**How to request a UKRI funding extension to your candidature (June 2021)**

The University has a commitment to providing a high quality research environment and implements quality assurance procedures targeted at monitoring student progression.

Please note: A research student, wishing to make a request, but who does not wish to disclose matters to their supervisor or training grant holder, can discuss their circumstances and request with their College Director of Postgraduate Research.

Swansea University is operating a three-stage evaluation process for requests to UKRI funding extensions.

**Stage 1:** Completion of criteria 1-4 within the form **AR1PR-1-EN (June 2021)**, by the research student and supervisor, or if the research student does not wish to disclose matters to their supervisor, their College Director of Postgraduate Research.

**Stage 2:** Endorsement by the PI/Grant Holder or Faculty Associate Dean, Research, Innovation and Impact.

**Stage 3:** Independent panel review, where panels will be chaired by the Deputy Pro-Vice Chancellor, Postgraduate Research and will comprise representation from Faculties, Finance, Student Services, Student Academic Services and the Postgraduate Research Office.

**Eligibility:**

1. Eligibility includes all UKRI-funded students (at least 50% funded by UKRI) who started before 1 March 2020, have a funding end date from 1 April 2021 onwards, have not submitted their doctoral thesis, and who have not already received a UKRI-funded COVID-19 extension under the initial UKRI policy. Students whose funding end date was between 1 March 2020 and 31 March 2021 at the announcement of the initial policy (9 April 2020) are not eligible.
2. Research students must have fully explored, with their supervisor, adapting their research project to enable successful completion;
3. Having initiated adaptations to the research project, but finding the research student still requires a funding extension to complete the adapted project within a funded period, then the research student can apply;
4. There must be a needs priority basis;
5. Swansea University also has the flexibility to provide support for UKRI-funded disabled students, those with long-term illness, those who are neurodivergent, or those with caring responsibilities.

**Funding extension timescale that can be requested:**

1. Extensions can be considered for up to 12 weeks/3 months.

**Provision:**

1. Swansea University has agreed to provide match-funding for studentships where it is already making a match-funding contribution to a UKRI studentship.
2. If a student is co-funded by an external partner and the external partner is unable to contribute towards the cost of the extension, the UKRI contribution could be used to fully support a shorter extension.

Please note: Any approved extension to funding will automatically extend the candidature period by the same time period.

**Grounds for Extension:**

Requests for a funding extension to a UKRI studentship typically may be made based upon one or more of the following grounds:

1. Affected Health and Wellbeing;
2. Compassionate (including serious domestic difficulties);
3. Inordinate Professional Commitments (which occurred during the minimum candidature period);
4. Increased caring responsibilities;
5. Technical difficulties (limited to technical difficulties beyond the student’s control) e.g.
	1. Lack of access to research resources and facilities.
	2. Interruption of data collection and/or fieldwork.

In support of a request, the following documentation, completed and signed ***must*** be supplied by the deadline for submission:

1. Form AR1PR-1-EN (June 2021), to include:
	1. A clear statement from the research student explaining the adaptations agreed and implemented to their research project, their circumstance(s), the impact of COVID-19 upon their research, their progress to date and the effect of their circumstance(s) upon their progress to date and/or ability to progress the adapted project.
	2. A clear statement from the research student’s supervisor (or Director of Postgraduate Research, if the research student does not wish to disclose circumstances to their supervisor), providing an evaluation of the progress to date of the adapted research project, and the situation as a result of the circumstance.
2. A work plan ***detailing*** how the research student will be ready for submission by the end of the requested extension period.
3. Evidence supporting the need for an extension. For example, that the research student has discussed and agreed adaptations to the research project and your supervisor will need to confirm that grounds for extension have been recorded in the e-Vision Research Management System (RMS) under COVID-19 ad hoc meeting/s.
4. Documentation should ***detail*** how the grounds cited have adversely impacted the research student’s work and progress. General statements that do not link the grounds cited to the research student’s ability to work and progress, will not be considered acceptable evidence.
5. Endorsement from the PI/Grant Holder or Faculty Associate Dean, Research, Innovation and Impact.

**Timescales:**

1. ***The fixed deadline for requests to be submitted is 12.00 (noon) on Thursday 26 August 2021 to pgrextensions@swansea.ac.uk.*** Due to the complexity of the funding arrangements, any submissions received after the time stated on the date above will not be able to be considered.
2. Please be aware that your request documentation requires contributions, endorsements and signatures from other people. So make sure you have enough time for these actions before you submit, prior to the deadline.
3. The panels for reviewing requests are expected to sit in September 2021.
4. Following ratification of the panel decisions by the University’s Senior Leadership Team, outcomes and notifications will be conveyed before the end of September -
	1. Student Academic Services will communicate outcomes to research students and supervisors.
	2. Student Academic Services will update e-Vision RMS records with the extension to candidature.
	3. PGR Office will undertake adjustments to bursaries so that funds can be released to research students as quickly as possible.
	4. PGR Office will report to UKRI as part of the Final Expenditure Statement in June 2022.

**Appeals:**

The procedures for requesting a funded extension to candidature ensures that all requests are scrutinised at both a College/Faculty-level (supervisor/PGR Director and Grant Holder/Faculty Associate Dean) and University-level (independent cross-disciplinary panel, chaired by the Deputy Pro-Vice Chancellor, Postgraduate Research). Based upon the evidence supplied by the research student by the fixed deadline for submission (*12.00 (noon) on Thursday 26 August)*, requests are evaluated against clearly defined criteria, as outlined in the form AR1PR-1-EN (June 2021).

If a research student is not satisfied with the outcome of the assessment, they have a right of appeal.

**Appeal Stage 1:** Should a research student wish to make an appeal following notification of the panel’s decision, they may do so only on the basis that the institutional procedures for submitting and evaluating their extension request have not been followed.

Requests for a review must be submitted in writing to pgrextensions@swansea.ac.uk within **5 working days\*** of the original notification email confirming the outcome of the assessment. Requests for Appeal will not be considered after this deadline.

Requests for a review must clearly state the basis for the request and how the identified process has not been followed.

The following situations are not valid grounds for appeal and will result in the automatic rejection of an appeal:

* You are not eligible to apply for a UKRI funded extension as per the criteria communicated and as outlined in [UKRI’s terms and conditions](https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/UKRI-11112020-COVID-19DoctoralExtensionsPolicyPhase2TermsAndConditions.pdf).
* You have failed to provide sufficient evidence by the deadline or missed a deadline (whether that be the initial deadline of 12.00 (noon) on Thursday 26 August or any subsequent deadline aligned to the Appeals process).

The appeal will be considered by the Head of the Postgraduate Research Office (or nominee) Academic Services, as someone not directly involved in the original decision making. As part of the review process the research student may be invited to an informal meeting via zoom or via the telephone.

The research student will be provided with written confirmation of the outcome of their Stage 1 Appeal by email; normally within **5 working days** of receipt of the appeal request.

\*5 working days i.e. Monday to Friday excluding Bank Holidays.

**Final Review Appeal:** If a research student is not satisfied with the outcome of their Stage 1 Appeal, they may make a Final Review Appeal by completing and submitting within **5 working days** of the date of the email confirming the outcome of their Stage 1 Appeal, the [Final Review Form.](https://myuni.swansea.ac.uk/media/Final-Review-Form.docx)

To submit a Final Review Appeal for consideration, research students should consult the University’s procedures, as outlined in the Academic Regulations -

<https://myuni.swansea.ac.uk/academic-life/academic-regulations/conduct-and-complaints/final-review-procedure/>

Students who are dissatisfied with the outcome of their Final Review may be able to complain to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (‘OIA’) providing that their complaint is eligible under its Rules (these are on the [OIA website](http://www.oiahe.org.uk/)). Students will need to send to the OIA a Scheme Application Form within three months of the date of the Completion of Procedures letter. Further information about the OIA scheme is outlined at Section 7 of the Final Review Procedures (accessible online at: <http://www.swan.ac.uk/registry/academicguide/conductandcomplaints/finalreviewprocedure/>).

Complaints may be made that fall outside of the Appeals Process – these should be dealt with in line with usual protocols.