

FACULTY OF ENVIRONMENT

As a guideline, any member of staff in any School in our Faculty should have a maximum 8 PGRs (in years 1-4), corresponding to an average intake of up to 2 candidates per academic year. It is expected that the total of 8 (head count as opposed to FTEs) would include PGRs for whom the supervisor is both primary and co-supervisor.

Why is the guideline being introduced?

The University quite rightly places a high priority on the training and development of our PGRs. To do this well, it takes considerable time and effort. The guideline is in place to ensure that no supervisor is overloaded.

There is a need for a new focus on quality rather than necessarily quantity of PGR projects. For those who are very successful in attracting and funding PhDs this guideline will help focus attention and effort on the highest priority and scientifically most important topics, and help ensure the best possible thesis (and other output such as papers).

The guidelines will not adversely affect our target of increasing PGR numbers to an overall (ie, years 1-3) ~2 per FTE since many members of staff do not currently supervise two PGRs. There is spare supervision capacity and the guideline will help promote a more sustainable and equitable supervision base across the Faculty. Supervisors who can attract more than 2 PGRs in any year should be encouraged to share the supervisory duties with staff who have fewer PGRs.

Why a guideline instead of a rule?

A rule could adversely affect activity in highly successful research areas which would be unacceptable. The total number of PGRs per academic will be monitored by the PGR Tutor. When the total of 8 is reached the PGR Tutor will meet with the academic in question to discuss workload, project priorities and discuss potential alternative supervisors as new projects can often be successfully supervised by other academics who have spare capacity.