

Guide to RSP Chairs in the UCD School of Medicine

Based on the Academic regulations 2024/25 and the UCD Graduate Student Handbook:

Research Studies Panel

The purpose of the Research Studies Panel (RSP) is to support and enhance the supervisor-student relationship, to monitor the progress of the student through their research studies, and to provide independent advice and support to the student and supervisor(s).

Membership

The RSP comprises:

- the Principal Supervisor
- any additional Co-Supervisor(s)
- at least one but normally no more than three advisers, one of whom must be a UCD faculty member. (Advisers may include faculty, adjunct, visiting or research staff or relevant professional staff of the University or external to the University.)
- and the Chair.

Scope

The main duties and responsibilities of the RSP are to:

- ensure quality, rigour and equity of the supervision process
- advise the student on their professional and personal development training and monitor progress against their Research and Professional Development Plan at least once a year
- provide appropriate academic expertise and, where appropriate, facilitate an interdisciplinary perspective
- provide temporary support to the student in the case of the unforeseen absence of the Principal Supervisor
- resolve any difficulties arising in the supervisor-student relationship. RSPs can be convened without the supervisor at the request of the student. Where matters are unresolved, they will be referred to the faculty member responsible for graduate research students in the School
- ensure that the student and Principal Supervisor are fully aware of any issues arising in relation to progress, and have had an opportunity to address these issues in a timely fashion
- ensure that the student is familiar with the assessment criteria well in advance of the Transfer Assessment and knows what is required for Stage 1 to Stage 2 progression (i.e. required reports, presentations, interview etc.)
- offer additional specific support for students or supervisors as requested by the Graduate Research Board.



Additional roles of the RSP Chair:

- **During the RSP meeting:**

At the first RSP meeting, the RSP Chair will explore and comment in the 'Comments' section of the Student Research and Professional Development Plan (RPDP) form* on the following:

- a. Has a plan for supervision be agreed on? If not, this should be discussed at the first RSP meeting.
 - b. Have the Student and Supervisor discussed how to communicate with each other? If not, this should be discussed at the first RSP meeting.
- Students should be asked on the frequency of their meeting with the Supervisor(s).

At later RSP meetings, the RSP Chair will track if the Student-Supervisor meetings are held regularly as per the agreement between the Student and Supervisor in the 'Comments' section.

- **At the end of each RSP meeting:**

The RSP Chair will ask the Supervisor(s) to step out at the end of each RSP meeting, to provide a space for the student to discuss the Supervisor-Student relationship.

- **After each RSP meeting:**

After liaising with the panel members, the RSP Chair will complete the 'Progress Report' and 'Recommendations for the Future' sections of the online RPDP form*. The RSP Chair will sign off the online form on behalf of the RSP members.

The RPDP Form can be accessed by RSP members on **InfoHub** via **'Students' → 'Registration and Class Lists' → 'My RSP Students'** Section.

- **After the Stage Transfer Assessment**, the RSP Chair will monitor the progress of the Student within Stage 2, based on the research plan presented at the Stage Transfer Assessment. If the project is not on track, this should be noted on the form.
- **In Stage 2**, the RSP Chair will encourage discussions around the thesis structure and plan for publications.
- The RSP Chair may flag any issues to the BRDC (medicine.research@ucd.ie).

*Link to the guide using the online RPDP form:

<https://www.ucd.ie/graduatestudies/t4media/RPDP%20Online%20Guide%20V.3%202023.pdf>