

# Advanced Artist Diploma – Progress review and termination of studies

This policy is based on the University of St Andrews document [Progress review and termination of studies for postgraduate research students](#) and has been amended only where necessary to take account of Royal Conservatoire personnel, structures and the practice-based nature of the Advanced Artist Diploma programme offered by the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland.

## Progress Reviews

### Principles

The QAA Quality Code for Research degrees stipulates that higher education institutions must “put in place clearly defined mechanisms for monitoring and supporting research student progress, including formal and explicit reviews of progress at different stages”. ([QAA 2018](#))

### Purpose

The progress review should:

- Ascertain whether the AdvArtDip student has progressed satisfactorily in their programme of study.
- Be a useful feedback exercise.
- Give the student formal practice in talking about their work (the subject of their submission, its importance to the artistic field, and its methodological approach) to an interested audience that may include a non-specialist.
- Promote the timely and successful completion of the Advanced Artist Diploma.
- Identify problems early, and help resolve problems where possible.
- Ascertain whether any decision is required concerning leave of absence, extension, withdrawal, or termination of studies.
- Serve as an opportunity for the student or supervisor to raise any concerns, and as a checkpoint to ensure school and supervisory provisions are satisfactory.

### Procedure

All AdvArtDip students will undergo a formal progress review, normally by month five. The Royal Conservatoire will make the requirements, timing, style, assessment criteria and potential outcomes of these reviews clear to students from the beginning of their programme.

Students with a disability may need reasonable adjustments as set out in the document [Academic Adjustments Guidance: Inclusive Learning and Teaching in a Doctoral Setting](#), and should engage with [Disability Support](#) at the earliest opportunity. Progress reviewers are responsible for implementing the adjustments ‘on the day’.

If, in the course of the review, questions arise regarding whether the Learning Agreement for a disabled student needs review or updating, then reviewers should refer the student to Disability Support to discuss this.

The progress review normally serves as a key checkpoint for engagement monitoring for international students studying on a student visa. If the progress review is being counted as an engagement point it must be in-person, or hybrid with at least one panel member in the room with the student. If alternative arrangements are in place to meet the engagement monitoring requirements (these must be suitably documented), it is not mandatory that the progress review be in-person.

The Royal Conservatoire is responsible for assigning a review panel for each student. The panel should not include any member of the research student's academic supervisory team but may include the mentor where the role is purely pastoral. In the case of a re-review, at least one member of the review panel should be an experienced member of staff.

The following documents are required for progress review:

- Record of 'pass' or 'fail' for the Preparatory Project
- Assessor feedback for the Preparatory Project
- Reports from each of the supervisors
- A student self-assessment report, plan for completion and initial outline of the commentary
- Reviewer's reports from any previous reviews

Students are to be assessed on both the quality and quantity of their work. They should not be judged based on the review panel's own preferences in regards to the artistic merits, topic, method or findings, so long as the work produced is of an appropriate level.

Each student's work will be classified according to one of four categories (see Appendix 1A for outcome descriptions):

- Green – Satisfactory
- Yellow – Minor concerns
- Amber – Major concerns
- Red – Unsatisfactory

After the review meeting, the panel provide feedback and recommend one of the outcomes above. The Programme Committee is responsible for approving the feedback and submitting it to the AdvArtDip Administrator, who will then share it with the student and the supervisor as appropriate. Students should always receive written feedback regarding the outcome of their review, preferably within one week of the review meeting. The Programme Committee may consult with the Convenor of the Research Degrees Committee on any reviews of particular concern, who may in turn consult with the Associate Provost Education.

The Convenor of the Programme Committee is responsible for overseeing the arrangements for the re-reviews. Reviewers' comments from the initial review must be made available for the re-review. Any re-reviews should take place within two months of the initial review.

Red and amber outcomes require a re-review, and red outcomes will result in a termination of studies warning. Two consecutive amber reviews may also result in a termination of studies

warning. Students must be given adequate time between the initial termination of studies warning and the re-review to address the concerns raised at the initial review. This will serve as a probationary warning period and must be at least two months but will not normally be longer than three months. A student must return to green or yellow at the next review in order to be moved off probation. If a student receives an amber following a red review, they will continue on a probationary status with one final opportunity to return to green or yellow before facing termination of studies.

If a student's progress does not return to green or yellow at the re-review, then their case will be referred to the Research Degrees Committee to begin the termination of studies process, unless the student decides to withdraw from the programme.

If a review in the late stages of a student's degree raises significant doubts as to whether the student will be able to submit on time, a re-review should be scheduled to support successful completion.

## Termination of studies

When serious problems regarding a student's progress are identified, it may prove necessary to terminate the student's studies.

The need for termination of studies may be identified:

- A) **Through the progress review.** Students receiving an amber (major concerns) or red (unsatisfactory) outcome must undergo a re-review. If sufficient progress is not demonstrated at this subsequent re-review then the student may be put forward for termination of studies. Students at risk for termination of studies must always receive a written warning after the first review in accordance with section A below.
- B) **Through a supervisor's observations and concerns at any time.** Concerns about a student's progress may be identified and documented by a supervisor who considers that the student's progress is unsatisfactory and/or that the student is failing to engage with normal attendance and supervision arrangements. Should they judge the lack of progress or engagement to be sufficiently serious, termination of studies may be recommended. 'Sufficient seriousness' in this case means that either:
  - i) The supervisor considers that the quantity or quality of artistic output does not reach the required standard based on the student's work in relation to the stage of their studies;
  - ii) That the student has failed to engage with three supervision appointments set by the supervisor and/or there has been no substantive contact with the supervisor for one month or longer, despite communication from the supervisor (see section A below); or
  - iii) The student has failed to adequately engage with and respond to feedback from the supervisor or the annual review process.
- C) **In the event of non-submission past the expected end date.** A student is expected to make their submission on or before their expected end date, see 'Length of Study and Associated Fees'. If the student and/or their supervisory team do not anticipate submission by this date, they should submit a request for an extension at least six weeks before the end date. If a student passes their expected end date, does not submit their submission, nor make an application for extension, and this is not resolved within one calendar month, the student will have their studies terminated (see section B below).

**A. Procedure for termination of studies following initiation either by the annual review committee or by a supervisor**

- 1) In the event of a student's progress being categorised as unsatisfactory or there being persisting major concerns, the student shall be notified in writing of the reasons for the recommendation and warned that termination of studies may be a consequence of the re- review. In addition, the written warning will include notification that termination of studies will lead to:
  - The loss of any research stipend, from the Royal Conservatoire or external funding body;
  - An end to any visa sponsorship by the Royal Conservatoire;
  - The loss of any stipendiary or voluntary role within the Royal Conservatoire that requires the student to be in good standing.

The letter will be copied to the supervisor(s), Head of Programme, Associate Provost Education, Director of Research and Engagement, and the AAS office. If the student's supervisor is the Director of Research and Engagement, the Academic Registrar will have responsibility for communicating with the student.

- 2) If the problems have been resolved to the satisfaction of the principal supervisor and Director of Research and Engagement at the end of the probationary warning period and the re-review process, no termination of studies will be pursued.
- 3) If problems have not been resolved to the satisfaction of the principal supervisor and Director of Research and Engagement at the end of the probationary warning period and the re-review process, then the Director of Research and Engagement will recommend termination of studies in writing to the Associate Provost Education, copied to the student, supervisor(s), Head of Programme, Academic Registrar and AAS office. The final decision on termination of studies is taken by the Associate Provost Education.
- 4) Where the recommendation of termination of studies is upheld, the Academic Registrar will write to the student to inform them, copied to: the supervisor(s), Head of Programme, Associate Provost Education, Director of Research and Engagement and the AAS office. The letter will include information on the University appeals process. Any research stipend received by the student, and any contingent voluntary or stipendiary officer's role fulfilled by them (see step 1 above) will cease once the Academic Registrar has confirmed termination and any appeals process has been concluded or the appeal deadline has passed without an appeal being raised by the student.
- 5) Where the recommendation of termination of studies is not upheld, the Associate Provost Education will write to the Director of Research and Engagement setting out the reasons and recommending an appropriate course of action. Such action may include: re-registration of the student for an alternative degree, where such an option is available and considered appropriate; returning to an earlier stage of this procedure; or the collation of additional documentation before termination can be finalised as

described in 4.

**B. Procedure for termination of studies following non-submission or failure to apply for an extension to study by the expected end date**

- 1) Students who do not make their submission by their expected end date will receive an email alert 14 days later informing them that they have not submitted their submission and must either submit this as soon as possible to moodle or apply for an extension to study.
- 2) If the student does not make their submission, nor apply for an extension to study, 21 days after their expected end date, a final e-mail will be sent informing them that they will be required to apply for an extension to study, and if an application is not received within 7 days, their studies will be terminated.
- 3) If the student has not applied for an extension to study, or contacted the Director of Research and Engagement to discuss the circumstances surrounding their non-submission 28 days after their expected end date has passed, the Academic Registrar will write to the student to inform them that their studies have been terminated, copied to: the Associate Provost Education, the Director of Research and Engagement, supervisor(s), Head of Programme, and AAS office and indicate the route of appeal.
- 4) A student on a Student visa who has had their studies terminated will be reported to UKVI as no longer fulfilling the sponsorship criteria, after any appeals process has been concluded or the appeal deadline has passed without an appeal being raised by the student.

## **Appendix A: progress review outcome codes**

### **Colour coding: Green**

#### **Review outcome: Satisfactory**

##### **Description**

The student's preparatory project was graded a 'pass' by the internal examiners. The student is able to situate their work in the context of previous literature and/or performance practice, and has a realistic plan for their final project and commentary. All required research training has been completed. This category does not preclude reviewers from having advice or suggestions which may aid the student.

##### **Resulting actions**

The result of the review, including any suggestions for improvement from the reviewers, is to be shared with the student and their supervisor.

### **Colour coding: Yellow**

#### **Review outcome: Minor concerns**

##### **Description**

The student's preparatory project was graded a 'pass' by the internal examiners. The student is able to situate their work in the context of previous literature and/or performance practice, and has a realistic plan for their final project and commentary. However, the reviewers noted areas of potential improvement. In performance, there may be aspects of technique, musicality, contextual understanding and/or presentation that could be further developed. The panel may suggest that the student would benefit from reviewing further literature and/or existing performance practice: this category may also be used where the required research training has not been completed.

##### **Resulting actions**

A re-review is not required. The Head of Programme will, at their discretion, correspond with the student and/or their supervisor regarding the recommendations made by the review panel, and any specific actions the student may need to take.

### **Colour coding: Amber**

#### **Review outcome: Major concerns**

##### **Description**

The student's preparatory project was graded a 'pass' by the internal examiners. However, the reviewers have concerns over the quality and standard of the work produced. There may be issues in the areas of technique, musicality, contextual understanding and/or presentation that will need to be addressed. The plans for the final project and commentary may be underdeveloped or unrealistic.

## **Resulting actions**

A resit of the performance is not required, but there must be an action plan and a re-review scheduled within two months. Two consecutive amber reviews can be treated the same as a red outcome and may initiate the first written warning for possible termination of studies should problems continue to be evident. If a student receives an amber following a red review they will continue on probation with one final opportunity to return to green or yellow before facing termination of studies.

## **Colour coding: Red**

### **Review outcome: Unsatisfactory**

#### **Description**

The student's preparatory project was graded a 'fail' by the internal examiners. There are significant doubts as to the student's ability to produce a body of work that meets the requirements of the degree. There may be unacceptable lapses in technique, musicality, contextual understanding and/or presentation. On the evidence of the work demonstrated for the preparatory project, any plans advanced for the final project and commentary may seem highly unrealistic.

#### **Resulting actions**

A resit of the performance is required, together with an action plan and a re-review scheduled within three months. A red outcome places a student on probation and initiates the first written warning for termination of studies.