

# Academic Regulations

## Section 22

### Research Degree Regulations for MPhil, PhD, PhD(Eur), PhD by Prior Output, DLitt, DSc

2022-23

#### Table of Contents

Principles.....	3
Application and qualifications for admission to MPhil and PhD .....	4
Registration .....	6
The registration period .....	7
Monitoring .....	8
Confirmation Viva.....	8
Supervision .....	9
Examination - general .....	10
Examination procedures .....	11
The student's responsibilities in the examination process .....	12
Examiners .....	13
First examination.....	14
Re-examination .....	15
Thesis.....	17
Provisions applying to the degree of PhD to be awarded for the submission of prior output.....	19
Provisions applying to the award of a higher doctorate .....	21

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## Principles

- 1 The University shall award the degrees of Master of Philosophy (MPhil) and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) to registered students who successfully complete approved programmes. In these regulations all references to PhD include the European Doctorate (Doctor Europaeus/Europaea PhD(Eur)) except where stated otherwise. The requirements for the award of higher doctorates (DLitt, DSc) are given in Regulations 120-128 below.
- 2 Programmes of research may be proposed in any field of study subject to the requirement that the proposed programme is capable of leading to scholarly research and to its presentation for assessment by appropriate examiners and to the availability of appropriate supervision at the University. The written thesis may be supplemented by material in other than written form if special provision has been made and agreed. All proposed research programmes shall be considered for research degree registration on their academic merits, on the University's ability to support the programme of study and without reference to the concerns or interests of any associated funding body (see also Regulation 14 below).
- 3 The MPhil shall be awarded to a student who has critically investigated and evaluated an approved topic and demonstrated an understanding of research methods appropriate to the chosen field or who has carried out an approved creative programme at an appropriate level which is critically evaluated and set in its context and has presented and defended a thesis by oral examination to the satisfaction of the examiners.
- 4 The PhD shall be awarded to a student who has critically investigated and evaluated an approved topic or who has carried out an approved creative programme at an appropriate level which is critically evaluated and set in its context, both of which must result in an independent and original contribution to knowledge. The student must also demonstrate an understanding of research methods appropriate to the chosen field and have presented and defended a thesis by oral examination to the satisfaction of the examiners.
- 5 The PhD shall also be awarded on the basis of prior output where existing published work or creative output provides evidence of an independent, original and significant contribution to knowledge and critical judgement at the level appropriate for the award. All work should have been published in the last ten years and be traceable in publicly available databases, catalogues, etc. and must be accessible to scholars or other interested persons. The work submitted must have been subjected to peer review by the relevant academic community. The student must also demonstrate an understanding of research methods appropriate to the chosen field and have presented and defended a thesis by oral examination to the satisfaction of the examiners.
- 6 The University Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee which may act through its sub-committees, shall be responsible for all matters pertaining to students for the research degrees described in these regulations and shall ensure that the Research Degree Regulations are complied with (refer point 13 of the Terms of Reference of the University Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee).

## Application and qualifications for admission to MPhil and PhD

- 7 By completing the appropriate application form, a person may apply for admission for the degree of:
  - 7.1 Master of Philosophy; *or*
  - 7.2 Master of Philosophy with possibility of transfer to Doctor of Philosophy; *or*
  - 7.3 Doctor of Philosophy; *or*
  - 7.4 Doctor Europaeus (European doctorate).
- 8 In approving an application for admission, the relevant Head of School and her/his nominee (with responsibility for Research) shall satisfy himself/herself that:
  - 8.1 the student is suitably qualified;
  - 8.2 the student is embarking on a viable research programme;
  - 8.3 adequate supervision is available and likely to be sustained; and
  - 8.4 the University is able to provide appropriate facilities for the conduct of scholarly research in the area of the research programme.
- 9 An applicant for admission for the degree of MPhil or MPhil with possibility of transfer to PhD shall hold a first or upper second class honours degree of a UK university or a qualification or other experience, which is regarded by the University as equivalent to such an honours degree.
- 10 An applicant holding qualifications other than those in Regulation 9 shall be considered on his or her merits and in relation to the nature and scope of the programme of work proposed. In considering an applicant in this category, the relevant Head of School or his/her nominee (with responsibility for Research) shall look for evidence of the student's ability and background knowledge in relation to the proposed research.
- 11 Applicants for MPhil, MPhil with possibility of transfer to PhD and Professional Doctorate Programmes whose first language is not English, shall provide as a University minimum requirement, evidence of English language skills demonstrated by:
  - IELTS composite 6.5 score, with a minimum of 6.0 in each of reading, speaking, listening and writing, *or*
  - Pearson PTE with 58 in all components of the test, *or*
  - a pass in the University's English language test (the PASSWORD Test) *or*
  - **For International Students only** - equivalent as judged by the authorised admitting officer in accordance with the advice of the University's International Office. Additionally, students whose enrolment will be subject to the conditions of a Tier 4 Student Visa will be required to hold qualifications that demonstrate the English Language criteria as set out in the Immigration Guidance current at the time of application and/or issuance of a Confirmation of Acceptance for Study (CAS). Separate competence equivalent to the IELTS requirements described above must be demonstrated in the individual areas of reading, writing, speaking and listening.
- 12 Applicants resident outside the UK, for whom English is not the first language,

must have gained the required English language qualification.

- 13 Individual subject areas may specify a requirement for more advanced English language skills.
- 14 Where a research degree project is part of a piece of funded research, the University shall 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.
- 15 The University may approve an application for admission from a person proposing to work outside the UK, provided that:
  - 15.1 there is satisfactory evidence as to the facilities available for the research both in the University and abroad; and
  - 15.2 the arrangements proposed for supervision enable frequent and substantial contact between the student and the supervisor(s) based in the UK, including adequate face-to-face contact with the supervisor(s). The student should maintain monthly meetings with the supervisors via online conferencing and should attend the University at least once per annum. In certain circumstances, the University may require arrangements for local supervision to be made.
  - 15.3 Where a local supervision arrangement is made the University may be prepared to waive the requirement for annual attendance at the University.
- 16 The University may exceptionally approve an application for admission as an enrolled student from a person registered for a higher degree by research at another institution of higher education and proposing to conduct part of their research at the University.
- 17 A student may undertake a programme of research in which the student's own creative work forms, as a point of origin or reference, a significant part of the intellectual enquiry. This could be in the form of a practice-based or practice-led research degree. Such creative work may be in any field (for instance, fine art, design, engineering and technology, architecture, creative writing, musical composition, film, dance, and performance), but must have been undertaken as part of the registered research programme. In such cases the presentation and submission may be partly in other than written form.
- 18 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 itself shall conform to the usual scholarly requirements and be of an appropriate length.
- 19 The final submission must be accompanied by a permanent record of the creative work. Where practical such a record should be bound with the thesis.
- 20 A student may undertake a programme of research of which the principal focus is the preparation of a scholarly edition of a text or texts, fine art, design, engineering and technology, architecture, creative writing, musical composition, film, dance, and performance or other original artefacts.

- 21 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 or critical context.
- 22 The application for registration should normally set out the form of the student's intended submission; if this is not possible then the form of the intended submission should be articulated during the first year of study, as described in Regulation 38.
- 23 The provisions which apply for application and award of a PhD by prior output are given in Regulations 105-119.

## **Registration**

- 24 Successful applicants must register via their School Office (formerly known as the Student Hub). A student admitted for study leading to a MPhil or PhD shall be provided with a period of registration as specified in Regulation 33 below.
- 25 A student shall register in the first instance for the degree of MPhil. Subject to satisfactory progress, registration may be transferred to PhD (see Confirmation Viva below).
- 26 Registration is subject to:
  - 26.1 the suitability of the student to undertake research;
  - 26.2 the programme of research; and
  - 26.3 the supervision arrangements and research facilities.
- 27 The registration process for MPhil or MPhil/PhD shall include the setting out of a programme of related studies and researcher development. This programme shall be agreed by the supervisors and student and is intended to:
  - 27.1 provide the student with the skills necessary for the pursuit of research as well as opportunities for personal and professional development;
  - 27.2 provide a body of specialised knowledge in the field of study of the proposed research;
  - 27.3 provide breadth of knowledge in the related subjects.
- 28 When this programme is agreed, it will be determined whether such a programme, and where appropriate its constituent parts, shall be for attendance, or assessment, or for attendance and assessment. The signed agreement shall be lodged with the Research and Postgraduate Office (RPO).
- 29 The Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee's sub-committee for Research Degrees may exceptionally permit a student to register for an additional course of study concurrently with the research degree registration, provided that either the research degree registration or the other course of study is by part-time study and that, in the opinion of the Research Degrees Sub-Committee, the dual registration will not detract from the research.

- 30 Where a student has previously undertaken research as a registered student for a research degree at the University or at another recognised University the Research Degrees Sub-Committee may approve a shorter than usual registration period which takes account of all or part of the time already spent by the student on such research. If the research was carried out at another university a report will be requested to verify the authenticity and ownership of the work. Registration at this University should normally be for a minimum of 12 months full-time or 24 months part-time.
- 31 Where a student or the University wishes the thesis to remain confidential for a period of time after completion of the work, application for approval shall normally be made to the Research Degrees Sub-Committee at the time of registration. In such cases where the need for confidentiality emerges at a subsequent stage, a special application for the thesis to remain confidential after submission shall be made immediately to the Research Degrees Sub-Committee in accordance with Regulation 101 below. The period approved shall normally not exceed three years from the date of the oral examination.

### The registration period

- 32 The minimum and maximum\* periods of registration shall be as follows:

#### MPhil

full-time	part-time
minimum: 12 months	minimum: 24 months
maximum: 24 months	maximum: 48 months

#### PhD (via transfer from MPhil registration and including the period of MPhil registration)

full-time	part-time
minimum: 24 months	minimum: 48 months
maximum: 48 months	maximum: 96 months

#### PhD (direct)

full-time	part-time
minimum: 24 months	minimum: 48 months
maximum: 48 months	maximum: 96 months

*\*Note: The maximum period of registration stated is that in which a student is expected to complete the award, including any unauthorised break from studies or other absence. If a student is granted an intermission, its length is added to the maximum period. The maximum period will also be adjusted on a pro rata basis, including any unauthorised break from studies, if a student switches mode following enrolment from full-time to part-time or vice versa. The remaining period is doubled if switching to part-time and halved if switching to full-time.*

A student registered for a European doctorate shall be required to spend a period of research of at least 16 weeks full-time (or the equivalent part-time) in another European country at an institution or organisation approved by the Research Degrees Sub-Committee.

- 33 A full-time student shall usually reach the standard for MPhil after twelve months of registration and for PhD within three years. A part-time student shall usually reach the standard for MPhil after two years of registration and for PhD within six years.
- 34 A student seeking a change to the registration period for his or her research degree programme shall apply in writing to the Research Degrees Sub-Committee for approval.
- 35 Where the student is prevented, by ill health or other serious cause, from making progress with the research, the student shall apply to the Research Degrees Sub-Committee for a period of intermission. The maximum permitted period of intermission shall be one year. A further exceptional request above one year must be approved by the Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research and Knowledge Exchange (or nominee) who may exceptionally approve an intermission for a further additional year. Criteria for agreement to a period of intermission will include continued academic viability of the research project. Students whose residence in the UK is only permitted by the terms of a student visa cannot remain resident in the UK if they are intermitting their studies. The University will notify the relevant authorities if an intermission is agreed.
- 36 A student shall submit the thesis to the RPO of the University before the expiry of the maximum period of registration. The Head of the Graduate School may in exceptional circumstances request of the Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research and Knowledge Exchange an extension to the period of registration, subject to confirmation that the student continues to make satisfactory academic progress and that the research project remains viable.
- 37 When a student discontinues the research, the Research Degrees Sub-Committee may:
  - 37.1 withdraw registration on application by the student;
  - 37.2 withdraw registration of a student on suspension by Finance for fee debt;
  - 37.3 withdraw registration on application of the Chair of the School-based Research Student Progress Group without the agreement of the student under the provisions detailed in Regulation 40 below.

## **Monitoring**

### **Confirmation Viva.**

- 38 During their first year of study, candidates for MPhil shall submit an initial progress report of 3,000 words and for PhD shall submit an initial progress report of 4,000 words for assessment and make an oral presentation to the relevant School Research Student Progress Group (RSPG). The student will be required to pass both components of this initial assessment to continue into the second year of their studies. If the student fails either or both components, they shall be permitted to re-submit the written report and/or make a further oral presentation.



Should the student fail either or both components on re-submission they shall be withdrawn from the programme. Should the student perform adequately to proceed directly to an MPhil, then this will be allowed.

The confirmation viva replaces transfer for students starting from the academic year 2020-21. Its exact timing is determined by the School's RSPG taking into consideration mode of study (full-time vs. part-time) and type of project (for instance, theoretical vs. practice-based or laboratory-based).

- 39 The student's progress report must be accompanied by a statement from the supervisors that the student has successfully completed and/or attended any required programme of related studies.
- 40 At least once a year, the Research Degrees Sub-Committee shall establish whether the student is actively engaged on the research programme and is maintaining regular and frequent contact with the supervisors and shall consider reports from the student, the supervisors and an independent reader, i.e. an internal member of staff who is not nor has been a supervisor of that student, on the student's progress. As a result of this process, the Committee shall take or progress appropriate action, which may include the termination or withdrawal of the student's registration. If no reports are obtained from the student and if no response is forthcoming from the student following enquiries from the University, the student may be withdrawn from the University.
- 41 A student registered for the degree of MPhil only may apply to transfer the registration to PhD. In such cases the student's full progress report shall be submitted to the Research Degrees Sub-Committee with the application for transfer.
- 42 A student who is registered for the degree of PhD and who is unable to complete the approved programme of work may, at any time prior to the submission of the thesis for examination, apply to the Research Degrees Sub-Committee for the registration to change to that for MPhil.

## **Supervision**

- 43 A research degree student shall have at least two supervisors, to be approved by the Research Degrees Sub-Committee. Prior to such approval, the Research Degrees Sub-Committee shall have due regard to the following that:
  - At least two of the supervisors, including the Lead Supervisor, should other than exceptionally be employed as substantive members of staff by the University (the second supervisor may be employed by a collaborative research partner of the University); *and*,
  - For students studying for a European Doctorate one of these supervisors (not the Lead Supervisor, see Regulation 44 below) must be located in the institution or organisation in a European country outside the UK where the student is to spend part of their research time.

- 44 One supervisor shall be the lead supervisor with responsibility to supervise the student on a regular and frequent basis and to ensure that the student has clear and unequivocal guidance when there are differences of opinion within, or when conflicting advice is offered by, different members of the supervisory team. The lead supervisor shall be responsible for ensuring that the student has access to the supervisory, training and associated resources required to complete their studies, and for ensuring that the supervisory team follow the University's Research Degree Regulations.
- 45 A supervisory team shall include at least one supervisor who has had experience of supervising at least one research student to successful completion. All supervisors must normally have completed the University's supervisory training scheme.
- 46 In addition to the supervisors, an adviser or advisers may be proposed to contribute some specialised knowledge or a link with an external organisation.
- 47 A person who is registered for a research degree is ineligible to act as Lead Supervisor for a research degree student but may act as a second supervisor in exceptional circumstances.
- 48 Any proposal to make a change in supervisory arrangements must be approved by the Research Degrees Sub-Committee. Application should normally be made by the student and the supervisory team acting together. If a supervisor leaves the employment of the University, the supervisory team (normally the Lead Supervisor) should notify the Research Degrees Sub-Committee which must approve subsequent supervisory arrangements.

### **Examination - general**

- 49 The examination for the MPhil and PhD shall have two stages: firstly, the submission and preliminary assessment of the thesis, and secondly, its defence by oral examination or exceptionally by alternative examination as approved by the Research Degrees Sub-Committee.
- 50 To be eligible for examination for MPhil or PhD, the supervisor shall confirm that the student has satisfied any requirements of a programme of related studies taken during the period of registration.
- 51 A student shall be examined orally on the programme of work and on the field of study in which the programme lies. A student studying for a European doctorate shall be required to conduct part of the defence of his or her thesis in one of the official European languages other than English. An oral examination shall normally be held in the UK. In special cases the Research Degrees Sub-Committee may give approval for the examination to take place abroad or to be conducted through online conferencing. The oral examination should take place within three months of the thesis submission and no later than six months after submission.

- 52 A senior academic within the University shall be designated independent chair of the oral examination. The Chair is not an examiner and is independent of the candidate's supervisory team and research topic, but takes responsibility for ensuring the University's Regulations are followed (Refer also to Section 5.4, Procedures for the Conduct of the Research Degree Oral Examination) and that examiners are able to distinguish between 'minor amendments' (i.e. factual or analytical errors that require corrections that can feasibly be made within six months) and 'revision' (i.e. substantial flaws in design, conduct, analysis or presentation that require revision that can feasibly be made within twelve months) of the thesis as detailed in Regulations 79.3, 79.4, 85 and 90.3.
- 53 Normally only the candidate, the examiners, the independent chair and, where the candidate permits, the supervisor(s), may be present at the oral examination. Should the supervisor(s) attend they do so in the capacity of observer(s) and as such, may not participate in the discussion and shall withdraw prior to the deliberations of the examiners on the outcome of the examination.
- 54 The Research Degrees Sub-Committee shall consider the reports and recommendation(s) of the examiner(s) in respect of the student and confer awards which will be presented to the Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee.
- 55 Where for reasons of sickness, disability or comparable valid cause the Research Degrees Sub-Committee is satisfied that a student would be under serious disadvantage if required to undergo an oral examination, or where there is other comparable reason, an alternative form of examination may be approved. Such approval shall not be given on the grounds that the student's knowledge of English is inadequate.
- 56 The degree of MPhil or PhD may be awarded posthumously to a student on the basis of a thesis which is ready for submission for examination. In such cases the University Research Degrees Sub-Committee shall seek evidence that the student would have been likely to have been successful had the oral examination taken place.
- 57 Following submission, where there is evidence of cheating or plagiarism in the thesis, or irregularities in the conduct of the examination, it shall be progressed and considered under the University's Procedures on Student Academic Misconduct (see Section 15). The same applies to postgraduate research graduates without time limit. Any student or former student found to be guilty of academic misconduct shall be subject to the provisions of those Procedures and their associated penalties for Research Degree allegations (see Section 15).
- 58 The Research Degrees Sub-Committee shall ensure that all examinations are conducted and the recommendations of the examiners are presented wholly in accordance with the University's regulations. In any instance where the Research Degrees Sub-Committee is made aware of a failure to comply with all the procedures of the examination process, it may declare the examination null and void and appoint new examiners. In such cases, this shall be reported to the Chair of the University Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee.

## **Examination procedures**

- 59 The Lead Supervisor shall, with the Head of School approval, propose the arrangements for the student's examination to the Research Degrees Sub-Committee for approval. The examination may not take place until the examination arrangements have been approved. The Research Degrees Sub-Committee may in exceptional circumstances act directly to appoint examiners and arrange the examination of a student.
- 60 The RPO shall inform the student of the procedure to be followed for the submission of the thesis and any conditions to be satisfied before the student may be considered eligible for examination.
- 61 The RPO shall be responsible for the organisation of the oral examination and shall notify the student, all supervisors, the independent chair and the examiners of the arrangements for the oral examination.
- 62 The RPO shall send a copy of the thesis to each examiner, together with an examiner's preliminary report form, and the University's Regulations including the Procedures for the Conduct of the Research Degree Oral Examination (Section 5.4) and shall ensure that the examiners are properly briefed as to their duties.

## **The student's responsibilities in the examination process**

- 63 The submission of the MPhil or PhD thesis is the sole responsibility of the student. It shall be the responsibility of the student to ensure that the MPhil or PhD thesis they submit for assessment is entirely their own and that they observe all rules and instructions governing examinations. Any allegation of plagiarism or any other impropriety shall be progressed under the Procedures on Student Academic Misconduct (see Regulation 57 above).
- 64 The student shall ensure that a specified number of copies of the thesis accompanied where appropriate by any original artefacts, is submitted to the RPO before the expiry of the registration period. These may be submitted for examination either in a permanently bound form or in a temporary bound form, which is sufficiently secure to ensure that pages cannot be added or removed. The thesis must be presented in a permanent binding of the approved type as detailed in the Handbook for Research Students and Supervisors (see Regulation 103) before the degree can be awarded.
- 65 The student shall notify the RPO as to whether the MPhil or PhD thesis has been submitted with or without the approval of the supervisory team.
- 66 The student shall satisfy any conditions of eligibility for examination required by the Research Degrees Sub-Committee.
- 67 The student shall take no part in the arrangement of the examination and shall have no formal contact with the examiner(s) following their appointment.

- 68 The student shall confirm that the thesis has not been submitted for a comparable academic award. The student shall not be precluded from incorporating in the thesis, covering a wider field, work which has already been submitted for a degree or comparable award, provided that it is indicated on the declaration form and also in the thesis, which work has been so incorporated.
- 69 The student shall ensure that the thesis format is in accordance with the requirements of the University's Regulations. The student shall attest that the contents of the permanently bound thesis are identical with the version submitted for examination, except where amendments have been made to meet the requirements of the examiners.
- 70 Any mitigating circumstances pertaining to the oral examination should be disclosed at the outset of oral examination process.

## **Examiners**

- 71 A student shall be examined by at least one external examiner and one internal examiner or, exceptionally, by two external examiners. For students studying for a European doctorate at least one of the examiners present at the oral examination shall be from a European country outside the UK and an additional examiner from a second European country outside the UK shall be appointed to examine the thesis and other materials forming part of the submission prior to the oral examination (see Regulation 80 below).
- 72 An internal examiner shall be defined as a member of staff of the University other than a supervisor or adviser of the student as appointed under procedures determined by Academic Board. The external examiner shall not be either a supervisor of another student or an external examiner on a taught course in the same School at the University. Former members of staff of the University shall not be approved as external examiners until five years after the termination of their employment with the University.
- 73 Where the student is on the staff of the University or has been in the last 5 years, in any capacity, a second external examiner shall be appointed and there shall be no internal examiner.
- 74 Examiners shall be appointed according to the following criteria:
- 74.1 experienced in research in the general area of the student's thesis; and,
  - 74.2 where applicable, have experience as a specialist in the topic(s) to be examined; and,
  - 74.3 at least one examiner shall have substantial experience (that is, normally having acted as an examiner at two or more previous research (i.e., PhD or Professional Doctorate) degree examinations); and,
  - 74.4 an external examiner shall be independent both of the University and, if applicable, of any collaborating organisation and shall not have acted previously as the student's supervisor or adviser.

- 75 The University shall determine and pay the fees and expenses of the external examiners.

### **First examination**

- 76 Each examiner shall read and examine the thesis and other materials forming part of the submission and submit an independent preliminary report on it to the RPO at least five days before the oral or alternative form of examination is held. In completing the preliminary report, each examiner shall consider whether the thesis provisionally satisfies the requirements of the degree and where possible make an appropriate provisional recommendation subject to the outcome of the oral examination.
- 77 Where the examiners are of the opinion that the thesis is so unsatisfactory that it is likely that they will recommend that the student will not be awarded the degree or will be required to revise and resubmit the thesis for re-examination, the examiners shall not, except under exceptional circumstances, make such recommendations without submitting the candidate to oral examination or approved alternative examination.
- 78 Following the oral examination, the examiners shall, where they are in agreement, submit a joint typewritten report on the day of the oral examination and a list of typographical errors within 5 days and recommendation relating to the award of the degree to the Chair of the Research Degrees Sub-Committee. The preliminary reports and joint recommendation of the examiners shall together provide sufficiently detailed comments on the scope and quality of the work to enable the Research Degrees Sub-Committee to satisfy itself that the recommendation chosen in Regulation 79 is appropriate. Where the examiners are not in agreement, separate reports and recommendations shall be submitted.
- 79 Following the completion of the oral examination the examiners may recommend that:
- 79.1 the student be awarded the degree;
  - 79.2 the student be awarded the degree subject to correcting the typographical errors identified by the examiners; the clean copy of the thesis should be submitted within 2 weeks of receipt of the examiners' list of typographical errors;
  - 79.3 the student be awarded the degree subject to minor amendments being made to the thesis; these should be submitted within 6 months to the satisfaction of internal and/or the external examiner(s). The examiners shall write a report detailing the amendments and corrections required, which shall be sent to the student by the RPO;
  - 79.4 the student be permitted to resubmit for the degree and be re-examined, with or without an oral examination; this should be done within the period of one calendar year from the date of the latest part of the first examination (see also Regulations 88- 95). In cases where the examiners recommend that only the thesis requires re-examination, they may determine that the re-examination of the thesis be undertaken by only the external examiner. The examiners shall write a report detailing the amendments and corrections required, which shall be sent to the student by the RPO;
  - 79.5 the student be not awarded the degree and be not permitted to be re-examined; or,

- 79.6 in the case of a PhD examination the student not be awarded the degree of PhD but be permitted to amend the work to the requirements of the MPhil and to submit for the MPhil award within 6 months.
- 80 In accordance with Regulation 54 above, the Research Degrees Sub-Committee shall consider all recommendations, confer awards, and present them to the Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee. Only one re-examination may be permitted by the Research Degrees Sub-Committee.
- 81 Where the examiners' recommendations are not unanimous, the Research Degrees Sub-Committee may:
- 81.1 accept a majority recommendation (provided that the majority recommendation includes at least one external examiner);
  - 81.2 accept the recommendation of the external examiner; or
  - 81.3 require the appointment of an additional external examiner.
- 82 Where such an additional external examiner is appointed under Regulation 81.3, they shall prepare an independent preliminary report on the basis of the thesis and, if considered necessary, may conduct a further oral examination. That examiner should not be informed of the recommendations of the other examiners. On receipt of the report from the additional examiner, the Chair of the Research Degrees Sub-Committee shall determine the outcome as detailed in Regulation 79 above and progress in accordance with Regulation 80 above.
- 83 Where the Research Degrees Sub-Committee recommends that the degree shall not be awarded and that no re-examination be permitted, the examiners shall prepare an agreed statement of the deficiencies of the thesis and the reason for their recommendation, which shall be forwarded to the Chair of the Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee for consideration. Where the decision not to re-examine the student is approved, the Chair of the Research Degrees Sub-Committee shall inform the student of this decision and include a copy of the agreed statement of the deficiencies of the thesis from the examiners.

## Re-examination

- 84 There are three forms of re-examination:
- 84.1 where the student's performance in the first oral or approved alternative examination was satisfactory but the thesis was unsatisfactory, the examiner(s) shall re-examine the thesis only;
  - 84.2 where the student's performance in the first oral or approved alternative examination was unsatisfactory and the thesis was also unsatisfactory, any re-examination shall include a re-examination of the thesis and an oral or approved alternative examination;
  - 84.3 where on the first examination the student's thesis was satisfactory but the performance in the oral and/or other examination(s) was not satisfactory the student shall be re-examined in the oral and/or other examination(s) subject to the time limits prescribed in Regulation 85, without being requested to revise and re-submit the thesis.
- 85 The student shall submit a thesis for re-examination to the RPO within the period

of one calendar year from official notification from the RPO of the outcome of the examination. If only an oral examination is required, this shall normally be undertaken within three months. The Research Degrees Sub-Committee may, where there are significant extenuating circumstances that occur during the calendar year, approve an exceptional extension of this period.

- 86 The Research Degrees Sub-Committee may require that an additional external examiner be appointed for the re-examination.
- 87 In the case of a re-examination under Regulations 84.1 the examiner(s) (refer 79.4 above) shall read and examine the thesis and submit, on the appropriate form, an independent report to the RPO. In completing the report, the examiner(s) shall consider whether the thesis satisfies the requirements of the degree and make a recommendation alongside sufficiently detailed comments on the scope and quality of the work to enable the Research Degrees Sub-Committee to satisfy itself that the recommendation chosen in Regulation 95 is appropriate.
- 88 Following the re-examination of the thesis under Regulation 84.1 or following an oral or other examination under Regulations 84.2 or 84.3, the examiners shall, where they are in agreement, submit, on the appropriate form, a joint recommendation relating to the award of the degree to the Chair of the Research Degrees Sub-Committee. The reports and joint recommendation of the examiners shall together provide sufficiently detailed comments on the scope and quality of the work to enable the Research Degrees Sub-Committee to satisfy itself that the recommendation chosen in Regulation 90 is appropriate.
- 89 Where the examiners are not in agreement, separate reports and recommendations shall be submitted. The recommendations shall be made on the appropriate form.
- 90 Following the completion of the re-examination the examiners may recommend that:
- 90.1 the student be awarded the degree;
  - 90.2 the student be awarded the degree subject to correcting the typographical errors; identified by the examiners; the clean copy of the thesis should be submitted within 2 weeks of receipt of the examiners' list of typographical errors;
  - 90.3 the student be awarded the degree subject to minor amendments being made to the thesis; these should normally be submitted within 6 months. The examiners shall write a report detailing what amendments and corrections are required, which shall be sent to the student by the RPO;
  - 90.4 the student not be awarded the degree and not be permitted to be re-examined;
  - 90.5 in the case of a PhD examination the student not be awarded the degree of PhD but be permitted to amend the work to the requirements of the MPhil and to submit for the MPhil award within 6 months.
- 91 In accordance with Regulation 54 above, the Research Degrees Sub-Committee shall consider all recommendations, confer awards, and present them to the Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee. In respect of 90.3 above, this is contingent upon the student amending the thesis to the satisfaction of the internal



and/or the external examiner(s) within 6 months. Minor amendments may normally be proposed on two occasions only.

## **Thesis**

- 92 Except with the specific permission of the Research Degrees Sub-Committee the thesis shall be presented in English. Where appropriate, matters pertinent to the thesis may be presented in another language but must be accompanied by a full translation into English, if appropriate to the subject discipline.
- 93 In exceptional circumstances, a student may be allowed to submit in a language other than English, if approved at the time of registration and if appropriate supervisors and examiners are available.
- 94 There shall be an abstract, in English, of approximately 300 words bound into the thesis which shall provide 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.
- 95 The thesis shall include a statement of the student's objectives and shall acknowledge published or other sources of material consulted (including an appropriate bibliography) and any assistance received.
- 96 Where a student's research programme is part of a collaborative group project, the thesis shall indicate clearly the student's individual contribution and the extent of the collaboration.
- 97 The student shall be free to publish material in advance of the thesis but reference shall be made in the thesis to any such work. Copies of published material may be bound in with the thesis but the student shall be examined solely on the basis of the thesis alone.
- 98 The text of the thesis should not exceed the following length (excluding ancillary data), unless approved by the Research Degrees Sub-Committee:
- for a PhD in Science, Engineering and practice-based or practice-led research degrees in Art and Design 40,000 words;
  - for an MPhil in Science, Engineering and practice-based or practice-led research degrees in Art and Design 30,000 words;
  - for a PhD in Arts, Social Sciences, Business and Education 80,000 words; for an MPhil in Arts, Social Sciences, Business and Education 40,000 words.

Where the thesis is accompanied by material in other than written form, as for example in a practice-based or practice-led research degree, or the research involves creative writing or the preparation of a scholarly edition, the written thesis should normally be within the range:

for a PhD 30,000 - 40,000 words;  
for a MPhil 15,000 - 20,000 words.

- 99 Following the award of the degree by the University Research Degrees Sub-Committee the RPO shall lodge one hard copy of the thesis in the library of the University and also normally lodge a digital copy with the British Library and the University's Institutional Repository. The RPO shall provide details of the requirements for the format of the digital copy. The hard-bound copy should normally be submitted within two weeks of notification of the award.
- 100 Where the Research Degrees Sub-Committee has agreed that the confidential nature of the student's work is such as to preclude the thesis being made freely available in the library of the University or electronically via the British Library, the thesis shall, immediately on completion of the programme of work, be retained by the University on restricted access and, for a time not exceeding the approved period, shall only be made available to those who were directly involved in the project.
- 101 The Research Degrees Sub-Committee shall normally only approve an application for confidentiality to enable a patent application to be lodged or to protect commercially, politically or personally sensitive material or where ethical considerations require this. A thesis shall not be restricted in this way to protect research leads. Work judged to be confidential on ethical grounds shall remain on restricted access. While the normal maximum period of confidentiality for other work is three years, in exceptional circumstances the Research Degrees Sub-Committee may approve a longer period. Where a shorter period would be adequate the Research Degrees Sub-Committee shall not automatically grant confidentiality for three years.
- 102 The copies of the thesis submitted for examination shall remain the property of the University but the copyright in the thesis shall be vested in the student.
- 103 The requirements for the format of the submitted thesis are as described in the Handbook for Research Students and Supervisors, which is updated each year by the RPO.
- 104 The University library copy shall be as detailed in Regulation 103 and bound as follows:
- 104.1 the binding shall be of a fixed type so that leaves cannot be removed or replaced; the front and rear boards shall have sufficient rigidity to support the weight of the work when standing upright; and
  - 104.2 in at least 24pt type the outside front board shall bear the title of the work, the name and initials of the student, the qualification, and the year of submission; the same information (excluding the title of the work) shall be shown on the spine of the work, reading downwards.

## **Provisions applying to the degree of PhD to be awarded for the submission of prior output**

- 105 Students for the degree of PhD by prior output must have made a substantial independent, coherent and original contribution to knowledge in a subject area or discipline for which supervisory expertise is available within the University. The extent of the work should be equivalent to that expected of a standard Doctor of Philosophy.
- 106 A student shall apply in writing to the RPO for registration for the PhD by prior output under these Regulations. The application for registration shall be considered by the Chair of the School-based Research Student Progress Group in consultation with the Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research and Knowledge Exchange. Where registration for the degree is approved, a supervisor shall be appointed to provide guidance to the student.
- 107 A student shall normally submit for examination for the degree of PhD by prior output within 12 months of registration.
- 108 A student must select current outputs from a nominated field of study and present two copies of such outputs for examination. Material other than books should be presented where practical in one or more hard-backed folders or box files, each containing a title and contents page, and displaying on the front cover the name and initials of the student, the qualification, and the year of submission. Where an artefact or piece of creative work is involved which cannot be included as such, there should instead be some permanent record of the work (for instance, video, photographic record, musical score, diagrammatic representation).
- 109 A student shall, in addition, be required to submit an abstract and two copies of a covering document of normally 15,000 to 30,000 words. The covering document should be a critical appraisal which identifies the research aims, explains how the outputs form a coherent body of work, demonstrates methodological and conceptual rigour, articulates the original contribution to the field, and, for co-authored work, identifies the individual contribution made by the student. In addition, the covering document should contain as an appendix a full bibliography of all relevant work in the public domain by the student.
- 110 Students shall be required:
- 110.1 to declare that the submitted work as a whole is not substantially the same as any that they have previously submitted or are currently submitting whether in published or unpublished form, for a degree, diploma, or similar qualification at any University or similar institution; and
  - 110.2 to declare which parts if any of the output or outputs submitted have previously been submitted for any such qualification; and
  - 110.3 where the work submitted includes outputs conducted in collaboration with others to provide a written statement normally signed by all collaborating

- parties on the extent of the student's individual contribution to the material and the conditions and circumstances under which the work was carried out.
- 110.4 to provide a statement detailing ethical considerations. In cases where any work submitted by the student has been based on a study involving human participants, the student shall submit a declaration to the effect that such work was given prior approval by an appropriate body responsible for the maintenance of ethical standards.
- 111 A student may not include with their submitted outputs work that has not been published or has not been in the public domain.
- 112 In order to be eligible for the award of the degree of PhD, the submitted work must constitute a substantial original contribution to knowledge. The work submitted shall be examined by examiners appointed by the University on the recommendation of the Research Degrees Sub-Committee. A student shall be examined by at least one external examiner and one internal examiner. In the case of collaborative outputs, the examiners must satisfy themselves that the parts of the submitted outputs attributed to the student constitute a substantial original contribution to knowledge. Where the student is on the staff of the University or has been in the last 5 years, in any capacity, see Regulation 73 which states that a second external examiner shall be appointed and there shall be no internal examiner.
- 113 A student shall be required to undergo an oral examination, which shall be on the submitted outputs themselves and covering document.
- 114 Each examiner shall make an independent report on the work submitted; both shall be present at the oral examination and shall sign the joint report and the final recommendation. The reports shall be considered by the Research Degrees Sub-Committee.
- 115 The joint report of the examiners shall conclude with one of the following recommendations:
- 115.1 that the student be awarded the degree of PhD;
  - 115.2 the student be awarded the degree subject to correcting the typographical errors identified by the examiners; the clean copy of the covering document should be submitted within 2 weeks of receipt of the examiners' list of typographical errors;
  - 115.3 that the student be awarded the degree of PhD subject to minor corrections or amendments to the covering document; these should normally be submitted within 6 months. The examiners shall write a report detailing the amendments and corrections required, which shall be sent to the student by the RPO;
  - 115.4 that the student not be awarded the degree of PhD.
- 116 In accordance with Regulation 54 above, the Research Degrees Sub-Committee shall consider all recommendations and propose awards for conferral to the University Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee. In respect of 115.3 above this is contingent upon the student amending the thesis to the satisfaction of the internal and/or the external examiner(s) within 6 months.

- 117 If, for any reason, a further opinion is required on the work submitted, an external adjudicator shall be appointed. The adjudicator shall be appointed by the University on the recommendation of the Chair of the Research Degrees Sub-Committee after consultation with the original external examiners. The adjudicator shall consider the work submitted and will also be sent the reports of the original examiners. The adjudicator shall make an independent report which shall conclude with one of the recommendations under Regulation 115. The report shall be sent, together with the original examiners' reports, to the Chair of the Research Degrees Sub-Committee who shall determine the outcome as detailed in 115 above and progress in accordance with Regulation 122 above. The recommendation of the adjudicator is expected to prevail.
- 118 One copy of the work submitted in support of a successful application shall be retained by the University and deposited in the library.
- 119 Section 13 Appeals Regulations and Procedure, applies to these provisions.

### **Provisions applying to the award of a higher doctorate**

- 120 Applications can be made for the following higher doctorates:  
Doctor of Letters (DLitt)  
Doctor of Science (DSc)
- 121 The work submitted must be of high distinction, must constitute an original and significant contribution to the advancement of knowledge or to the application of knowledge or to both and must establish that the applicant is a leading authority in the field or fields of study concerned.
- 122 Applicants should normally be  
122.1 holders, of at least seven years' standing, of a first degree such as a Bachelor's degree or of a qualification of equivalent standard; or  
122.2 holders, of at least four years' standing, of a higher degree such as a Master's or research degree or of a qualification of equivalent standard.
- 123 Applicants must submit four copies of the work on which the application is based. The submission may take the form of books, contributions to journals, patent specifications, reports, specifications, designs, video, photographic record, musical score or diagrammatic representation, and may include other relevant evidence of original work. Material other than books must be secured in one or more hard-backed folders, or box files, each containing a title and contents page, and displaying on the front cover the name and initials of the student, the qualification, and the year of submission. An applicant shall state which part, if any, has been submitted for another academic award. The work submitted for the degree shall not be concurrently submitted by the candidate for a higher doctorate or other award at any other institution. The content of the submission must be in English unless specific permission to the contrary has been given by the Research Degrees Sub-Committee. Where an artefact or piece of creative work is involved which cannot be included as such, there should instead be some permanent record of the work (for instance, video,

photographic record, musical score, diagrammatic representation).

- 124 In addition to the copies of the work on which the application is based, applicants must submit one copy of each of the following, all of which must be word processed:
- 124.1 a completed application form;
  - 124.2 a curriculum vitae;
  - 124.3 a list detailing each work to be submitted in support of the application;
  - 124.4 a critical appraisal of 4,000 to 10,000 words setting out the field, the aims and main themes of the work, and the original and distinguished contribution to the advancement or application of knowledge in the field represented by the works;
  - 124.5 a full statement of the extent of the applicant's contribution to work submitted, involving joint authorship or other types of collaboration;
  - 124.6 a statement detailing ethical considerations. In cases where any work submitted by the candidate has been based on a study involving human participants, the candidate shall submit a declaration to the effect that such work was given prior approval by an appropriate body responsible for the maintenance of ethical standards.
- 125 On submission of an application, the Research Degrees Sub-Committee will consider whether a *prima facie* case for proceeding to a formal examination of the application has been established, taking whatever advice it considers appropriate.
- 126 If satisfied that such a case has been established, the Research Degrees Sub-Committee will submit the application to two examiners appointed by the University, each of whom shall make an independent report to Research Degrees Sub-Committee. A student shall be examined by at least one external examiner and one internal examiner. Before making their report, examiners may seek additional information from the candidate in writing through the RPO. If the Examiners' reports do not unanimously recommend the award of the degree, the Research Degrees Sub-Committee may appoint an additional examiner. Where the student is on the staff of the University or has been in the last 5 years, in any capacity, see Regulation 73 which states that a second external examiner shall be appointed and there shall be no internal examiner.
- 127 One copy of the work submitted in support of a successful application shall be retained by the University and deposited in the library.
- 128 Section 13 of the Academic Regulations, Appeals Regulations and Procedure, applies to these provisions.