & Student. Student & HoD

Formal- you must complete a Stage 2 Student Complaint Form

The form may be submitted either in hard copy or by email to ulstudentcomplaints@ul.ie.

Bullying & Harassment:
Informal- discussion between the Supervisor, HoD, PSU

A complaint including an allegation of bullying, harassment or intimidation by a member of staff, the case will be referred to UL's Policy and Procedures for **Student Dignity & Respect**
Advice! informal channels should be fully explored prior to activation of a formal process!

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Final Stages

- Submission of Research Thesis Process

  - Nomination of Examiners PGR-1 Form
  - Submission of Thesis PGR-4 Form

- *Viva Voce* - Code of Practice

- Format and Presentation of the Thesis

- Electronic Submission

- Thesis embargo (Default position no Embargo)

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Final Stages

- The Final Stages of the Research

- Final draft of submission … must meet an agreed standard … to submit

- Make sure deadlines are achievable

- Prepare for the *Viva Voce* Examination – talk to supervisors/others

- Ask about format of the Viva Voce,
    - Review the guide for Viva Voce Examination

Examiners' Reports

"5.14.17 The examiners' report must comment on the following areas:

• The overall standard and quality of research in the thesis

• The original contribution the thesis makes to knowledge and scholarship

• The writing style and overall presentation of the thesis

• The ability of the student to defend the research in the oral examination

• The nature of the amendments and/or corrections required

• Conclusion and award recommendation"

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Summary

- **You** are responsible for your progress

- Interact with you supervisor(s)

- **Do not disregard** any correspondence or letters

- Be **aware** of the regulations and procedures

- If you are **unsure, ask** someone for advice

- Review theses completed in your Research area

- **Avoid** Social Isolation engage regularly in an activity or sport that interests you…

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Remember
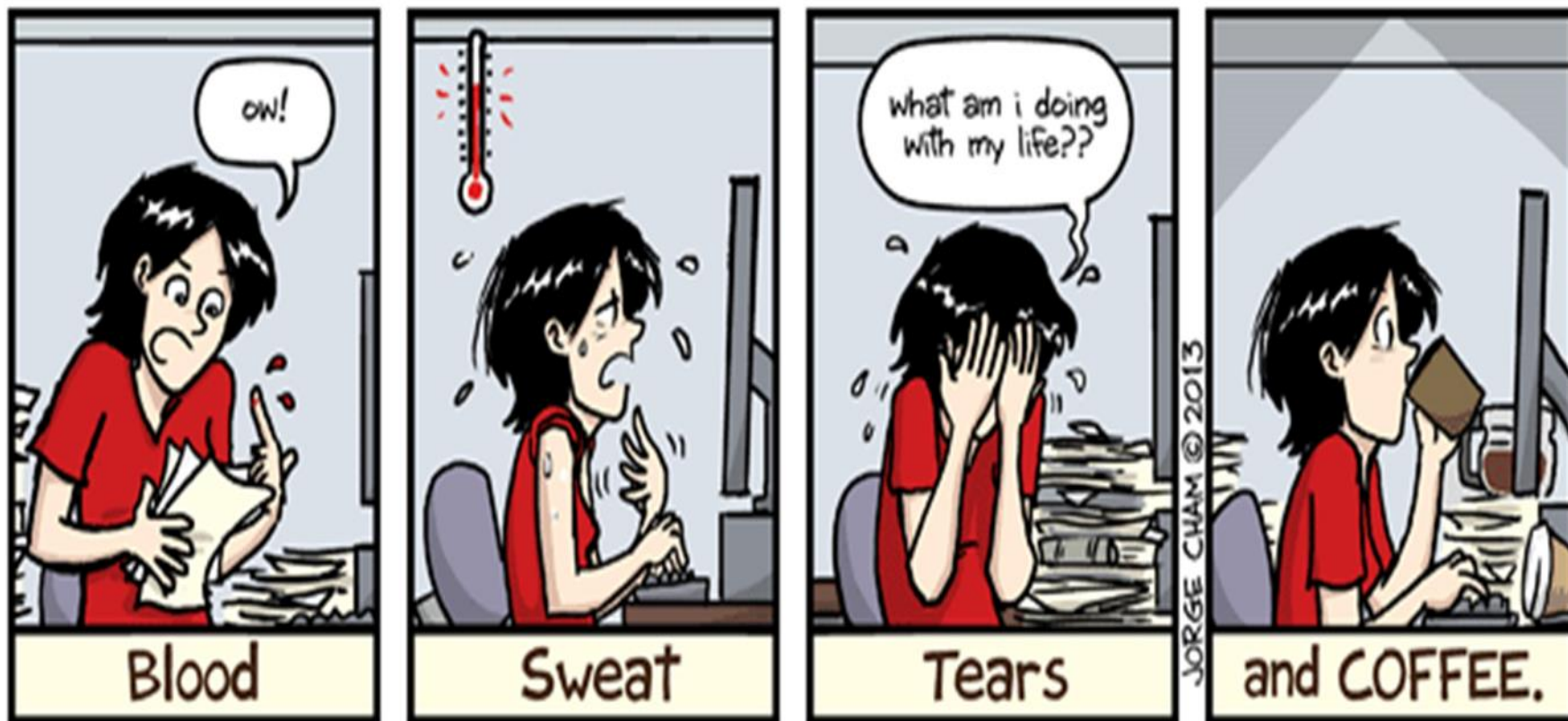
Finally

- Thank-you for listening

- Questions…

- Funding options, consider applying for IRC funding.

http://research.ie/funding/postgraduate-funding