**Principles and Guidance Notes to Schools on requests to revise and increase bench fees for a PGR project**

As set out in the University’s bench fees policy bench fees must be set by the School and determined in advance as part of the admissions process and will have been included in the Offer Letter.

Exceptionally, the University and a PGR’s sponsor may mutually agree to a revision and increase of the bench fees agreed at the outset of a project. Such changes are expected to be exceptional and unforeseen. This may include where unforeseen costs have arisen (e.g. unexpected and significant inflationary costs) or where this will be of benefit to the PGR  in terms of the project’s direction and development. Additional bench fees must be carefully costed, and the School must hold, and be able to provide on request, an itemized list of the additional expenditure that the revised bench fee covers.

Requests require written agreement of the PGR, the sponsor and the Head of School, and approval by the PGR Pricing Group. Should you wish to request an additional bench fee please complete the application form below.

Charging and collection of fees, including bench fees, is linked to annual registration which takes place each year on the anniversary of the start date. If a request for additional bench fees is approved by the PGR Pricing Group these will be charged to the sponsor at the point of next annual re-registration. The School may therefore need to underwrite the additional bench fees until registration. The PGR may be required to obtain a revised sponsor letter to enable the Postgraduate Fees team to formally invoice at the point of registration. For this reason it is essential that PGRs are included in conversations about any increase to their bench fees and have given their consent in writing.

There must be no detrimental impact to the PGR with their re-registration, continuation or award in the event of any delay or non-payment of the additional bench fees by the PGR’s sponsor. For this reason, approval from the Head of School must be obtained to underwrite the additional bench fees in the event of any delay or non-payment by the Sponsor.

Where a School finds that the costs of a project have increased but the sponsor does not agree to a revision of the bench fees from those set out in the original offer letter it is expected that the School will underwrite the additional costs to ensure continuation and completion of the PGR’s project. It is not expected that additional bench fees will be charged due to delays with progression meaning new research is continuing into the overtime period. It would be expected that the progress monitoring and supervision meeting arrangements will have picked this up before the end of the standard period of study, and appropriate steps taken at the time.

**Process (Summary)**

Requests can only be made where the School has obtained the written agreement of the PGR, the sponsor and the Head of School to an revision (increase) to a bench fee. The application form should be completed to apply to revise and increase the bench fees. The form should be completed and submitted to the Doctoral College Operations Progression and Examinations Team.

DCO will arrange for the request to be considered by the PG Fees Team before referring to the PGR Pricing Group (Chair acting on behalf of the Group).

If approved, DCO will issue written confirmation to the PGR and the School to confirm the revised bench fee arrangements that have been agreed. Confirmation of approval will be sent to:

* PGR
* Director of PGR Studies
* Supervisors
* Graduate School
* PGR Fees Team shared inbox
* Cc directly to the PGR contact in the PG Fees Team

A copy of the letter will be uploaded to the Project Files in GRAD

DCO will update the PGR’s latest term record in BANNER to record the revision to the bench fees.

* SWARDAT Other Fee Comments filed “Revision of bench fees approved by PGR Pricing Group [date]. Revised details as follows [Record new bench fees]”.
* As part of the registration roll before the anniversary of the start date, DCO will update the Bench Fee field in SWARDAT as needed.

The revised bench fees will then be charged to the sponsor at the point of re-registration. The PGR may be required to obtain a revised sponsor letter to enable the Postgraduate Fees team to formally invoice at the point of registration.

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Approved by: PGR Pricing Group

Document owner: Doctoral College Operations



**Application to revise and increase bench fees for a PGR project**

This form should be completed by the School to request an increase to the bench fees agreed at the outset of the project. The completed form should be completed and submitted to the Doctoral College Operations Progression and Examinations Team (rp\_student@adm.leeds.ac.uk). DCO will arrange for the request to be considered by the PGR Pricing Group.

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| **PGR details** | **Information** |
| PGR Name |  |
| ID number |  |
| School |  |
| Name of sponsor |  |
| Original bench fees | *Please outline the bench fees as agreed in advance and included on the offer letter* |
| Revised bench fees | *Please outline the revised bench fees which have been agreed with the sponsor (this should indicate both the amount to be charged and in which year of study).* |
| Reason for the request | *Please outline the reasons for the exceptional revision of the bench fees from those included on the offer letter. Please summarise the purpose of the revised bench fees and what this will cover and how this is a directly relevant and a necessary for the PGR’s project. This should set out how and why the additional bench fee costs will benefit the PGR and their project* |
| **Declaration: The School confirms the following** |
| The PGR has been consulted and given their consent to the revision to the bench fees and the School holds evidence of this. |  |
| The revised bench fees are directly relevant and a necessary additional requirement for the defined research project. The additional bench fees continue to meet the definition of what can be covered by the bench fees, as set out in the PGR bench fees policy. |  |
| The School holds an itemized list of the additional expenditure that the revised bench fee covers should it be requested either for Audit, by a PGR’s sponsor or by the PGR. |  |
| The PGR’s sponsor has been consulted and the School has received written agreement from the sponsor to pay the additional bench fees requested here. (This should be attached). |  |
| The Head of School has been consulted and agreed to underwrite the additional bench fees requested here in the event of any delay or non-payment of the additional bench fees which may impact the PGR’s registration, continuation or completion. (This should be attached). |  |
| The School understands that if this request is approved by the PGR Pricing Group the additional bench fees will be charged to the sponsor at the point of annual re-registration, and that it may be required to underwrite the additional bench fees until that time. |  |
| **DIRECTOR OF PGR STUDIES (OR HEAD OF SCHOOL) AUTHORISATION** |
| Name: |  |
| Date |  |