**Guidelines for Confirmation Review Event**

PhD students (excluding those who are on the route for a PhD by published work or are on

Professional Doctorate programmes) will be required to have a formal Confirmation Review to confirm their registration. The Confirmation of Registration Event will normally take place 15 to 24 months after registration for full-time students and 24 to 36 months for part-time students.

**Evidence to be submitted by the Student**

The Confirmation Review Report presented by the student must include supporting evidence as follows:

* A significant piece of scholarly work produced by the student, such as draft chapters for the final submission, with an indicative length of 15,000 to 20,000 words. For students undertaking performance- or practice-based research, an equivalent combined submission of scholarly writing and creative work in the ratio which has been agreed with the supervisory team should be submitted;
* A written account of work which has been undertaken, work which is in progress, and a plan of work which remains to be carried out, including a plan for the format of the final submission (e.g. thesis chapter outline).
* The content of the confirmation review report should be such as to provide evidence that demonstrates the student's ability to undertake research and communicate such work at doctoral level;

Students are strongly recommended to seek advice from their supervisors when writing the confirmation review document. The contents will vary depending upon the discipline and the exact presentation/structure is flexible. Students may consider using the template at **Appendix A** below for the written account of work. The list of sections in the template is not prescriptive and students should consult their supervisors.

**The CRE Panel**

The Director of Studies will convene a panel composed of an independent chair, an independent reviewer and the supervisory team. A panel event will take place attended by the student in which his/her work will be reviewed.

The independent chair and the independent Reviewer will:

* Have undertaken confirmation training if they have had no prior experience of reviewing confirmation;
* Not have had any involvement with the project or student that could give

rise to a conflict of interest.

**Assessment Criteria**

The Confirmation Registration panel will assess the application against the following criteria and make recommendations on the outcome to the Research Degrees Committee:

* Evidence from the work which has been undertaken and the schedule of future work which remains to be done that the project has the potential to meet the requirements for the final submission for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, including the intended contribution of the research and its scope for originality;
* Evidence demonstrating the student’s ability to sustain work and scholarly

writing at doctoral level;

* The adequacy of progress to date with the programme of work and the

suitability of any adjustments made to the project, including steps taken to address any problems which have been encountered;

* Evidence that the schedule of future work which remains to be done can realistically   
  be achieved within the normal period of study;
* The suitability of the thesis chapter outline.

**Outcomes**

The confirmation of registration review will lead to one of the following two outcomes:

* Progress satisfactory and registration confirmed: all subsequent annual

registrations to be for PhD;

* Progress unsatisfactory and the student’s registration should not be   
  confirmed at this stage, but the student may resubmit for confirmation   
  of registration on a single occasion only, normally three months later for full-   
  time students or six months later for part-time students, with or without   
  further oral examination.

The chair will submit a recommendation to the Research Degrees Committee who will confirm the outcome for each student. The independent Reviewer and the supervisory team will supply the candidate with a written statement to inform them of the outcome, and of any further action required to satisfy the criteria for confirmation of registration, if applicable.

Students are only eligible for a single re-assessment which will lead to one of the following

three outcomes:

* The student be permitted to continue registration on the degree;
* Progress satisfactory for MPhil only;
* Progress unsatisfactory, studies terminated.

A formal appeal procedure and grounds for appeal against any decision of the Research Degrees Committee can be found at <https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/policies/academic-appeals.aspx>.  Students need to email their formal notification of an intention to appeal to [academicappeals@stmarys.ac.uk](mailto:academicappeals@stmarys.ac.uk) no later than 10 working days after the date of confirmation of the outcome by the Research Degrees Committee.

**Appendix A**

**Confirmation Review - Suggested Template for the Written Account of Work**

1. **Title Page** – including St Mary’s logo, title of PhD, student’s name, names of supervisory team, date.
2. **Table of contents**
3. **List of figures/tables (if applicable)**
4. **Introduction to the programme of work**
   1. This should set the scene, the context and importance of the research problem.
   2. Should include the aims of your programme of work and the major research questions you intend to answer.
   3. Particular attention should be paid to the impact the research will make to the scientific community and, where relevant, to the wider society.
5. **Literature review**
   1. A review of relevant literature that demonstrates understanding of the field, including key seminal research/theory, as well as up to date contemporary research/theory such that a rationale for the problem/challenge/issue to be researched in the PhD programme is presented
   2. This section may be split into sub-headings as appropriate.
6. **Work completed to date**
   1. This section will provide a narrative summary of the work completed to date. This should include reflections on the work completed to date, including difficulties that were overcome and lessons learned.
   2. It could also include research-study write-up(s) comprising of an introduction, methods, results and discussion.
7. **Work in progress**
   1. This should include an overview of work that is currently being undertaken.
   2. This may be in the form of a partially presented research study write-up, i.e. introduction to that particular study that has followed on from the first, methods for that study, and any preliminary data analyses or overview of analysis to be employed.
8. **Schedule of future work**
   1. This will typically include a brief identification of the remaining studies that are planned, what they will seek to address, and accompanying timelines for such work.
   2. A thesis chapter outline should also be included.
9. **References**
   1. A full reference list of all work cited in the confirmation review document, formatted according to the guidelines followed in your Faculty.
10. **Appendices (if applicable)**
    1. Can include links to published papers, conference proceedings, conference abstracts, or whatever else is relevant as necessary.