

Research Supervision and Awards in Collaboration with Other Institutions: Implementation Plan

This document serves to outline the steps and practicalities involved in establishing collaborative doctoral research supervision and awards between DCU and other institutions. The document accompanies the 'Position on Research Supervision and Awards in Collaboration with Other Institutions'. Please ensure that you have read the latter document, associated protocols and the guiding principles before proceeding with a proposal.

1. Single-Awarding Body

- (a) If you are looking to set up a collaboration where there is one awarding body only and the relationship can be described as informal, as set out in the 'Position on Research Supervision and Awards in Collaboration with Other Institutions', please consult in advance with your Head of School regarding workload allocation and strategy. The Head of School is the responsible person for sign-off in this context.
- (b) If you wish to appoint an external co-supervisor for a DCU-registered doctoral student, you will need to fill in the [R-103 form](#), which will have to be approved by the relevant Faculty Research Committee and then submitted to Registry so that the supervisory panel information can be recorded or updated.
- (c) If the context is such that the research programme is shared between two or more supervisors, where there may be financial or IP implications and/or where the student spends more than 1 month in an academic year in the partner university (in the case of a DCU student), or in DCU (in the case of an external student), then you need to establish a 'Joint Supervisory Agreement'. This agreement shall be **endorsed by the Head of School and approved, in advance, by Graduate Research Studies Board, in keeping with DCU's Collaborative Provision Approval Protocols**. A template for this type of agreement is available from the Graduate Studies Office website, under "[Information for Supervisors \(Section 3\)](#)". **IP ownership shall be covered by a separate agreement, approved, in advance, by DCU Invent and signed by DCU's IP Operations Manager¹**. Under the agreement, visiting students should be recorded as research student visitors in DCU using the [R26H Form](#). If no inter-institutional agreement is in place, a short-term visiting research student can apply to attend GTE modules using the [R26 Form](#). Note: Fees are applicable in this latter case.²

¹ Please refer to the DCU [Intellectual Property Policy](#)

² All queries on fees should be directed to the [Fees team in Registry](#).

2. Multiple-awarding bodies

Figure 1 provides a high level overview of a decision-making process for those who are interested in proposing the establishment of Joint or Double (Multiple) Awards. It is expected that the process will not always be linear and timelines will vary. Significant effort is required to establish Joint or Double Award agreements which involves multiple units within the University. Adequate notice is therefore required.

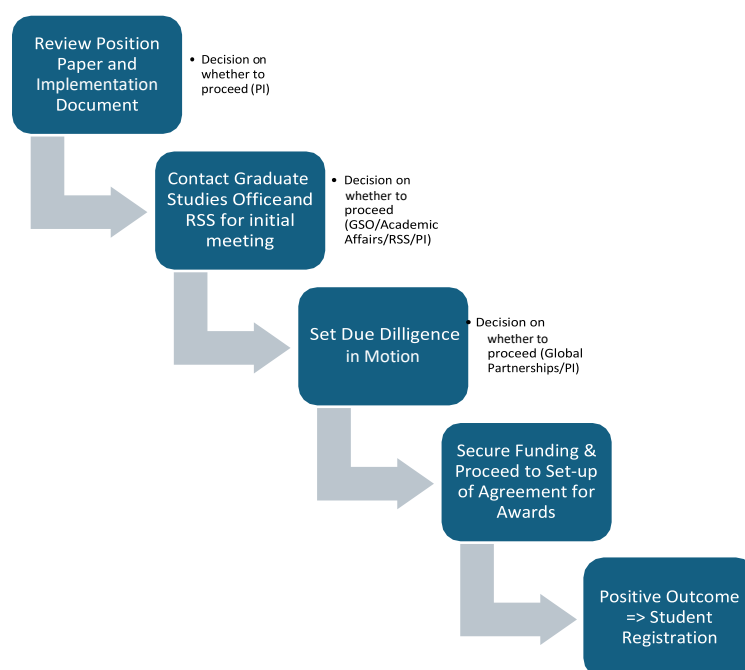


Figure 1: High Level Overview of Decision Process

For initiatives that aim to lead to the establishment of a Joint or Double Doctoral Award, please read the guiding principles first in ‘Position on Research Supervision and Awards in Collaboration with Other Institutions’, and related documentation and protocols.

Next, consider the following questions:

- Does the proposed partnership concretely align with DCU’s current strategy?
- Is there evidence of current and substantial collaboration with the proposed partner(s), previously co-supervised doctoral students, joint research awards, sustained co-publication etc.?
- Is joint or double (multiple) awards a pre-requisite to attract funding³?

³ Funding would ideally include fees plus stipends or salary at least at current nationally agreed levels (also tracking potential increases over time), funding for any necessary equipment, bench fees, funding for conference travel and travel required for fieldwork.

- Are there efficiencies of scale for the proposed collaboration (e.g. at least four students to be registered at DCU, multiple students per partnership proposed etc.)?
- Will students recruited by the partner university spend at least 12 months (not necessarily continuously) at DCU?
- Where a 'Double' Award is being mooted, will there be an integrated approach between partners for co-supervision, progression and assessment, as would be the case for Joint Awards?

If the answer to all of the above is 'yes', then the proposed initiative fits with DCU's guiding position on Collaborative Doctoral Awards. The more practical aspects, outlined below, can now be considered.

3. Practical Considerations when Proposing a Joint or Double Doctoral Award

Steps, timelines and responsibilities are outlined below. Note that these are indicative only. Requests for assistance that fall too close to a funding deadline may not qualify for support due to lack of time and capacity.

1. **Preliminary Notification to GSO/RSS:** The proposing academic should arrange a meeting with both GSO (graduatestudies@dcu.ie) and RSS (research@dcu.ie) to provide early notification of the proposed collaboration in principle. At this point, or during due diligence, GSO might consult with the Academic Affairs.

Timeline: ASAP – at least three months prior to funding application deadline, where applicable.

Responsible: PI (Head of School endorsement is assumed when PI contacts)

2. **Due Diligence:** Due diligence on proposed partners must be carried out in advance of any agreement in accordance with [DCU's Principles of International Partnership](#). MOUs/MOAs may not be required; this will be determined by the Global Partnerships team. In instances where they are required, the MOU and/or MOA do not have to be in place at the time of application for funding, but **no student can register** until they are in place. Given short timelines between funding decisions and commencement of programmes, it is advisable that the due diligence is carried out as soon as possible, if required. An [Information Sheet](#) has been provided to assist with this process.

Timeline: ASAP – at least three months prior to funding application deadline, where applicable.

Responsible: PI and International Partnerships

3. **Secure funding:** PI and partners may need to apply for funding.

Timeline: Varies according to funding proposal. Cycle would typically be 12 months prior to first registration

Responsible: PI, Partners, RSS

4. **Negotiation on Joint or Double Awards:** Assuming funding is secured and MOU/MOA are being put in place (where required), negotiation on Joint or Double Awards commence. This requires the filling in of a detailed questionnaire (available from GSO) and liaison with partners to facilitate the establishment of the award. Some preparatory work can be carried out in parallel with preparation for the funding proposal. However, agreements will not be finalised unless there is a successful outcome to a funding application. Proposals for Joint and Double (Multiple) Awards will require approval by Graduate Research Studies Board, in keeping with DCU's "Collaborative Provision Approval Protocols". PIs should take into account the annual calendar for GRSB meetings when seeking approval.

Timeline: Immediately on securing of funding.

Responsible: PI, Partners, GSO, GRSB

5. **Registration and Commencement:** The collaborative programme commences and students register in both institutions.

Timeline: Students can only register when agreements have been signed.

Responsible: Normal units at DCU.

Important Considerations For Establishing and Implementing Collaborative Awards

Please bear in mind the following important points, to be read alongside the 'Position on Research Supervision and Awards in Collaboration with Other Institutions'.

- **Duration:** DCU's expectation is that the minimum time a student would spend in DCU is 12 months over the period of study for Joint/Double awards. Note that local expectations may also dictate that this be higher for award recognition.
- **Fees:**
 - For students for whom DCU is the recruiting institution⁴, normal fees apply, regardless of what is charged in the partner institution, and should be budgeted for the full duration of the programme.⁵

⁴ Meaning DCU directly recruits, PI and principal supervisor is DCU staff, full funding for student is secured by DCU, majority of registration time is at DCU.

⁵ Note for MSCA DN's, this currently implies budgeting for full fees from the Networking and Training budget.

- Where DCU is temporarily hosting a student in a Joint or Double Award Programme, and the student has paid any fees applicable in the partner institution, DCU will not charge the student fees while the student is hosted by DCU.
- **Scale:**
 - Priority will be given to proposals with a minimum of four PhD students directly recruited by and registered at DCU for the duration of the Award, which must be four years full-time, or equivalent part-time⁶. Joint or Double Awards will not be established for one single student.
 - Due to the complexities and costs in drafting up agreements, any Joint/Double award would be limited to two awarding institutions, although the number of partners in a consortium may be more.
- **Compliance:**
 - All approved Joint or Double award programmes **must** involve compliance by DCU supervisors with [expectations for remote supervision](#) and with the DCU Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis.
 - All approved Joint or Double award programmes **must** involve compliance by DCU-registered students with DCU's Research Ethics Guidelines. DCU supervisors must ensure such compliance is in place before any data acquisition commences.
 - All students who conduct research at DCU should undertake the online DCU Research Integrity course, even if they have taken a similar course elsewhere.
- **Examination:** Given differences in PhD examination processes, especially when Ireland is compared to other European countries, it is recommended that the Joint or Double Award agreement specify that the private viva examination (followed by opportunity for revision), as is the system in Ireland, takes place *before* any public defence viva. This would avoid problematic situations where an award is approved in a public defence in one country where, typically, no revisions are required, and subsequently not approved in a private defence in Ireland or where major revisions and/or resubmission is the outcome.
- **Effort:** Staff who are proposing Joint or Double Awards must be willing to fully engage with the relevant support offices (i.e. GSO, International Partnerships, Registry, OVPAA, Research Support Services, Invent, Finance and the COO's Office as required), to furnish the necessary information in a timely manner, and to liaise with the partner organisation and their relevant academic and professional support units. Supports for the work required must also come from the relevant School and/or Faculties. The ability to execute Joint or Double Awards

⁶ Exceptions can be made for MSCA Doctoral Networks (e.g. MSCA Joint Doctorates with 48 person-months per student) where the number of students in each institution can be three.

is contingent upon adequate resources being available for the volume of requests and the level of significant oversight required.

Implementation for the Position on Research Supervision and Awards in Collaboration with Other Institutions		
Graduate Studies Office		 Ollscoil Chathair Bhaile Átha Cliath Dublin City University
Approved by:	Date:	
Graduate Research Studies Board	8 November 2024	