



University
of Glasgow

Making the most of your Annual Progress Review (APR)



Aims of 'Making the most of your APR' session

- **Remind you**
 - of the purpose of the Annual Progress Review (APR)
 - of timings, process and requirements
- **Encourage you**
 - that APR is a positive process, not one to be worried about
- **Reassure you**
 - that APR helps keep students on track for a successful PhD outcome
- **Help you**
 - understand the assessment process ('traffic light system')
- **Answer your questions**
 - de-mystify & 'de-stress' the APR process

Purpose of the Annual Progress Review

- APR is an **essential requirement** of the Graduate School for every PhD student
- The main purpose of the APR is to **assess the student's progress in relation to their stage of study**
- Assessment is an important part of this process; more specifically APR will provide:
 - *an opportunity for PGR student and assessors to discuss all aspects of work and achievements*
 - *an opportunity for the PGR student and assessors to discuss any issues about their research experience.*
 - *feedback to the PGR student on their research, personal development & performance*

APR timings, process and requirements

- PGR annual report and progress review forms due to be uploaded by **30th June**
- It is envisaged that Panel meetings will take place through July to mid August
- College of MVLS completion date is **31st August 2021**
 - PGR Convenor to provide recommendation for each student by then
- APR panel meetings will take place online via Zoom this year
 - students should organise meeting directly with their Panel members
- APR presentation element is scheduled for late August / early September
 - First Year: 10 minute planning overview presentation (may or may not include data)
 - Second Year: 3 minute flash presentation of a scientific poster (or 1 or 2 slides)
 - Third Year: 15 minute presentation of chosen research theme from your thesis

APR – The Report

- Your annual report (of the preceding 12 months work) should be approximately 3,000 words in the style of a journal appropriate to your discipline, and should contain
 - Abstract,
 - Introduction,
 - Materials and Methods,
 - Results, and
 - Discussion
- In addition, there should be a 500–1000 word section detailing the planned incoming year's work with potential pitfalls and solutions identified
- COVID mitigation plan

APR - The Panel Meeting or 'interview'

- **Who are your Panel assessors?**
 - Panel members are typically academics or senior postdocs appointed by your PI before you started your PhD. There should be two panel members.
- **Should my supervisor be involved?**
 - Panel meetings would not normally involve direct supervisors
 - Panel meetings provide students with an opportunity to raise issues or concerns they may prefer not to discuss with their supervisor
 - This is a chance for **independent, objective assessors** to gauge progress

APR - The Panel Meeting or 'interview'

- [Formal Assessment Interview \(MS Word\)](#) is carried out by two assessors who are not involved in the supervision of the student.
- The assessors meet with the student face-to-face for a formal interview.
- At this point, remedial action is agreed upon if required.
- The panel must upload a formal note of the meeting and action points within one week of the interview. 
- The Postgraduate Convener assigns a progression marker to each student. This marker is based on a [Traffic light \(MS Word\)](#) system.
- Once completed, you can register for the next academic session if appropriate.
- Check with your local [Postgraduate Convener](#) for any extra requirements.

Institute of Cancer Sciences ANNUAL PROGRESS REVIEW INTERVIEW GUIDE
Version 1 – updated 24.02.2016

STUDENT NAME	
YEAR OF STUDY	
REVIEWER PANEL NAMES	
DATE OF REVIEW	
<i>This is a guide for reviewers for the annual PGR progress review interview. Please ensure all areas are covered, including future career plans, and brief notes are completed. This form can be printed for use in the interview and also completed as a word document for upload to the PGR system.</i>	
SUPERVISORY MEETING ARRANGEMENTS/FREQUENCY	
RESEARCH PROGRESS	
WRITING PROGRESS	
PRESENTATIONS/CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE/PUBLICATIONS	
FUTURE CAREER PLANS	

APR – variations in process and requirements

- **All students** should complete a **Data Management Plan** (unless they are very early in PhD planning e.g., completing Initial Review under Year 1 Annual Review tab owing to a late start)
- **Year 1** students should be in a position to complete this after discussion with their Supervisor
- Upload DMP along with your Annual Report and other documents for the APR **
- Students about to enter **Thesis Pending** year, should submit a **Thesis Plan** as part of their 3rd Annual Report

Some students submit a **DMP in the early stages which they then amend over time.

College Graduate School guidance

<https://www.gla.ac.uk/colleges/mvls/graduateschool/currentpgrstudentinformation/pgrannualreviewprocess/>

PURPOSE OF THE PGR PROGRESS REVIEW

The process allows you and your supervisor(s) to plan your training needs for the year. You can also plan for regular milestones for progression.

The reviews are as follows:

- **Year 1:** Complete an initial review and annual review
- **All following years:** Complete an annual review only

Log in to the online system: [PGR Review Process - Online System](#).

Please note the new questions on the impact of Covid-19 for you to complete after having discussed this with your Supervisor.

[Year 1](#)

[All students apart from Year 1](#)

[Part-time Students](#)

[MSc by Research Students](#)

[MVLS Doctoral Training Programme Students](#)

[Furth of Glasgow](#)

[PGR Progress Review FAQs](#)

[Log in: PGR Progress Review System](#)

Online Form

4. Have you and/or your supervisors identified any issues which are affecting your progress? (e.g. skills gaps, facilities/equipment available, etc). If yes, please give details of the issues identified and how these will be resolved.

No

5. How often do you discuss your project with your Supervisor? (Face to face)

Monthly

6. How often do you discuss your project with your Supervisor? (Email)

Weekly

7. How often do you discuss your project with your Supervisor? (Telephone)

Never

8. How satisfied are you with this arrangement?

Satisfied

9. How do you find these meetings?

Useful

10. Do you receive adequate feedback on written work (eg Literature Review)?

Yes

cont.,

13. Please provide a summary of the objectives you and your supervisory team have agreed for the coming session? (e.g. fieldwork, written work, publication, thesis submission, conference attendance, project management training etc. Please give details of nature, volume and deadlines as appropriate)

The first objective is to complete the systematic review, the time frame for this is currently dependent on the outcome of the initial screening and how many papers have been identified for review. Alongside the systematic review I will be experimenting with different modelling techniques with example data in order to gain more practical experience.

14. Are there any training or development opportunities not currently provided that you would find useful? If so, please specify.

More R workshops. Although there are workshops available the are currently full and in high demand.

15. If you wish to make any other comments about your experience as a research student within the Graduate School, you may do so here – or separately, and confidentially, to the Graduate School Office (mvls-gradschool@glasgow.ac.uk).

No

16. Please confirm thesis submission date. Please note that an extension is granted only under extreme circumstances

31st September 2023

This is your thesis submission date, fourth anniversary of your start date, not the date you are uploading to the APR

cont.,

29. COVID-19 Question: Please explain the ways in which you think your research could be or has been affected by the coronavirus lockdown e.g. collection of data, access to resources.

30. COVID-19 Question: Has lockdown affected you and your personal circumstance in other ways that will affect your studies e.g. financial, physical or mental health, childcare, family health concerns, return to clinical work, assisting with testing? If yes, please briefly provide any information you feel is appropriate to support your situation.

31. COVID-19 Question: What action have you taken to 'continue, minimise or mitigate' the impact on your research? What further challenges remain?

***Please take time to add detail as this can be used as evidence of the impact of COVID on your progress.*

APR – COVID mitigation

University of Glasgow
College of Medical, Veterinary and Life Sciences

Mitigation Plan to reduce the Impact of COVID-19 on the PGR student population

General

- Students will be instructed that they MUST discuss with their supervisor a mitigation plan to reduce the impact of COVID-19 lockdown on their research. This should include possible adjustments to their research work plan and maintain a record of any lost time due to, for example, lack of access to an appropriate resource, a period of illness, needing to attend to caring responsibilities, or returning to clinical duties.
- Students and supervisors will be expected to engage with annual review as scheduled in order to review progress over the last year and enable you to raise any issues you have encountered or foresee over the next progression period. The review should be completed remotely using, for example, Zoom or Skype. A record of impacting factors should be recorded within the online progress portal.

Online Form

Annual				
Section	First Emailed	Submitted	View	Override Submit
Self Assessment				Override Submit
Supervisor Report 1				Override Submit
Supervisor Report 2				Override Submit
Review Panel Recommendation				Override Submit
Student Statement				Override Submit
Recommendation			Submit	

- Sequential system
 - begin with Self Assessment & upload documents (Report, DMP, Thesis Plan where appropriate)
- Only once you have completed your section, can the next down the line upload, and so on
 - alert your supervisors when you have uploaded to APR
 - encourage both supervisors to complete
- Concludes with Student Statement which is affirmation that you have read everything

Online Form – Convenor Recommendation

based on all submissions (self assessment/sups/review panel for each individual student)



- I recommend that the student be permitted to register for the coming session
- I recommend that the student be permitted register for the coming session subject to the following conditions (minor action required, please provide details below)
- I DO NOT recommend that the student be permitted to register unless the following substantial action is taken (please provide details below)
- Student is due to submit their thesis and only requires to register to complete their degree
- Student has completed, no requirement for progression
- Student should be excluded from further study (please provide details below) or has withdrawn



Making the most of your APR - Summing up

Annual Progress Review is an important opportunity to:

- monitor, collate and synthesise the previous 12 months of your PhD;
- share your work and research progress with independent senior academic colleagues to receive constructive and helpful feedback;
- reflect on important decisions, developments and turning points that have shaped your research endeavour;
- reflect on some of the challenges you may have faced in the previous year to help you think about solutions;
- reflect on the broader aspects of your development particularly the development of specific research skills and competences as well as broader attributes that you have cultivated during your PhD.

cont.,

Making the most of your APR – Summing up

- Don't worry about your APR but take it seriously – your Panel assessors are there to help
- The majority of students are 'green lighted' and those 'amber lighted' students typically require *minor actions* such as preparing a thesis plan or refining their research questions
- Use the APR as a time to
 - 'take stock' of your progress
 - to focus discussions with your supervisors on your progress and next steps (looking at the big picture rather than individual analyses or chapters)
 - ask your Panel questions about your progress, and for their advice
- Treat APR as an annual 'mini viva' – practice for when you have your real PhD viva
- Once you graduate your PhD, you too can become a reviewer !

Any question about your Annual Progress Review (APR)?

