

Academic Regulations

Section 21

Research Degrees Awards Framework

2026-27

Version control	1.0
Owned by:	Pro Vice-Chancellor: Student Services
Latest amendment on:	2026-09-07
Approved by the Academic Board	2021-06-09
Coming into effect on:	2021-09-01
Adjusted for consistency:	2022-09-08

Awards and awards descriptors				
Masters level awards	CATS points	FHEQ level	ECTS credits	Maximum period of registration*
Master of Research (MRes)	180 at Masters level	7	90	3 years
The Master of Research (MRes) programme shall include a compulsory and substantial component of advanced independent work, such as a dissertation or project.				
Masters + level award Master of Philosophy (MPhil) FHEQ Level: 8 The holder of an MPhil will have critically investigated and evaluated an approved topic and demonstrated an understanding of research methods appropriate to the chosen field, or have carried out an approved creative programme at an appropriate level which is critically evaluated and set in its context, and will have presented and defended a thesis by oral examination to the satisfaction of the examiners. (Refer to Section 22, paragraphs 33-38 for Regulations in respect of the minimum and maximum registration period)				
Doctorate level awards Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) Doctor Europaeus/Europaea (PhD(Eur)) FHEQ Level: 8 The holder of a PhD will have critically investigated and evaluated an approved				

topic or carried out an approved creative programme at an appropriate level which is critically evaluated and set in its context, both of which resulting in an independent and original contribution to knowledge. The student will also have demonstrated an understanding of research methods appropriate to the chosen field and presented and defended a thesis by oral examination to the satisfaction of the examiners.

The holder of a European Doctorate (PhD(Eur)) will have additionally spent a period of research at another European institution outside the UK-(refer to Section 22, paragraphs 33-38 for Regulations in respect of the minimum and maximum registration period)

Doctor of Philosophy by Prior Output (PhD)

FHEQ Level: 8

The holder of a PhD awarded on the basis of Prior Output will have provided evidence of an independent, original and significant contribution to knowledge, and will have defended this by oral examination to the satisfaction of the examiners. Such output shall normally be in the public domain, but where deemed appropriate by the University Awards Board or its sub-committee for Research Degrees may exceptionally include private consultancy work of a substantive nature, or creative work currently in private ownership- (refer to Section 22, paragraphs 33-38 for Regulations in respect of the minimum and maximum registration period)

Awards and awards descriptors	
Professional doctorates Doctor of Education (EdD) Professional Doctorate (DProf) FHEQ Level: 8 The holder of a Professional Doctorate will have demonstrated the ability to conceptualise, design and implement a project for the generation of new applications or understanding at the forefront of an area of professional practice. They will also have demonstrated an understanding of research methods appropriate to the chosen field and presented a thesis based on professional practice and defended it by oral examination to the satisfaction of the examiners.	Period of registration* 4 years (full-time) and 6 years (part-time) to a maximum of 6 years (full-time) and 8 years (part-time), including any taught elements (unless otherwise specified in the relevant course specific regulations)
Higher doctorates Doctor of Letters (Dlitt) Doctor of Science (DSc) FHEQ Level: 8 The holder of a higher doctorate will have provided evidence of an original and significant contribution to the advancement of knowledge or to the application of knowledge or to both and have established that he or she is a leading authority in the field(s) of study concerned, to the satisfaction of three external examiners.	