

# Part 9

## Research Degrees

**IMPORTANT: THESE REGULATIONS APPLY TO STUDENTS ENROLLED IN OR AFTER SEPTEMBER 2016.**

### 1 General Principles

- 1.1 A copy of these Regulations (Part 9) shall be supplied to all research degree students, supervisors, examiners and administrators. In the event of any contradiction or inconsistency between these Regulations and any other published material relating to the research degrees of our University, these Regulations prevail.
- 1.2 These Regulations, as per the Quality Assurance Agency's Code of Practice, apply to MPhil, PhD (including MPhils and PhDs awarded on the basis of published work), all forms of Professional Doctorate, and research Master's degrees where the research component (including a requirement to produce original work), is larger than the taught component when measured by student effort.
- 1.3 Our research degrees are awarded primarily on the basis of a substantial thesis or body of published work or equivalent research output in a form other than the written word submitted by a student resulting from the student's original research and defended by oral examination to the satisfaction of individually appointed examiners (see Section 12 of these Regulations).
- 1.4 Our University awards the following research degrees:
- A Master's award that contains a research component which is larger than any accompanying taught component when measured by student effort;
  - Master of Philosophy (MPhil) to students who successfully complete an approved course of research skills development and supervised research culminating in the submission of a thesis of a requisite standard;

- Professional Doctorate (PD) to students who have made an independent and original contribution to a specific professional area and who have successfully completed an approved course of study informed by or entailing professional practice and that incorporates a formal taught element, an approved course of research skills development and a research element culminating in the submission of a thesis or theses of a requisite standard;
- Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) to students who successfully complete an approved course of research skills development and supervised research culminating in the submission of a thesis of a requisite standard;
- European Doctorate (PhD(Eur)) to students who successfully complete an approved course of research skills development and supervised research culminating in the submission of a thesis of a requisite standard, and in accordance with the regulations in Appendix D
- Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) and Master of Philosophy (MPhil) by published work to members of our University and associated institutions who submit a substantial body of published or creative/non-textual works of a requisite standard; (see Appendix B for related Regulations)
- Higher Doctorate to members of our University and associated institutions in recognition of the professional and academic accomplishment of a leading authority in the applicable field of study over a sustained period of time who has made an original and significant contribution to the advancement or application of knowledge in that field (see Appendix C for related Regulations)

See the *Manual of General Regulations, Part 1: Descriptions of our University's Awards* for further information on the scope and descriptions of research degrees awarded by our University.

- 1.5 Our University is committed to ensuring that the research degrees it awards and confers are consistent in standard with research degrees awarded and conferred throughout United Kingdom Higher Education Institutions.
- 1.6 Our University will develop, implement and regularly review a *Code of Practice* and make this readily available to students and staff involved in postgraduate research degree courses. The *Code of Practice* is available for download from our Graduate School web pages.
- 1.7 Courses of research may be proposed in any field of study subject to the requirement that the proposed course is capable of leading to scholarly research and to its presentation for assessment by appropriate examiners. The thesis or theses may be in other than written form depending on the norms of

the discipline but, in such cases, will include a substantial written commentary contextualising the nature of the research component. All proposed postgraduate research courses will be considered for enrolment on their academic merits and on the ability of our University to provide an appropriate research environment, without reference to the concerns or interests of any associated funding body.

- 1.8 Course Leaders for Professional Doctorate courses may apply to Academic Board for permission to operate in whole, or in part, outside of the provisions of Part 9 of the *Manual of General Regulations* but only where this is required by a Professional Body and where Academic Board is assured that the requested change in practice produces an outcome that aligns with relevant QAA precepts.
- 1.9 Where a candidate for a postgraduate research award has a disability or other form of specific learning need that may require reasonable adjustment to any of the regulatory requirements set out in Part 9 they should seek advice from the *Disability, Dyslexia & Access Centre (DDAC)*.

## **2 Admissions requirements for the degrees of Research Master's, Master of Philosophy, Doctor of Philosophy and Professional Doctorate**

- 2.1 The minimum entry requirement for the degree of Research Master's or MPhil is a second class Honours degree, or above, of a United Kingdom Higher Education Institution, or a qualification which is regarded by Research Degrees Subcommittee as equivalent to such (e.g. a verifiable overseas qualification).
- 2.2 The normal entry requirement for the degree of PhD via MPhil or Professional Doctorate is a first or upper second class Honours degree of a United Kingdom Higher Education Institution, or a qualification which is regarded by Research Degrees Subcommittee as equivalent to such (e.g. a verifiable overseas qualification).
- 2.3 Applications from candidates holding qualifications and/or experience other than those set out in 2.1 & 2.2 will be considered by Research Degrees Subcommittee on their merits and in relation to the nature and scope of the course of work proposed.
- 2.4 In considering applicants our University will look for evidence of a candidate's ability and background knowledge in relation to the proposed field of study. Professional experience or publications, written reports or other appropriate evidence of accomplishment will be taken into consideration. Research Degrees Subcommittee may require an applicant to pass an externally assessed qualifying examination at final year Honours degree level, arranged by our University, before admission is approved.
- 2.5 Direct enrolment for the degree of PhD may be permitted for candidates who hold a research Master's degree (MPhil or equivalent) awarded by our

University, by the Council for National Academic Awards (CNAA) or by a United Kingdom or international Higher Education Institution.

- 2.6 Where English is not the applicant's first language, a minimum IELTS Academic English, or as our University deems equivalent, score of 7.0 overall, with a minimum of 6.5 in all components, is required at entry for MPhil, MPhil/PhD, PhD Direct and Professional Doctorate students. For a research masters, the requirement is a minimum IELTS Academic English, or as our University deems equivalent, score of 6.5 overall, with a minimum of 6.0 in all components. Such assessment of English language competence must normally have been undertaken no more than two years prior to application, though relevant and more recent study in a United Kingdom Higher Education Institution may be accepted as sufficient proof of ability.
- 2.7 No research degree student may be employed by our University or any relevant collaborative institution to assess any taught or professional element(s) that constitute part of the course for which they are about to enrol or are enrolled.
- 2.8 Admissions decisions will involve at least two members of staff, at least one of whom is an academic of our University, who have received staff development in the selection and admission of research degree students.

### **3 Minimum and maximum periods for the degrees of Masters (acquired primarily by research), Master of Philosophy, Doctor of Philosophy and Professional Doctorate**

- 3.1 The normal minimum and maximum periods of study for research degrees are:

	<i>Minimum</i>	<i>Maximum</i>
<i>Masters (acquired primarily by Research)</i>		
<i>Full-time</i>	<i>12 months</i>	<i>24 months</i>
<i>Part-time</i>	<i>24 months</i>	<i>48 months</i>
<i>MPhil</i>		
<i>Full-time</i>	<i>24 months</i>	<i>36 months</i>
<i>Part-time</i>	<i>48 months</i>	<i>60 months</i>
<i>PhD (via transfer from MPhil)</i>		
<i>Full-time</i>	<i>36 months</i>	<i>48 months</i>
<i>Part-time</i>	<i>60 months</i>	<i>84 months</i>
<i>PhD(Eur)</i>		
<i>Full-time</i>	<i>36 months</i>	<i>48 months</i>
<i>Part-time</i>	<i>60 months</i>	<i>84 months</i>

### *Professional Doctorate*

Full-time See Individual courses

Part-time See Individual courses

### *PhD (direct)*

Full-time 36 months 48 months

Part-time 60 months 84 months

- 3.2 Normally a student may not submit their thesis for examination until they have been enrolled for the minimum period stipulated in 3.3. Exceptionally, Research Degrees Subcommittee may agree a shorter enrolment period (see 3.11).

### **Continuation status**

- 3.3 The stage between the end of the minimum period and the end of the maximum period is known as the continuation status. The application for continuation “status” can only be made once the minimum study period has elapsed and is tenable for a maximum of twelve months only for full time students and a maximum of twenty-four months for part-time students; except for students enrolled on a Masters (acquired primarily by research) where the continuation status will last a maximum of six months for full time students and a maximum of twelve months for part time students.
- 3.4 During the relevant Annual Monitoring Review, the panel will assess the evidence presented by the student and may recommend to the School Research Degrees Subcommittee (SRDSC) that the student proceeds to continuation status based on the quantity and quality of the work submitted at the end of the minimum period.

The Panel will be responsible for providing the necessary confirmation to SRDSC that the following conditions for transfer to continuation status have been met:

- *confirmation that the minimum study period has elapsed;*
  - *confirmation that a significant number of draft chapters of the thesis are complete or nearing completion;*
  - *confirmation that the student no longer requires access to our University’s research facilities, laboratories, resources and equipment beyond that required for the writing-up of their research findings;*
  - *confirmation that primary data gathering and data analysis activities are complete.*
- 3.5 Where the student is not ready to proceed to continuation status because there is no expectation that the student will submit the final version of the thesis for examination during the maximum period, Research Degrees Subcommittee may extend the minimum period for up to one academic year for students enrolled on an MPhil, PhD or Professional Doctorate, and up to one term for students enrolled on a Masters (acquired primarily by research)on

the recommendation from the SRDSC only on exceptional circumstances. The student will continue to pay the full tuition fee.

- 3.6 A student shall normally submit his/her thesis for examination when holding the continuation status. A further extension will only be agreed in exceptional circumstances and only by RDSC on the recommendation from SRDSC. The scenarios that will normally be considered as exceptional circumstances are mentioned in 3.15 and 3.16 below.
- 3.7 If submission is still not achieved by the end of this additional period, their enrolment with our University will be withdrawn.
- 3.8 Professional Doctorate courses may make provision for a continuation period though this will depend on the particular course.
- 3.9 Where there is evidence that the research is proceeding exceptionally well, Research Degrees Subcommittee may approve a shorter study/registration period than normal. It is expected that a student will submit the thesis (or other form of assessment) at the end of the approved shorter study/registration period. Therefore, a shorter study/registration period will not follow a continuation status; in other words, a shorter study period is not an opportunity to decrease the minimum study period and still apply to continuation status. The length of the period decreased will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and will be approved based on the merit of the application.
- 3.10 Where students change from full to part-time study or *vice versa*, via PhD Manager, their minimum and maximum period is calculated on a *pro rata* basis.
- 3.11 Students may (unless prohibited by Professional and Statutory Regulatory Body requirements) suspend their period of enrolment for an initial period of twelve months, over the duration of their postgraduate research course, with the agreement of the Director of Studies and SRDSC.
- 3.12 Any request for the approval of a period of suspension must be submitted on PhD Manager and be accompanied by suitable and sufficient documentary evidence and should be submitted in advance of the proposed period of suspension. Students and members of the supervisory team should note that, retrospective suspension applications, prior to the current academic year, will not normally be considered.
- 3.13 All international students (i.e. not Home / EU) on a student visa may only request a suspension of enrolment, via PhD Manager, following prior consultation and approval from the International Office.
- 3.14 Students enrolled on an MPhil, PhD or Professional Doctorate may (unless prohibited by Professional and Statutory Regulatory Body requirements) be granted a further suspension of their enrolment/registration for one or two complete semesters up to a maximum of a further twelve months. Such requests will only normally be considered in exceptional circumstances and

must be agreed by the Director of Studies via PhD Manager. Suspensions beyond the initial period of twelve months are at the discretion of Research Degrees Subcommittee.

3.15 The scenarios which follow are typical of what may normally be considered exceptional circumstances:

- a) The student has suffered from a serious physical or mental illness;
- b) The student has experienced the death or serious illness of a partner/spouse, close family member or friend;
- c) The student has been the victim of a criminal act;
- d) The student has suffered distress due to a natural disaster or catastrophe, such as flood, fire or tornado;
- e) General unforeseen or unpreventable circumstances or events that have caused distress or injury as a result of a serious accident;
- f) The student has experienced significant personal problems relating to a close family member or a close personal relationship;
- g) The source of funding for the course of research or postgraduate research degree tuition fee has changed;
- h) The student has experienced a delay in obtaining ethical approval for the course of research due to external factors and where the application was submitted in a timely fashion;
- i) Failure of essential specialist equipment where delays have been the result of identifying alternative equipment or where this has not been possible;
- j) The student was selected for jury service;
- k) The course of research has been subject to delays caused by a change in members of the supervisory team;
- l) Any period of internship or vocational placement essential to the degree course.

3.16 The scenarios which follow are typical of what would not normally be considered exceptional circumstances:

- a) The student and/or Director of Studies were unaware of the policy and process relating to requests for suspension of enrolment for a postgraduate research degree.
- b) The course of research requires further primary research, fieldwork or laboratory work;
- c) The student was engaged in voluntary service overseas;
- d) The student was enrolled on another course of study;
- e) The student was engaged in a temporary teaching position or lectureship;
- f) Insufficient or inadequate time management, planning and preparation;
- g) Circumstances relating to normal pregnancy, excluding standard maternity leave entitlement;
- h) The student was involved in a long-term holiday or vacation;
- i) Failure of non-University computer systems or media storage devices;

- j) Failure of University equipment or storage media, where failure is less than a continuous 24 hour period;
  - k) The student has moved home or place of employment;
  - l) The student has experienced difficulties with the English language;
  - m) Delays have occurred due to proof-reading of the thesis.
- 3.17 For the duration of the approved period of suspension, enrolment will be put on hold and no tuition fees will be payable. The degree is suspended and the period of study and submission date for the thesis will be adjusted by a corresponding period.
- 3.18 Throughout the period of suspension, student access rights to on-campus resources, the Library, UEL Direct and PhD Manager will be held in abeyance. The student should have no access to supervisory support other than occasional contact.
- 3.19 If a student is unable to recommence study at the University after a maximum period of twenty-four months suspension, their enrolment with our University will be withdrawn.
- 3.20 An approved period of suspension must commence on the first day of the relevant term.

#### **4 Registration process for Masters (acquired primarily by research), MPhil, PhD, and Professional Doctorate courses**

- 4.1 Registration of the research component can only take place following approval by Research Degrees Subcommittee that the requirements in 4.3 have been met. This approval requires appropriate academic judgement to be brought to bear on the viability of each research proposal. For this purpose, our University ensures that School Research Degrees Sub-Committees are composed of persons who are, or who have engaged in, research and who have appropriate experience of successful research degree supervision.
- 4.2 In the case of Professional Doctorates, Schools may, if they deem it necessary to exercise appropriate academic judgement, constitute course specific sub-groups to make recommendations to School Research Degrees Sub-Committees concerning registration. The constitution of such groups will be as specified in the terms of reference of School Research Degrees Sub-Committees as agreed by Academic Board.
- 4.3 In considering applications for registration, Research Degrees Subcommittee shall satisfy itself that the following requirements are met:
- (a) that students are suitably qualified;



- (b) that students are embarking on viable research courses;
  - (c) that supervision is adequate and likely to be sustained;
  - (d) that the research environment is suitable.
- 4.4 Registration, via PhD Manager, for full-time students must occur within six calendar months of the date of enrolment and may be backdated to that date. Registration for part-time students must occur within twelve calendar months of the date of enrolment and may be backdated to that date.
- 4.5 Research Degrees Subcommittee may consider applications from students domiciled in the United Kingdom proposing to conduct research outside of the United Kingdom, provided the following conditions are met:
- (a) Satisfactory evidence is provided as to the suitability of the proposed research environment;
  - (b) That the arrangements proposed for supervision enable frequent and substantial contact between the student and supervisor(s) based in the United Kingdom, including adequate face-to-face contact with the supervisor(s) and that such contact is documented. The student should not normally spend less than an average of six calendar weeks per academic year at our University.
- 4.6 A policy is in place regarding arrangements for MPhil or PhD students domiciled outside of the United Kingdom ('split-site' students) and Schools must follow this when considering applications and putting in place supervision arrangements.
- 4.7 Where a research degree project is part of a piece of funded research, Research Degrees Subcommittee must establish to its satisfaction that the terms on which the research is funded do not detract from the fulfilment of the objectives and requirements of the student's research degree.
- 4.8 Where a student has previously undertaken research as an enrolled student for a research degree at another higher education institution, Research Degrees Subcommittee may approve a shorter than usual study period which takes account of all or part of the time already spent by the student on said research. As a minimum, a student who transfers in this fashion must be registered as a research degree student with our University for 12 months on a full-time basis.
- 4.9 Research Degrees Subcommittee may permit a student to enrol for another course of study concurrently with their research degree enrolment, provided that either their research degree enrolment or the other course of study is undertaken on a part-time basis. A research degree student of our University may not be concurrently enrolled for a research degree at another institution without the permission of Research Degrees Subcommittee.

- 4.10 Where a student and our University wishes the thesis to remain confidential for a period of time after completion of the work, application for approval should normally be made to Research Degrees Subcommittee at the time of registration. In cases where the need for confidentiality emerges after registration, a special application for the thesis to remain confidential after submission must be made immediately to Research Degrees Subcommittee. The period approved shall not normally exceed two years.
- 4.11 Students whose work forms part of a larger group project may enrol for a research degree. In such cases, each individually registered project must in itself be distinguishable for the purposes of assessment and be appropriate for the award being sought. The application must indicate clearly each individual contribution and its relationship to the group project.

## **5 Award titles and intermediate awards for Professional Doctorates**

- 5.1 Each approved Professional Doctorate course shall lead to a named doctorate, the title of which shall refer to the discipline or professional area involved, and which shall be agreed at (re)approval.
- 5.2 In the case of some named Professional Doctorates, provision may be made for an intermediate award of Postgraduate Certificate (PGCert), Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip), MA, MRes, MProf or MSc. An intermediate award shall only be conferred if the requirements for the award given in the course specification have been met.
- 5.3 Where a Professional Doctorate offers intermediate awards and/or modules that are also components of a UEL Master's Degree, the taught components will be approved at level 7, will be modularised, and will conform in all respects to the agreed University Modular Regulations. All other taught components of a Professional Doctorate will be approved at D level or level 8 and will conform in all respects to the agreed University regulations for D level or level 8 modules.

## **6 Skills development for Masters (acquired primarily by research), MPhil, PhD, and Professional Doctorate courses**

- 6.1 Students for Masters (acquired primarily by research), MPhil and PhD are required to follow a defined generic -plan of skills development. It is expected that the contents of the plan will be defined at the beginning of the academic year by discussions between the students and their supervisors based on a skills audit. The plan should provide a framework for the students detailing the development of their skills throughout their course and should be reviewed at the end of the academic year as part of the students' annual progression. The plan should be logged in PhD Manager.

This plan shall have the following objectives:

- (a) To provide students with an understanding of the nature of research processes and contexts, debates about the nature of research, theories of knowledge production, critical thinking and the wider impact of research;
- (b) To provide students with opportunities to develop a range of personal and professional skills necessary for the preparation, planning, organisation and management of research projects;
- (c) To provide students with opportunities for the development of co-operative networks and working relationships within our University and the wider research community.
- (d) To provide students with skills that will improve their career management, time management and employability,
- (e) To provide students with the necessary understanding regarding the principles of research governance, and professional conduct to perform research with integrity under an ethical framework.

6.2 Students for a Professional Doctorate shall be required to undertake an integrated course of work which includes a course of taught postgraduate study on which their performance is formally assessed, and which incorporates the objectives in 6.1 above.

6.3 The University will provide all students for Masters (acquired primarily by research), MPhil, PhD and Professional Doctorates with appropriate opportunities for personal, professional and research skills development throughout the enrolment period. However, opportunities to receive training outside the University should also be considered.

6.4 Research Degrees Subcommittee will regularly review the development of research and generic skills provided to students for Masters (acquired primarily by research), MPhil, PhD and Professional Doctorate.

## **7 Course of study for Professional Doctorate awards**

7.1 A Professional Doctorate course of our University may provide for students to claim prior experiential and/or certified credit against some of the taught parts of the course as per the agreed university procedures in the *Manual of General Regulations, Part 3c: Doctoral Regulations*.

7.2 The course of study for each named Professional Doctorate shall be approved and reviewed in accordance with such arrangements as may from time to time be specified by Academic Board. The course specification must include

provision for Research Degrees Subcommittee to approve and register the research element of the course and must specify the procedure for doing so.

- 7.3 Students will be required to undertake an individual piece of research in which the student's own professional practice forms, as a point of origin or reference, a significant part of the intellectual enquiry. Such professional practice may be in any relevant field but must have been undertaken as part of the enrolled course.

## **8 Supervision for Masters (acquired primarily by research), MPhil, Professional Doctorate, and PhD courses**

- 8.1 All Masters (acquired primarily by research), MPhil, PhD and Professional Doctorate students at the research stage shall have at least two, and not more than three, supervisors who together demonstrate an appropriate range of academic and/or professional experience, engagement in research activity and has relevant publications
- 8.2 One member of the supervisory team shall be appointed as the Director of Studies and will ensure that the student is supervised on a regular, frequent and recorded basis via PhD Manager. A nominated member of the supervisory team will be the main point of contact between the student and the supervisory team and shall be responsible for agreeing the allocation of academic responsibilities within the supervisory team.
- 8.3 At least one supervisor shall have experience of successful supervision to completion of a research degree comparable to that for which the student is enrolled. In the case of an application to enrol for PhD or PhD via transfer from MPhil, one of the supervisors must have successfully supervised to PhD level.
- 8.4 A supervisory team is normally expected to have a combined experience of research degree supervision to successful completion of no fewer than two students.
- 8.5 Where only one member of the supervisory team has previously supervised a student to successful completion the University recommends that they serve as the Director of Studies. Normally, the proposed Director of Studies will have previously supervised at least one postgraduate research student to successful completion. Where this is not the case the rationale for the exception will be recorded in the relevant minutes of the School Research Degrees Subcommittee.
- 8.6 Research Degrees Subcommittee may permit the use of supervisors external to our University or collaborative partners provided suitable expertise cannot be provided by current staff. Any external supervisor appointed must have completed any relevant staff development equivalent to that expected of members of staff at UEL or a collaborative partner. External supervisors are not however permitted to be Directors of Study.

- 8.7 People holding emeritus positions at UEL may continue as a supervisor only on the nomination of the relevant School and where Research Degrees Subcommittee agrees it is in the best interests of the student and the university.
- 8.8 Where the use of external expertise is needed but the individual(s) cannot act as a supervisor, they may hold the status of advisor.
- 8.9 No person who is receiving supervision for a research degree at any Higher Education Institution may act as a supervisor.
- 8.10 Proposals for a change in supervision arrangements should be made, via PhD Manager, to Research Degrees Subcommittee. Arrangements must be made for the provision of an interim supervisor if a member of the supervisory team is unable to fulfil their responsibilities for a prolonged period of time due to illness or other unforeseeable circumstances. In the event of a member of a supervisory team being granted a sabbatical or similar, arrangement must be made in advance of the period of sabbatical for regular contact to be maintained with the student or for an interim supervisor to be assigned, via PhD Manager, with the approval of Research Degrees Subcommittee.
- 8.11 Our University will ensure that the quality of supervision is not put at risk as a result of an excessive volume and range of responsibilities being assigned to individual supervisors. School Research Degrees Sub-Committees will routinely monitor supervisory allocations and should notify the relevant Dean of School. School Research Degrees Sub-Committees will report on this matter in their annual PGR report. Research Degrees Subcommittee will periodically review institutional policy on the maximum number of students a supervisor can be responsible for. Research Degrees Subcommittee will be guided by the overall workload of the individual.
- 8.12 All newly appointed supervisors who do not have previous experience of research degree supervision to successful completion must attend an appropriate course of staff development within six months of appointment and this should be recorded by both the relevant School and the Graduate School.
- 8.13 Our University will ensure that regular and relevant staff development for supervisors is made available through our Researcher Development Course and Research Degrees Subcommittee will periodically review such provision and will communicate attendance to the relevant School.
- 8.14 Our University expects experienced supervisors to avail themselves of opportunities to attend relevant staff development activity and to share their good practice with colleagues new to the activity. Experienced supervisors should expect to attend a relevant staff development activity at least once every five years. Research Degrees Subcommittee will periodically receive reports on attendance from the Graduate School and will communicate attendance to the relevant School.

## **9 Annual monitoring review of student progress for MPhil, PhD, and Professional Doctorate**

- 9.1 The progression of all MPhil, PhD or Professional Doctorate students throughout their study period will be formally reviewed annually by a panel consisting of a minimum of two members of research active staff from the relevant School(s) with at least one of them with experience of research degree supervision and who are independent of the student's supervisory team. Students must be present at the review and may request that their supervisory team is also present. The continuation of enrolled status as a student is dependent on the successful completion of an annual review.
- 9.2 Research Degrees Subcommittee will monitor, through annual reports made by Schools, the progress of all MPhil, PhD and Professional Doctorate students.
- 9.3 Each School will publicise in the relevant course webpages and on the course handbook their own requirements to be expected from a student to progress on the course.
- 9.4 The Progress Review panel will make the decision/recommendation to the SRDSC on one of the following outcomes:
- that the student should progress to the next year of enrolment,
  - if the Annual Review is not satisfactory:
    - That the student be permitted to resubmit their progress report without a reconvened Annual review meeting. The Chair of the panel must provide guidance in writing to the student on the matters that need to be addressed, and the student must resubmit their progress report within two months of receiving the guidance from the Chair of the panel.
    - To defer the decision to a second Annual review meeting to be convened within two months. The Chair of the panel must provide guidance in writing to the student on the matters that need to be addressed,
    - That the student be withdrawn (which should be supported by evidence that the student has received written warnings on lack of progress during the enrolment period).
- 9.5 The Candidate will be eligible for no more than one more attempt after an initial deferral decision. If the panel is not satisfied after the second meeting, the panel will recommend to SRDSC the withdrawal of the student.
- 9.6 All decisions should be communicated formally in writing to the student.
- 9.7 Once the student has submitted the thesis for assessment the Progress Review process will cease.
- 9.8 Students may only appeal the outcome of their annual monitoring review in the circumstances set out in Section 18 of these Regulations. The request should

take the form of a letter to the Appeals Liaison Officer of our University setting out the student's case.

## **10 Transfer of enrolment**

- 10.1 Students who enrolled initially for PhD via MPhil must apply to Research Degrees Subcommittee, via PhD Manager, to transfer to PhD status on the appropriate form when they have made sufficient progress. This should normally occur within 24 months of a full-time student's enrolment period or within 36 months of a part-time student's enrolment period and on the basis of a relevant portfolio of evidence.
- 10.2 The request for transfer will be heard by a panel consisting of a minimum of two and a maximum of six research active members of staff from the relevant School(s) with appropriate academic and professional expertise and who are independent of the student's supervisory team. The student must be present at the meeting of the panel. The student may request that their supervisory team is also present.
- 10.3 In support of the application to transfer their enrolment, the student shall prepare for Research Degrees Subcommittee a full progress report on the work undertaken. The progress report should be uploaded to PhD Manager and typically be 3,000 to 6,000 words in length and include:
- (a) A brief review and discussion of the work already undertaken;
  - (b) A statement of the intended further work, including details of the original contribution to knowledge that is anticipated.
- 10.4 Each School will publicise in the relevant course webpages and on the course handbook the requirements to be expected from a student to transfer their enrolment to PhD status.
- 10.5 The transfer panel will make the decision/recommendation, via PhD Manager, to the SRDSC on one of the following outcomes:
- to transfer the student enrolment to PhD status,
  - if the transfer review is not satisfactory:
    - to defer the decision to a second transfer meeting to be convened within two months. The Chair of the panel must provide guidance in writing to the student on the matters that need to be addressed,
    - to continue in MPhil status, or
    - to withdraw the student (which should be supported by evidence that the student has received written warnings on lack of progress during the enrolment period).
- 10.6 The Candidate will be eligible for no more than two attempts at transferring from MPhil to PhD status.

- 10.7 In turn SRDSC will recommend, via PhD Manager, to RDSC the decision.
- 10.8 Before approving the transfer from MPhil to PhD status, via PhD Manager, Research Degrees Subcommittee must be satisfied that the student has made sufficient progress, that the proposed course provides a suitable basis for work at PhD standard and that the student is capable of pursuing the research project to completion.
- 10.9 A student enrolled on the degree of MPhil only, may also apply to transfer their enrolment to PhD.
- 10.10 All decisions should be communicated formally in writing to the student via PhD Manager.
- 10.11 A student who is enrolled on the degree of PhD and who is unable to complete the approved course of work may, at any time prior to the submission of the thesis for examination, apply to Research Degrees Subcommittee, via PhD Manager, for the enrolment to be changed to that of MPhil.
- 10.12 Students may only request an appeal of the outcome of their transfer panel in the circumstances set out in Section 18 of these Regulations. The request should take the form of a letter to the Appeals Liaison Officer of our University setting out the student's case.

## **11 Examination of research degrees**

- 11.1 Masters (acquired primarily by research), MPhil, PhD and Professional Doctorate students must successfully complete all assessed elements of their course before award of the degree can be made.
- 11.2 The examination of the research component of all research degrees has two stages: firstly, the preliminary assessment of the submission (thesis alone, or thesis and creative/non-textual work), and secondly, its defence by oral examination.
- 11.3 Theses should be submitted for examination in a temporary bound form such as perfect-binding (perfect-binding is a method of binding single pages by gluing them together on the spine of the document), which is sufficiently secure to ensure that pages cannot be added or removed. A thesis submitted for examination in a perfect binding must be in its final form. Once the examination procedure has been satisfactorily concluded, the thesis must be presented as a PDF file before the degree can be awarded. In such cases the internal examiner (or an external examiner where there is no internal examiner) must confirm to Research Degrees Subcommittee that the PDF version is identical to



the version submitted for examination, other than where appropriate amendments have been made to meet the requirements of the examiners.

- 11.4 Students are normally examined orally. The examination is on the course of research and on the field of study in which the course lies.
- 11.5 Where, for reasons of sickness, disability or comparable valid cause, Research Degrees Subcommittee is satisfied that a student would be at serious disadvantage if required to undergo an oral examination, an alternative form of examination may exceptionally be approved. Any alternative arrangements requested on the grounds of disability can only be agreed in discussion with the Disability and Dyslexia Team and after appropriate evidence has been validated. Such approval shall not be given on the grounds that the student has inadequate knowledge of the language in which the thesis is presented.
- 11.6 The oral examination should normally take place within three months of the student handing in the submission.
- 11.7 A research degree student is examined by at least two and not more than three examiners, of whom at least one must be an external examiner.
- 11.8 A student's supervisor, be it presently or at any point in the student's current research course, may not be an examiner.
- 11.9 Supervisors may, with the consent of the student, attend the oral examination but may not participate in the discussion and must withdraw before the deliberations of the examiners on the outcome of the examination.
- 11.10 Where the student is a member of staff of our University or a collaborating establishment (or is deemed by Research Degrees Subcommittee to be closely related to our University in a comparable manner), the examining team shall include two external examiners.
- 11.11 Prior to the oral examination, each examiner shall independently complete a preliminary report on the thesis (see Regulations 12.10 - 12.13).
- 11.12 In the event that Research Degrees Subcommittee is made aware of a failure to comply with the procedures of the examination process, it may declare the examination null and void and appoint new examiners.
- 11.13 Oral examinations are normally held in the United Kingdom. However, in exceptional cases, Research Degrees Subcommittee may give approval for the examination to take place abroad.

### *The duties of our University*

- 11.14 The Director of Studies, in consultation with the Research Degrees Leader, or relevant research director, will propose to Research Degrees Subcommittee, via PhD Manager, the intended date for submission of the thesis.
- 11.15 The proposed examination arrangements must be approved by Research Degrees Subcommittee, via PhD Manager, at least three months before the intended date of submission of the thesis.
- 11.16 Where Research Degrees Subcommittee approves the proposed arrangements, examination conditions will be in effect. As such, no form of contact (thesis and thesis content) should occur between the candidate or their supervisors and the approved examiners. Where such contact occurs, the Head of the Graduate School will be responsible for taking appropriate action on behalf of the University.
- 11.17 The oral examination may not take place until the examination arrangements have been approved by Research Degrees Subcommittee. Once approved, examination arrangements are in effect for a period of no longer than six months.
- 11.18 Where the oral examination is delayed for a period of six months, or more, beyond the date where arrangements were approved, the Director of Studies will resubmit the arrangements, via PhD Manager, to Research Degrees Subcommittee for re-approval.
- 11.19 In exceptional circumstances, the Chair of Research Degrees Subcommittee may act directly to appoint examiners and make arrangements for the examination of the student. Where Chair's action is taken in such circumstances, it must be reported to the subsequent meeting of Research Degrees Subcommittee.
- 11.20 The Director of Studies and the candidate are advised against making any firm commitments to a proposed oral examination prior to formal approval from Research Degrees Subcommittee (e.g. payment of travel costs or booking accommodation).
- 11.21 Research Degrees Subcommittee shall ensure that external examiners are independent of our University, and any collaborating establishment (see 12.7).
- 11.22 Our University shall make known to all its students the procedure to be followed for the submission (including the number of copies to be submitted for examination) and any conditions to be satisfied before students are eligible for examination. The student shall normally be required to submit one copy of the submission for each examiner and a further copy for the Chair of Examiners.
- 11.23 Our University shall ensure, through the remit of the Chair of Examiners (see Section 13), that all examinations are conducted, and the recommendations of the examiners are presented, in accordance with its Regulations.

- 11.24 Our University shall notify the student, all supervisors and the examiners of the date of the oral examination.
- 11.25 Our University shall send a copy of the submission to each examiner, together with the examiners' preliminary report form, the notes for examiners and our University's Regulations, and shall ensure that the examiners are properly briefed as to their duties.
- 11.26 Our University shall determine and pay the fees and expenses of external examiners.
- 11.27 Our University shall ensure that all examiners have completed and submitted their preliminary reports at least seven days before the oral examination takes place. Should any preliminary report not be returned in time, our University shall notify the student, the supervisory team and examiners that the examination must be postponed.
- 11.28 Without delay following the oral examination, the Chair of Examiners shall forward the examiners' recommendations to the relevant officer of our University.
- 11.29 Decisions on the reports and recommendations of the examiners in respect of research degree students are taken by Research Degrees Subcommittee. The power to confer the degree rests with Academic Board.
- 11.30 Examiners' preliminary and final reports will be sent on request to the student and supervisory team once an award has been made or the final determination of the examiners is that the student should fail.

*The student's responsibilities*

- 11.31 It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that the submission is received by the appropriate officer of our University before the expiry of the study period.
- 11.32 The submission of work for examination is at the discretion of the student. (While a student would be unwise to submit work for examination against the advice of their Director of Studies, it is his or her right to do so. Equally, students must not assume that a Director of Studies' agreement to a submission guarantees an award will be made. In the event of a student submitting work for examination without the consent of the Director of Studies, the examination team will be notified of this after the examination so as to protect the academic standards of our University without prejudicing the examiners' deliberations or judgment).
- 11.33 Students must satisfy any conditions of eligibility for examination required by our University.

- 11.34 Students must take no part in the arrangement of their examination and have no contact with the examiners between their appointment and the oral examination.
- 11.35 Students must ensure that the format of any thesis is in accordance with the requirements of our University's Regulations (see Section 19).
- 11.36 The student must confirm, through the submission of a declaration form, that the work has not been submitted for an academic award at the same level. However, the student is not precluded from incorporating in the submission material which has already been submitted for a degree or comparable award, provided such work is identified on the declaration form and also in the submission.
- 11.37 Students must confirm that the material submitted is their own work. The University takes plagiarism and collusion extremely seriously and will apply the relevant penalties in any proven case.
- 11.38 The thesis title submitted on the 'Approval of Examination Arrangements' form can only be changed with the agreement of Research Degrees Subcommittee following an agreed recommendation from the examiners.
- 11.39 Students may only appeal the outcome of their research degree examination in the circumstances set out in Section 18 of these Regulations. The request should take the form of a letter to the Appeals Liaison Officer of our University setting out the student's case.

## **12 Examiners for research degrees**

### *Criteria for appointment*

- 12.1 Examiners must be experienced in research or, where appropriate, professional practice, within the general area of the student's submission and, wherever practicable, have experience as a specialist in the topic(s) to be examined.
- 12.2 Examiners shall not have had direct involvement in the student's research.
- 12.3 Examiners' own work shall not have been the focus of the student's research.
- 12.4 The members of the examining team shall normally and collectively have examined at least three students at or above the level of the relevant award. An external examiner shall normally have examined at least one student at the requisite level. Exceptionally (e.g. in developing areas of research), Research Degrees Subcommittee shall have discretion to modify the latter requirement, subject to demonstration that the integrity of examination arrangements will otherwise be maintained.

- 12.5 At least one examiner for a doctoral award shall normally hold a PhD or Professional Doctorate as appropriate to the examination.
- 12.6 An external examiner shall be independent of our University and any collaborating institution and shall not have acted previously as the student's supervisor. An external examiner shall not be a supervisor of another student for a research award of our University. The School proposing and external examiner must also check that they are eligible to work in the UK.
- 12.7 Former staff members of our University or a collaborating institution should not be proposed as external examiners until at least three years after the termination of their employment.
- 12.8 No person who is enrolled for a research degree may act as an examiner.
- 12.9 The appointment of external examiners for any taught element of the course shall be made according to the procedures approved from time to time by Academic Board.

#### *Duties of examiners*

- 12.10 Each examiner shall examine the submission and present on it an independent preliminary report to the relevant officer of our University on the appropriate form, before any oral or alternative form of examination is held. In completing the preliminary report, each examiner must consider whether the submission provisionally satisfies the requirements of the degree and where possible make an appropriate provisional recommendation subject to the outcome of the oral examination.
- 12.11 An examiner after reading the thesis may not at this point recommend that a student fail outright or obtain a lower award without holding an oral examination or alternative form of examination.
- 12.12 Following the oral examination, the examiners shall, where they are in agreement, present a joint report and recommendation relating to the award of the degree to Research Degrees Subcommittee. The preliminary reports and joint recommendation of the examiners must together provide sufficiently detailed commentary on the scope and quality of the work to enable Research Degrees Subcommittee to satisfy itself that the criteria for the award of the degree have been met.
- 12.13 Where the examiners are not in agreement, separate reports and recommendations shall be submitted to Research Degrees Subcommittee on the appropriate forms.

### **13 Chair of Examiners for research degrees**

- 13.1 Research Degrees Subcommittee shall approve the appointment of a Chair of Examiners. The Chair of Examiners shall be an employee of our University, or a collaborative or partner institution, who has undertaken a course of relevant staff development.
- 13.2 No supervisor of the student being examined may be nominated as the Chair of Examiners.
- 13.3 The Chair of Examiners shall be present at the oral examination and shall ensure that the examination is conducted in accordance with these Regulations. Following the conclusion of the oral examination and the examiners' deliberations, the Chair of Examiners shall ensure that the examiners submit their report(s) and recommendation(s) to Research Degrees Subcommittee without delay.
- 13.4 The Chair of Examiners is not an examiner and shall not take part in the oral examination of the thesis or in the examiners' deliberations, or otherwise seek to influence the examiners in the exercise of academic judgement on the thesis and the outcome of the oral examination. The examiners may, at any time during the examination process, seek clarification from the Chair of Examiners upon matters of process, but not on matters of academic judgement.
- 13.5 The Chair of Examiners shall not be required to adjudicate upon differences of opinion between examiners or seek to resolve such differences, other than those that result from a misunderstanding of the examination Regulations and procedures. Differences of opinion between examiners emanating from the exercise of academic judgement shall be dealt with in accordance with Regulation 12.13.

## **14 Outcomes of examinations for Research Degrees**

- 14.1 Following the completion of the examination the examiners may recommend:
  - (a) That in the case of MPhil and PhD, the student be awarded the degree.

In the case of Masters (acquired primarily by research) and Professional Doctorates that the student pass the Research Thesis without corrections.
  - (b) That, in the case of MPhil and PhD, the student is awarded the degree subject to minor amendments being made to the submission, which in the judgement of the examiners can reasonably be completed by the student within a period of three months from the date of notification in writing. These will be typographical, spelling or grammatical amendments, or adjustments or additions that do not substantively alter the

argument or structure of the thesis. In such circumstances, the examiners must indicate to the student in writing what amendments and corrections are required.

In the case of Masters (acquired primarily by research) and Professional Doctorates that the student pass the Research Thesis subject to minor amendments being made to the submission, which in the judgement of the examiners can reasonably be completed by the student within a period of three months from the date of notification in writing. These will be typographical, spelling or grammatical amendments, or adjustments or additions that do not substantively alter the argument or structure of the thesis. In such circumstances, the examiners must indicate to the student in writing what amendments and corrections are required;

- (C) That, in the case of Masters (acquired primarily by research) the student is permitted to re-submit the research thesis following more substantial amendments being made to the submission within a period of six months from the date of notification in writing. The subsequent re-examination may be with or without an oral examination. In such circumstances, the examiners must indicate to the student in writing what amendments and corrections are required and if a subsequent oral examination is needed.

In the case of MPhil and PhD, the student is permitted to re-submit for the degree following more substantial amendments being made to the submission within a period of twelve months from the date of notification in writing. The subsequent re-examination may be with or without an oral examination. In such circumstances, the examiners must indicate to the student in writing what amendments and corrections are required and if a subsequent oral examination is needed

In the case of Professional Doctorates, the student be permitted to re-submit the research thesis following more substantial amendments being made to the submission within a period of twelve months from the date of notification in writing. The subsequent re-examination may be with or without an oral examination. In such circumstances, the examiners must indicate to the student in writing what amendments and corrections are required and if a subsequent oral examination is needed.

- (d) In the case of a PhD examination, that the student be awarded the degree of MPhil, duly amended to the satisfaction of the examiners if necessary;

- (e) In the case of the examination of a Professional Doctorate thesis, that the student is offered a Master's degree or a postgraduate certificate or diploma where provision for such awards is made in the course specification and the student has passed the relevant modules;
- (f) In the case of Masters (acquired primarily by research), that the student is offered a postgraduate certificate where provision for such awards is made in the course specification and the student has passed the relevant modules;
- (g) That the student not be awarded the degree and not be permitted to be re-examined;

N.B. In the case of a recommendation that adjustments be made, the examiners must make it clear whether they deem such alterations to be minor or major, though it will be for Research Degrees Subcommittee to agree to any such recommendation.

## **15 Re-examination of Masters (acquired primarily by research), MPhil, PhD, and Professional Doctorate**

15.1 Normally, only one re-examination is permitted.

15.2 Where it is necessary to appoint new and/or additional examiners for the re-examination, this will occur through the agreed University procedures.

15.3 There are four forms of re-examination:

- (a) Where the student's performance in the first oral examination is satisfactory, but the thesis unsatisfactory. Re-examination may occur with or without an oral examination;
- (b) Where on the first examination the student's thesis is so unsatisfactory that Research Degrees Subcommittee dispensed with the oral examination. Any re-examination must include a re-examination of the thesis and an oral or approved alternative form of examination;
- (c) Where on the first examination a student's thesis is considered satisfactory but the performance in the oral does not satisfy the examiners. The student may, on the recommendation of the examiners and with the approval of Research Degrees Subcommittee, be re-examined in the oral and/or alternative form of examination, without being requested to revise and re-submit the thesis;



(d) Where on the first examination both the thesis and the oral examination were considered unsatisfactory by the examiners. Re-examination will occur with an oral examination.

N.B. For situations (b), (c) and (d) an oral examination **must** take place. The examiners have no power to set this requirement aside.

15.4 In the case of a re-examination, the options available to the examiners are to recommend:

(a) That the student be awarded the degree;

(b) That the student be awarded the degree subject to minor amendments to the thesis to be completed within a period of three months from the date of notification in writing and to the satisfaction of the examiners;

(c) In the case of a PhD examination, that the student be awarded the degree of MPhil subject to the presentation of the thesis (duly amended, if necessary) to the satisfaction of the examiners;

(d) In the case of a Professional Doctorate examination, that the student is awarded a Master's degree or a postgraduate certificate or diploma where provision for such awards is made in the course specification and the student has passed the relevant modules;

(e) In the case of Masters (acquired primarily by research), that the student is offered a postgraduate certificate where provision for such awards is made in the course specification and the student has passed the relevant modules;

(f) That the student not be awarded the degree (see 14.5 on the preparation of an agreed statement).

## **16 Posthumous awards**

16.1 Our University may award research degrees posthumously as per 2.3 in the *Manual of General Regulations, Part 10: Conferment of Awards*

## **17 Disagreement between examiners following the oral examination**

17.1 Where the examiners' recommendations are not unanimous, they will be referred to Research Degrees Subcommittee, which may:

(a) Accept the recommendation of the external examiner(s);

or

- (b) Appoint an external adjudicator with appropriate disciplinary and professional expertise and extensive experience of the supervision and examination of research degrees.

17.2 In the event of an external adjudicator being appointed, they will be expected to:

- (a) Read the thesis or published work and/or review the work in a form other than the written word;
- (b) Receive the individual preliminary reports and the reports following the oral examination;
- (c) Prepare a report to Research Degrees Subcommittee which will inform its decision.

## **18 Appeals against annual monitoring review, transfer of research degree enrolment or oral examination decision for postgraduate research degrees (including both 'taught' and 'research' Professional Doctorates)**

18.1 Students may, in the circumstances set out below, appeal against an annual monitoring review, transfer of research degree enrolment or the outcome of the oral examination of the thesis or other submittal on a postgraduate research course (whether at the first examination or re-examination).

### *Grounds for an appeal*

18.2 An appeal may only be made in relation to the decision of our University based on the recommendation of an annual monitoring review panel, a panel hearing the case for transfer of a research degree enrolment or an oral examination of the thesis or other submittal on a postgraduate research course. Given the existence of procedures for complaint and grievance during the study period (see Section 21), alleged inadequacy of supervisory or other arrangements during the period of study do not constitute grounds for an appeal.

18.3 Appeals are permitted only on the following grounds:

- (a) That there are circumstances affecting the student's performance of which the review/transfer panel or the examiners were unaware and which the student, for reasons beyond their own control, was unable to bring to the panel or examiners' attention at the time;
- (b) That there is evidence of procedural irregularity, including administrative error, in the conduct of the review/transfer panel or examination of such a nature as to cause doubt as to whether the result might have been different had there not been such irregularity;

- (c) That there is evidence of unfair or improper assessment on the part of one or more of the monitoring review/transfer panel members or examiners.

Students may not challenge the academic judgement of the University.

*Procedure for dealing with an appeal*

- 18.4 A student must lodge an appeal statement to the Compliance Team of the University within one calendar month of the date of notification of the decision. Once received, the Compliance Team will undertake an initial evaluation to check that the appeal is submitted under the correct procedures, falls within the grounds upon which an appeal may be made (see 18.3), is submitted within the deadline and is in the required format.
- 18.5 In the event that a Formal Complaint is submitted at the same time as an Appeal against an Assessment Board decision, the complaint will be placed on hold until the investigation into the appeal has been completed.
- 18.6 The University does not encourage students to seek legal representation to bring an appeal under the Postgraduate Research appeals procedure, because it is not a legal process. However, a request may be agreed as a reasonable adjustment. The University may also obtain legal representation if appropriate.
- 18.7 The appeal will be considered as soon as possible, and in any event within two months of receipt of the case for review, by three persons drawn from the academic staff of our University having experience of supervising and examining research degrees and who have had no previous involvement in the case, including membership of such committees as have considered it. At least one panel member will have received staff development in equality and diversity issues and will be expected to ensure that the appeal is conducted in accordance with the relevant University policy. No research degree student may be a member of a Research Degree Appeal Panel.
- 18.8 The Appeals Liaison Officer will act as Secretary to the Research Degree Appeal Panel.
- 18.9 The appellant may be accompanied by one friend (who may not be a paid legal representative).
- 18.10 If the appellant does not appear at the date and time scheduled for the Panel's hearing, the Research Degree Appeal Panel shall consider whether any reasons advanced for non-attendance are valid, and:
  - (a) if members so judge, adjourn proceedings to a later meeting;

or

- (b) if no reasons are advanced, or if they are judged invalid, proceed in the appellant's absence.
- 18.11 The members of the Research Degree Appeal Panel and the appellant will have the right to call and question relevant witnesses. All witnesses, the appellant and their friend shall withdraw before the Research Degree Appeal Panel considers its decision.
- 18.12 Where there is a clear justification for doing so e.g. where travel costs are prohibitive or the student's mode of attendance makes attendance in person difficult, a request to conduct the Panel via video link can be considered. The Chair of the panel will have final say on whether the panel can be convened via video link. For any panel via video-link the Chair and panel members would be located at an on-campus location at our University. Guidance regarding conducting a panel via video link will be shared with all parties prior to the panel by the Appeals Liaison Officer.
- 18.13 If a Research Degree Appeal Panel agrees that a student has valid grounds for an appeal, it must either:
- (a) Recommend that Research Degrees Subcommittee invite the review/transfer panel or examiners to reconsider their decision;
- or
- (b) Recommend that Research Degrees Subcommittee appoint a new transfer/review panel or examiners.
- 18.14 A Research Degree Appeal Panel is not constituted as an Examination Board and has no authority to set aside the decision of a review/transfer panel or the examiners.
- 18.15 The secretary to the Research Degree Appeal Panel shall communicate the decision to the Chair of Research Degrees Subcommittee, the appellant and the Chair of the review/transfer panel or Chair of Examiners within five working days of the last meeting of the Research Degree Appeal Panel.
- 18.16 There shall be no appeal against the finding of a Research Degree Appeal Panel. Allegations of procedural irregularities in the conduct of an appeal may be heard by the Vice-Chancellor who may, at his or her discretion, require the Research Degree Appeal Panel to reconsider the case.
- 18.17 If the appellant has exhausted the internal procedures and is not satisfied with the outcome, they may request that the case is reviewed by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIAHE) which is a body independent of our University

- 18.18 The grounds and eligibility for review shall be determined by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator.
- 18.19 The findings of any case considered by the Independent Adjudicator shall be considered directly by Academic Board. Academic Board shall take into account the recommendations of the Independent Adjudicator in reaching a final decision on any action to be taken in response to the Appeal.
- 18.20 The decision of Academic Board is final and there shall be no further appeal against this decision.

**19 Presentation of the thesis for Masters (acquired primarily by research), MPhil, Professional Doctorate, and PhD**

- 19.1 For the purposes of an examination, one copy of the thesis is normally required for each examiner and a further copy for the Chair of Examiners.
- 19.2 Except with the specific permission of Research Degrees Subcommittee, the thesis must be presented in English. Permission to present a thesis in another language must normally be sought through the application for registration. Given that the medium of instruction in our University is English, permission to present a thesis in a language other than English is likely to be given only if the subject matter of the thesis involves language and related studies.
- 19.3 Our University will only permit a student to present a thesis in a language other than English if it is satisfied that adequate supervision in the alternate language can be arranged and that examiners capable of examining the thesis in said language are likely to be available. In such cases, a summary in English of approximately 1000 words must be included with the thesis.
- 19.4 The thesis must include a statement of the student's objectives and must acknowledge published or other sources of material consulted (including an appropriate bibliography) and any assistance received.
- 19.5 There shall be an abstract of approximately 300 words provided with the thesis which provides a synopsis of the thesis, stating the nature and scope of the work undertaken and of the contribution made to the knowledge of the subject treated.
- 19.6 Where a student's research course is part of a collaborative group project, the thesis must clearly indicate the student's individual contribution and the extent of the collaboration. This statement on the extent of the collaboration must be supported by all the collaborators concerned.
- 19.7 The copyright of the thesis is vested in the student, but the treatment of other forms of intellectual property must be specifically agreed with our University prior to the submission of the thesis.

- 19.8 The student is free to publish material in advance of the thesis submission, but reference must be made to any such publication in the thesis. Copies of published material should be submitted with the thesis.
- 19.9 While theses are normally in A4 format, our University may give permission for a thesis to be submitted in another format where it is satisfied that the contents can be better expressed accordingly. However, students using a format larger than A4 should note that the production of microfiche copies and full-size enlargements may not be feasible.
- 19.10 The text of the thesis should not normally exceed the following length (excluding ancillary data - see 19.11):
- (a) Masters (acquired primarily by research) – 12,000 words;
  - (b) MPhil - 40,000 words;
  - (c) Professional Doctorate - 60,000 words;
  - (d) PhD – 80,000 words.

The University may withhold from examination a thesis that exceeds the maximum word limit. The student should apply to Research Degrees Subcommittee with accompanying justifications for permission to submit a thesis that exceeds the maximum word limit.

- 19.11 Appendices, referential footnotes and/or endnotes are not included in the indicative word counts given in 19.10. Footnotes and/or endnotes that are discursive in nature must be included in the word count.
- 19.12 An electronic copy of each Masters (acquired primarily by research), MPhil, PhD or Professional Doctorate thesis will be retained by our University. In the case of a PhD or Professional Doctorate thesis this will be to meet the requirements of the British Library Electronic Thesis Online Service (EThOS). Students must complete the EThOS declaration form on submission of the electronic copy.
- 19.13 Where our University has agreed that the confidential nature of the student's work is such as to preclude the thesis being made freely available in our University library, or that of any collaborating establishment, and, in the case of a PhD or Professional Doctorate, the British Library, the thesis shall be held by the University only and made available only to those who were directly involved in the project for a time not exceeding the approved period.
- 19.14 Our University is only likely to approve an application for confidentiality in order to enable a patent application to be lodged or to protect commercially or politically sensitive material. Theses may not be restricted in this way in order to protect research leads. While the normal maximum period of confidentiality

is two years, our University may approve a longer period in exceptional circumstances.

- 19.15 An electronic copy of the thesis must be submitted to the Graduate School. The UEL File Transfer Portal may be used for submission. The electronic copy of the thesis will be subject to verification by the examiners as a true copy and then lodged in the library of our University before the award of the degree can be made. Any collaborating establishment may require a copy in electronic or paper form. The electronic copy must be otherwise identical to the thesis after any necessary post-viva revisions.

*Presentation of final thesis*

- 19.16 The final version of the thesis (i.e. that which is submitted after successful oral examination and any amendments) must observe the following conventions:

- (a) The thesis should be presented in English, unless you have special permission to present in another language.
- (b) Double or one-and-a-half spacing must be used in typescript except for indented quotations or footnotes where single spacing may be used;
- (c) Pages shall be numbered consecutively through the main text including photographs and/or diagrams which are included as whole pages and any lists of tables, prefaces etc. Page numbers shall be located centrally at the bottom of each page, approximately 10mm above the edge. The preliminary sections should be numbered in lower case Roman numerals (starting at i), and the text of the thesis itself in Arabic numerals (starting at 1). (For more detailed issues relating to numbering refer to the relevant Section of the International Organisation for Standardisation specification No. ISO 7144:1986);
- (d) Margins shall be 40mm on the left-hand side and 20mm on the right-hand side and the top and bottom margins.
- (e) The page size shall normally be set to A4.
- (f) The page format should normally be set to portrait
- (g) The font should be set to Times New Roman or Arial, in 12pt font size.
- (h) The title page\* of the thesis shall give the following information:
  - the full title of the thesis;
  - the full name of the author;

- the full title of the award for which the degree is submitted in partial fulfilment of our University's requirements;
- that the degree is awarded by our University;
- the month and year of submission for the viva examination.

\* See specimen in Appendix A

- (i) Must be submitted in PDF/A format.

19.17 Material must be arranged in the following sequence:

*Preliminaries:*

- Title page (see specimen title page)
- Abstract (no more than 300 words)
- Declaration (optional)
- Table of contents, including subsections
- List of tables, figures, illustrations etc. (if any)
- List of accompanying material (if any)
- Definitions (if any, being a list of definitions of any terms specific to the work)
- Abbreviations (if any)
- Acknowledgements
- Dedication (optional)

*Main thesis text:*

- Introduction and main text, divided into chapters, sections and subsections
- References and bibliography
- Appendices (if any)
- Glossary (if any)
- Index (if any)



## **20 Presentation of work in a form other than the written word for a Masters (acquired primarily by research), MPhil or PhD**

- 20.1 Students may undertake a course of research in which their creative work forms, as a point of origin or reference, a significant part of the intellectual inquiry. Such creative work may be in any field but must have been undertaken as part of the registered research course. In such cases, the presentation and submission may be partly in other than written form.
- 20.2 The creative work must be clearly presented in relation to the argument of a written thesis and set in its relevant theoretical, historical, critical or design context. The thesis must itself conform to the usual scholarly requirements and be of an appropriate length taking into account the balance between various research components (see 19.10).
- 20.3 The final submission must be accompanied by some permanent record of the creative work bound, where practicable, with the thesis.
- 20.4 The application for registration must set out the form of the student's intended submission if not written and of the proposed methods of assessment.
- 20.5 Students may undertake a course of research of which the principal focus is the preparation of a scholarly edition of a text(s) or other original artefacts.
- 20.6 In such cases the completed submission must include a copy of the edited text(s) or collection of artefact(s), appropriate textual and explanatory annotations and a substantial introduction and critical commentary which sets the text in the relevant historical, theoretical or critical context (see 19.10 regarding the required length of the thesis).

## **21 Complaints Procedure**

- 21.1 Research Degree students are subject to the Regulations governing all students of our University as detailed in the *Manual of General Regulations, Part 14: Complaints Procedure*.

## **22 Feedback Mechanisms**

- 22.1 Our University will implement mechanisms to collect, review and, where appropriate, respond to feedback from all concerned with postgraduate research courses. Research Degrees Subcommittee will consider all feedback, act upon it and communicate the results appropriately.

## **23 Ethical approval and Code of Practice for Research Ethics**

- 23.1 All research degrees that propose research which involves human participants, sensitive human data (personal or otherwise) and human material (including

human tissue, embryos, fetuses and bodily fluids, from living or deceased participants), must receive ethical clearance from our University Research Ethics Committee and/or Schools/Collaborative Research Ethics Committee/Board prior to the commencement of the research or the relevant part thereof. If the research is being carried out, in whole or in part, at another institution or institutions, ethical clearance must also be obtained from each participating institution.

- 23.2 It is the joint responsibility of both the student and the Director of Studies to ensure that ethical clearance is obtained. Approval must be sought in accordance with such arrangements for ethical review and approval as may from time to time be specified by our University/School/Collaborative Research Ethics Committees/Boards.
- 23.3 Students and Directors of Studies must be familiar with the University's Code of Practice for Research Ethics. Copies of the code and policy may be found on the Graduate School's website.

## **24 Code of Practice for Research and Research Misconduct Policy**

- 24.1 Our University's Code of Practice for Research and our Research Misconduct Policy apply to all students for research degrees and to staff conducting research within, or on behalf of, the institution. Copies of the code and policy may be found on the Graduate School's website.
- 24.2 Our University expects all students for research degrees and staff involved in their supervision to observe the standards of research practice set out in the guidelines published by scientific and learned societies and any other relevant professional bodies.

**Appendix A**

***Specimen title page wording***

**THE ORIGINS OF THE FARMERS'  
CO-OPERATIVE IN WESSEX**

**JOHN SMITH**

**A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the  
requirements of the University of East London  
for the degree of ..... of Philosophy**

**OR**

**A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the  
requirements of the University of East London  
for the degree of professional doctorate in .....<sup>1</sup>**

**School of .....**

**September 2013**

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<sup>1</sup> Students must use whichever of these statements is correct for their programme of study. Students must **not** insert both.

## **Appendix B**

### Regulations for the awards of MPhil and PhD by Published Work

#### *Definition of published work*

- 1.1 For the purposes of these Regulations, 'published work' and 'publications' includes, but is not limited to, books, refereed articles, authored chapters, creative work, non-textual work and artefacts. Where it is not possible for such work to be submitted for examination (e.g. in the case of installations or exhibitions), there should be a permanent and submittable record of it (e.g. videographic, photographic).
- 1.2 Published work as per the above definition must be freely available within the public domain at the point of examination and have been subject to peer review. Work which is, either in part or whole, in progress, submitted or accepted for publication or 'in press' may not be submitted for examination under these Regulations. Work previously presented by the student for another degree may not normally be included in the submission. If such work is intended to constitute part of the submission, it must be identified as such and the degree will not be awarded unless substantial new work of distinction is presented.
- 1.3 Exceptionally, work of a confidential nature which is subject to restrictions on its circulation so as to enable a patent application to be lodged or to protect commercially or politically sensitive material, may, at the discretion of Research Degrees Subcommittee, be accepted for examination providing such restrictions do not impede our University's ability to conduct a proper assessment and examination of the submission.

#### *Critical Appraisal*

- 1.4 The submission for examination of the degrees of MPhil and PhD by published work will consist of the published work and a critical appraisal of said work not normally exceeding 10,000 words. The appraisal must summarise each publication submitted, synthesise the publications as a coherent study, provide a critical review of the current state of knowledge in the respective field or discipline and show how the published work has contributed to the field or discipline. It should also comment on the standing of any journals or similar and the reception of the publications as indicated by citations and/or reviews.

#### *Eligibility*

- 1.5 Any member of the staff of our University of at least three years' standing may apply to Research Degrees Subcommittee for permission to submit for an MPhil or PhD of our University by published work. A former member of staff of at least three years' standing on the effective date of their resignation or retirement may also apply to Research Degrees Subcommittee for permission to submit for an MPhil or PhD of our University by published work.

1.6 Members of academic staff, of at least three years' standing, of a collaborating institution, members of staff of another establishment who have taught for at least three years on courses validated by our University, or members of staff of other institutions who have taught for at least three years on a course at our University, may also apply to submit. In assessing such applicants' eligibility to apply to be examined for an MPhil or PhD by publication, Research Degrees Subcommittee will take into account the extent of the applicants' contribution to the scholarship of our University.

1.7 Any Bachelor's degree graduate of our University of at least eight years' standing or Master's graduates of at least four years' standing may apply to Research Degrees Subcommittee for permission to submit for an MPhil or PhD by published work of our University.

1.8 Graduates of courses now validated as UEL courses at collaborative or partner institutions but which were not UEL courses at the point of graduation, may be eligible for an MPhil or PhD by publication of our University provided the criteria given in 1.7 have been met and at the discretion of Research Degrees Subcommittee.

1.9 Successful applicants must enrol as students of our University and pay the appropriate part-time research degree fee.

#### *Application*

1.10 The application (as per standard research degree applications) should be accompanied by a list of the publications to be submitted and an outline of the critical appraisal (see 1.4 above).

#### *Registration*

1.11 Registration will be as detailed in Section 4 of these Regulations and will include a list of publications to be submitted and an outline of the critical appraisal described above. The list of publications should be comprehensive, but it is understood that pending publications may be forthcoming subsequent to registration. In such cases, and at the discretion of Research Degrees Subcommittee, it may be permissible for such publications to be included in the body of work entered for examination.

1.12 Following registration, there is no possibility of transfer from MPhil by published work to PhD by published work.

1.13 The minimum and maximum periods for a research degree by publication are:

	<i>Minimum</i>	<i>Maximum</i>
<i>MPhil</i>	9 months	24 months
<i>PhD</i>	12 months	24 months

## *Examinations*

1.14 The examination team will consist of one internal examiner and two external examiners.

1.15 The examination team may only recommend:

- (a) that the student be awarded the degree
- (b) that the student not be awarded the degree
- (c) in the case of a PhD by published work examination, that the student be awarded the degree of MPhil by published work

1.16 The examination team's recommendation that an award be made subject to amendment, or amendment and re-examination, can refer only to the critical appraisal element of the submission.

## *Extent of these Regulations (Appendix B)*

1.17 Except where such Regulations in this appendix explicitly state other than, or in their remit preclude the application of, the Regulations for research degrees contained in the main body of Part 9, said Regulations as they relate to admissions, registration, supervision, examinations, annual monitoring review, appeals and complaints shall apply.

## Appendix C

### Regulations for the award of Higher Doctorate

#### *Standard and Eligibility*

1.1 Applications can be made for the following Higher Doctorates:

- Doctor of Engineering (DEng)
- Doctor of Laws (LLD)
- Doctor of Letters (DLitt)
- Doctor of Science (DSc)
- Doctor of Technology (DTech)

1.2 A Higher Doctorate is awarded in recognition of a sustained and distinguished original contribution to, or advancement of, knowledge and/or professional accomplishment in the respective field.

1.3 Applicants will be a holder of at least seven years' standing of a first degree or a holder of four years' standing of a higher degree, as awarded by our University, the CNAA or a United Kingdom Higher Education Institution of equivalent standing, or a qualification which is regarded by Research Degrees Subcommittee as equivalent to the such (e.g. a verifiable overseas qualification).

1.4 Applications may be made by members of our University as defined in Appendix B, 1.5 to 1.9 above.

#### *Application*

1.5 Applicants must submit three copies of the works upon which their application is based. The submission may take the form of, but is not limited to, books, journal contributions, patent specifications, reports, specifications and design studies and may also include other relevant evidence of original or distinguished work. All material, other than books or output in a form other than the written word, must be secured in hard-backed folders, each containing a title and contents page.

1.6 An applicant must, where appropriate, state which part or part of the work has been submitted for another academic award.

1.7 The contents of the submission must be in English unless permission to the contrary has been given by Research Degrees Subcommittee.

- 1.8 Along with the submission, applicants must submit one copy of each of the following:
- (a) a completed application form, stating for which Higher Doctorate the student wishes to be considered
  - (b) a summary of not more than 1,000 words on the relevance of the works to the advancement of knowledge
  - (c) a list of the works comprising the submission
  - (d) where appropriate, a statement of the extent of the applicant's contribution to co-authored or collaborative work submitted
  - (e) the appropriate initial fee

#### *Higher Doctorate Committee*

- 1.9 On receipt of an application, an *ad hoc* University Higher Doctorate Committee will be convened to consider whether a *prima facie* case for proceeding to examination has been established. The Committee will, at a minimum, consist of the Pro-Vice Chancellor for Research, the Head of the Graduate School and up to 3 persons drawn from academic staff with expertise appropriate to considering the application. The Committee shall seek such advice and consultation as it deems necessary to consideration of the application.
- 1.10 An applicant may not be a member of the Committee.
- 1.11 No member of the Committee may serve as examiner to the applicant should a *prima facie* case be established.
- 1.12 The establishment of a *prima facie* case does not imply the eventual awarding of the Higher Doctorate.

#### *Examination and Conferment*

- 1.13 If satisfied that a *prima facie* case has been established, the Committee shall, on payment of a further fee by the student, submit the application to three examiners, one of whom shall be a Professor or Reader of our University, and the remaining two shall be external individuals of recognised eminence in the respective field, who have not co-authored or collaborated on any of the works submitted where relevant.
- 1.14 Each examiner shall submit an independent recommendation to Research Degrees Subcommittee for consideration and the award of Higher Doctorate will be made if, in the opinion of Research Degrees Subcommittee and



subject to ratification by Research Degrees Subcommittee, an outstanding contribution to the respective field has been made.

- 1.15 In the event of disagreement between examiners, the Committee may appoint a third external examiner or reject the submission.
- 1.16 One copy of the work submitted in support of a successful application shall be retained on open access by our University.

## Appendix D

### Regulations for the award of European Doctorate (PhD(Eur))

- 1.1 PhD(Eur) courses are subject to those Regulations above (Part 9) that apply to PhD courses, except where this appendix states otherwise.

#### *The Thesis*

- 1.2 The thesis or submission must have been prepared as a result of research conducted in a nation that is a member of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) other than the United Kingdom (UK) lasting not less than ten consecutive weeks on a full-time basis or the part-time equivalent. The Director of Studies, or designate, must obtain a signed memorandum from the appropriate Dean of School or equivalent of the co-operating university detailing the level and extent of support that shall be offered to the visiting student. No student shall be permitted to undertake research at another university in an EHEA nation until said memorandum has been accepted by, and lodged with, Research Degrees Subcommittee.
- 1.3 The title page of the thesis or submission must bear the text:

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the University of East London for the degree of European Doctorate (PhD(Eur)).

#### *Examiners*

- 1.4 Alongside an internal examiner, there will be two external examiners for the submission from universities in two separate EHEA nations other than the UK. Research Degrees Subcommittee shall define the term 'university' without limitation to institutions that bear this word in their titles. Such institutions shall normally be members of the *European Universities Association*.
- 1.5 Research Degrees Subcommittee shall assure itself that proposed examiners are capable of reaching sufficient common understanding of the submission and its consequent examination.
- 1.6 Alongside an internal examiner, at least one of the examiners conducting the oral examination must be from a university of an EHEA nation other than the UK.

#### *The Examination*

- 1.7 Part of the oral examination must be conducted in an official language of a nation that is a member of EHEA.