



# Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Research Programmes

Head of the Doctoral School  
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UNIVERSITY OF  
**WINCHESTER**

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<b>Summary/Description:</b>	
<p>This document defines the Academic Regulations for all Postgraduate Research programmes, validated by the University of Winchester..</p> <p>A summary of changes to this document appears below</p>	

## SUMMARY OF CHANGES

This list summarises the changes since 2019/20 The date confirms when the changes were implemented.

September 2022	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. B1.4 Removed reference to taught programmes</li> <li>2. B2.2 Clarified that staff studying for a postgraduate research degree at Winchester should use their student account for communicating student matters with the university.</li> <li>3. B2.6 and B3.1 Clarified that the University may withdraw students if they fail to engage with their studies.</li> <li>4. B4.2 Clarified that changes in mode of study may be approved only once</li> <li>5. B5 Clarified the role of the Director of Studies in the supervisory team and clarified that supervisory teams: a) must be holders of the qualification that they are providing supervision, b) clarified that an external supervisor may be appointed if there is no suitable expertise in the supervisory body c) visiting Professors from Sarum College and Emeritus Professors may act</li> </ol>
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	<p>as DoS, and d) a student registered for a research degree cannot act as a supervisor</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. C1.2 Added MRes and removed Prof M</li> <li>7. C1.5 Clarified the length of time without engagement that may lead to withdrawal</li> <li>8. C1.7 Clarified that a student who didn't upgrade to MPhil will have its registration period adjusted</li> <li>9. C1.9 Clarified that a PGR student that changes their mode of study will have its period of registration adjusted</li> <li>10. D5 Clarified that students enrolled in a PhD by publication are exempt of the requirement of taking and passing the PGCRS</li> <li>11. E2.2 b), E3.3 a) and G4.1 Clarified that assessors and examiners must not be enrolled as a research degree student</li> <li>12. E2.2 c) and E3.3 b) Clarified the language from examiners to assessors</li> <li>13. E3.4 Clarified that an exit award may be conferred to students that do not pass the Thesis Progression viva</li> <li>14. G4.1 Clarified in which cases two external examiners may be appointed</li> <li>15. Section H2 Clarified in which cases a Posthumous Postgraduate Research Degree may be awarded</li> <li>16. Appendix 1 Added the definition of the PGR Student Progress Committee</li> <li>17. Appendix 5 Added Professional Masters and MRes to the list of degree titles and their abbreviations.</li> <li>18. Appendix 6 Incorporated the Award and Classification Rules and Credit Framework summary for Postgraduate Research Degrees</li> <li>19. Throughout the document there were updates to reflect changes of names such as Doctoral School, Research and Innovation and PGR Progress Committee.</li> </ol>
September 2021	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Removal of reference to DProf BY Contribution To Practice and inclusion of reference to Supporting Students to Success for Postgraduate Research Degrees Procedure throughout the regulations</li> <li>2. Section B3.1 Minimum supervisory meeting requirement added</li> <li>3. Section B4.1 Expected Study hours for FT students included</li> <li>4. B5 Details on supervision included here rather than under Section G</li> <li>5. C1.3 Registration periods clarified</li> <li>6. E2.2 and E3.3 examiner criteria included</li> <li>7. G.4 Clarification of the examination procedure included.</li> <li>8. All reference to the information bank has been replaced with intranet and where appropriate reference to RDQC has been replaced with PPGR Student Progress Committee instead.</li> <li>9. All reference to Doctor of Philosophy by Works in the Public Domain removed</li> <li>10. G2.1 Word Count revised and G2.3 added</li> <li>11. Faculty Exam Board has been replaced throughout by Faculty Progression and Award Board.</li> <li>12. L1 updated to reflect practice (either Faculty Progression and Award Board or Research Degrees Quality committee, as appropriate).</li> <li>13. E2.2b, E3.3 and G4.7.2 updated to reflect duration of Examiner appointment</li> <li>14. E2.2c, E3.3b and G4.7.3 new sections added on 'Termination of appointments (Examiner)</li> </ol>

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## SECTION A INTRODUCTION

These Regulations are intended to be used as a primary source of information. Alongside the Regulations, the University operates a wide range of institutional policies and procedures. Key aspects of these policies and procedures are incorporated within the Regulations and reference is made there to the full policy or procedures, which can be found on the University's website under *Freedom of information*.

### Section A1 Scope of the Regulations

- A1.1 The *Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Research Programmes*, referred to here as the 'Regulations', apply to all postgraduate research provision of the University of Winchester and to all students undertaking that provision unless specifically exempted by Senate or disallowed under accreditation agreements with Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies. A full list of all postgraduate research awards, together with Honorary degree awards, is contained in Appendix 5.
- A1.2 The University reserves the right to withdraw programmes and to make changes in regulations, programmes, modules, fees etc., at any time before or after an applicant's admission. Admission to the University is subject to compliance with the University's registration and enrolment procedures and its Regulations.
- A1.3 The Regulations for each year shall be approved annually by Senate Academic Development Committee and Senate during the previous year.
- A1.4 The Regulations in force at any time shall be those for that academic year unless specified otherwise. When a student registers at the start of an academic year for a year of study or part way through an academic year, the student shall sign up for the Regulations for that academic year.
- A1.5 When a student resumes study after an interruption, the student shall undertake to abide by the Regulations and, where appropriate, the programme and module specifications in force at the time of resumption.
- A1.6 The Academic Regulations may be amended, through Senate Academic Development Committee, by authority of Senate.

### Section A2 Exemptions from and Suspension of the Regulations

- A2.1 In exceptional circumstances, a programme or Faculty may seek an exemption from one or more of the Regulations, normally at the time of validation or review. Application to do so shall follow appropriate consultation with other programmes and subjects as required, and must be made explicit at the time of validation or review and must be explicitly approved by Academic Regulations, Policies and Procedures Committee. Where approval is secured, this must be made explicit in the Programme Specification or Programme Outline, as appropriate, and added to the list of Exemptions held by the Quality Office on the University Intranet.
- A2.2 In exceptional circumstances, and following appropriate consultation, a programme or Faculty may seek to obtain formal approval through Academic Regulations, Policies and Procedures Committee to suspend temporarily one or more of the Regulations. Where approval is secured, students shall be explicitly notified before implementation. (An example of this might occur where a programme is running out or an external event prevents the normal procedures to apply).

## **SECTION B ENROLMENT, CONTRACTUAL OBLIGATIONS AND ATTENDANCE**

### **Section B1 Enrolment**

- B1.1 All students shall enrol annually in accordance with procedures established by the Academic Registrar. Failure to re-enrol shall result in termination of registration.
- B1.2 Students starting an MPhil/PhD (including PhD by Publication), must enrol and register within 20 working days of the Induction (or If they miss this date, they must defer starting their studies until the next registration date).
- B1.3 Professional Doctorate students, who are taking taught modules and fail to enrol and register by the day on which the module starts, must defer starting their studies until the next intake for the module/programme.
- B1.4 A student shall not be permitted to enrol on more than one programme leading to a qualification at one time except with the special permission of the Academic Registrar. This includes registration at another higher education provider. Failure to disclose any information relevant to this regulation may result in disciplinary action being taken and termination of registration, particularly in cases involving fraud or academic misconduct

### **Section B2 Contractual Obligations**

- B2.1 All students undertake to abide by the Regulations of the University and the programme for which they have registered, as a condition of enrolment, and to be subject to the University's discipline while registered at the University.
- B2.2 The University is responsible for providing students with a functioning University email account and providing adequate support. All formal email communication between the University and students shall proceed through this account; this includes staff who are studying for a research degree at Winchester. Students shall, therefore, undertake to monitor communications at least once a week.
- B2.3 Should a student transfer to another programme and/or to another mode of study at the University, or withdraw temporarily or permanently from a programme, they shall obtain written approval in accordance with the University's procedures.
- B2.4 A student remains enrolled unless:
- a) they have advised the University of their withdrawal by completing the approved *Withdrawal Form* (available from Intranet) and submitting it to the Doctoral School (pgradmin@winchester.ac.uk); or
  - b) the University has terminated their registration.
- B2.5 A student shall ensure that their personal records, held by the University, always have the up to date residential address(es) and contact number(s).
- B2.6 Students shall ensure appropriate engagement with their studies as defined by attendance in Section B3. Failure to do so may result in the registration of a student been withdrawn by the University (see section C.1.5).

### **Section B3 Attendance**

- B3.1 Attendance refers to the University's expectations with regard to the way in which students engage with their research programme. The specific nature of attendance requirements varies depending on the nature of the programme but general expectations are that students complete modules (where required), undertake training and other specified activities. Engagement is also determined by meeting regularly with their Director of Studies/Supervisory Team with at least six meetings including three full team meetings each academic year (*pro rata* for part time mode). Lack of engagement from

a student as determined above will be subject to their registration being withdrawn by the University (also see section C.1.5).

B3.2 A student is admitted to a Professional Doctorate programme on the basis of being actively engaged in a profession relevant to the award being sought.

- a) Part-time students are normally required to remain actively engaged in their professional practice during their studies and any change in their practice should be reported to the University. A change may, at the discretion of the Programme Leader (where students are taking taught modules) or the Research Degrees Quality Committee (where students are completing the Thesis), lead to a requirement that studies interrupt their studies for a maximum of 12 months, depending on the circumstances of the change (see also Section C2: Interruption).
- b) Full-time students may be permitted to take a break from active engagement in the profession during part or all of their period of registration.

#### **Section B4 Full-Time and Part-Time Modes of Attendance**

B4.1 The following modes of attendance are available to students:

- a) Full-time (normally an average of 35 hours per week)
- b) Part-time (normally an average of 17 hours per week)

B4.2 A student is expected to continue in the same mode of study for which they originally registered. Students who wish to apply for to transfer between full-time and part-time study (or *vice versa*) must complete *Form Q: Changes to Mode of Study*. Changes in Mode of Study may only be approved once. If approved the minimum and maximum registration periods shall be adjusted according to paragraphs C1.2 and C1.9 below.

B4.3 Full-time students are permitted to undertake a certain amount of paid teaching or demonstrating work subject to the following conditions:

- a) the total demand on their time, including contact time and a reasonable allowance for preparation and marking, does not exceed 180 hours in any one year;
- b) the total demand on their time shall not normally exceed six hours in any week;
- c) the work is compatible with their programme of doctoral study;
- d) the approval of their Director of Studies
- e) Students may not teach until their second year of their studies

*(Further details may be found in the Employment of Full-Time PGR Students as Graduate Tutors: Approved Procedures)*

B4.4 Research Assistants shall be registered part-time except that in special circumstances the Research Degrees Quality Committee, on the recommendation of the Faculty Head of Research and Knowledge Exchange, may approve full-time registration.

#### **Section B5 Supervision**

All students studying for an MPhil or Doctoral award shall be allocated a Supervisory Team of either two or three people. One of them will act as a Director of Studies (DoS). The DoS will assume principal responsibility for the supervision of the student; the second supervisor may act independently of the Director of Studies, with both parties assuming joint responsibility for supervision up until the completion of the programme. The Director of Studies will also be responsible for agreeing the respective responsibilities and roles of the supervisory team and ensuring progress is reviewed at appropriate points in the academic year.

Supervisors are appointed by the Research Degrees Quality Committee according to approved criteria in accordance with the UK Quality Code for Higher Education and Advice and Guidance - Research Degrees (guiding principle 3) (2018), including:

- DoS who is an active researcher (REF 2021 Annex C) in a department or subject that has hosting rights.
- The team (including DoS) has at least two supervisors, who themselves must hold the qualification that they are supervising
- one of whom meets the ‘excellent research’ (QAA 1025, 2018) requirement (i.e. on a Teaching and Research or a Teaching with Enhanced Responsibility for Research role profile);
- one of whom meets the definition of active researcher (REF 2021 Annex C).

Research Degrees Quality Committee may permit the use of supervisors external to our University provided suitable expertise cannot be provided by the current supervisory body. Any external supervisor appointed must have completed any relevant staff development equivalent to that expected of members of staff at Winchester. For the purpose of supervision, Visiting Fellows from Sarum College and Emeritus Professors may act as DoS.

No person who is receiving supervision for a research degree at any Higher Education Institution may act as a supervisor.

Refer to the University’s current *PGR Student and Supervisors Handbook* for further details.

## **SECTION C REGISTRATION PERIODS, INTERRUPTION AND REPEAT STUDY**

### **Section C1 Registration Periods**

C1.1 The period of registration shall date from the point of initial enrolment. The expected period of registration for a programme shall normally be the minimum period as defined below:

#### **C1.2 Full time**

<i>Award</i>	<i>Period of Registration</i>
MRes	1 year
Period allowed for corrections to Thesis post-viva	1 year
Total:	2 years
MPhil	1 year
Period allowed for corrections to Thesis post-viva	1 year
Total:	2 years
Prof Doc – Stage 1 <sup>1</sup> (taught modules)	1.5 years
Prof Doc – Stage 2 (Thesis)	1.5 years
Period allowed for corrections to Thesis post-viva	1 year
Total:	4 years MPhil/PhD 3 years
Period allowed for corrections to Thesis post-viva	1 year
Total:	4 years

#### **Part time**

<i>Award</i>	<i>Period of Registration</i>
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MRes	2 years
Period allowed for corrections to Thesis post-viva	1 year
Total:	3 years
MPhil	2 years
Period allowed for corrections to Thesis post-viva	1 year
Total:	3 years
Prof Doc- Stage 1 <sup>1</sup> (taught modules)	3 years
ProfDoc – Stage 2 (Thesis)	3 years
Period allowed for corrections to Thesis post-viva	1 year
Total:	7 years
MPhil/PhD	6 years
Period allowed for corrections to Thesis post-viva	1 year
Total:	7 years

- C1.3 MPhil/PhD students are expected to submit their thesis and undertake their final viva voce examination no later than one year prior to the end of their total period of registration, with the exception of students submitting for a PhD by Publication, who must submit their thesis within 12 months of registration.
- C1.4 In exceptional circumstances, and for academic reasons only, a student may be permitted to submit a thesis earlier than the specified minimum period of registration. In such a case, the request must be made by the Director of Studies to Research Degrees Quality Committee for approval.
- C1.5 The maximum period of registration defines the period within which a student shall complete the requirements for the award. This shall not include any periods of interrupted study.
- The University may terminate the registration of a student where a student is failing to make progress under the Supporting Students to Succeed Procedure for Postgraduate Research Degrees or has not engaged/been inactive for more than three months for FT students and six months for PT students. If such a decision is made, an exit award may be conferred.
- C1.6 An MPhil or PhD student whose thesis is not ‘completed’ by the end of the maximum period of registration shall be deemed to have failed and their registration shall be terminated. Where appropriate, an exit award may be conferred. ‘Completion’ is defined as the thesis having been examined, corrections made and approved, and the award confirmed by the Research Degrees Quality Committee, on behalf of Senate
- C1.7 A student enrolled for the degree of MPhil/PhD may be permitted to submit for the degree of MPhil. However, the period of registration shall be adjusted for the degree to which the submission is made according to section C1.2
- C1.8 Students who wish to apply for an extension on their period of registration shall complete *Form T: Extension to Period of Registration*. The maximum period that may be applied for, at any one time, is one year and only in exceptional circumstances students may apply for a maximum of two years in total.
- C1.9 When a student’s mode of study changes from full-time to part-time or *vice versa*, the maximum period of registration shall normally be amended according to section C1.2.<sup>1</sup>
- C1.10 Where students change their programme, the number of years outstanding shall be amended according to the maximum permitted for the new programme.

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<sup>1</sup> Care needs to be taken when a student transfers between full-time and part-time or vice versa. Approval may only be granted if Registry has confirmed that the student will not exceed the full-time equivalent (FTE).

## **Section C2      Interruption**

- C2.1 Students who are unable to continue their programme due to extenuating circumstances may apply to interrupt their studies.
- C2.2 The period of the interruption of studies shall normally be up to one year and exceptionally up to a maximum of two years. Interruption for parental leave shall not normally be included in the maximum period of interruption.
- C2.3 Students who are completing the taught modules for a Professional Doctoral programme shall complete the Interruption Form, available from the intranet or the Doctoral School. The form shall be submitted with evidence where appropriate to either the Professional Doctorate Programme Leader for consideration. Interruptions are subject to a minimum period of three months
- C2.4 Students who are studying for their Thesis and who wish to interrupt study shall complete and submit *Form R: Request for Interruption in Study* to the the Doctoral School , this is subject to a minimum period of three months. The form and appropriate evidence if required shall be submitted to PGRAdmin@winchester.ac.uk for consideration by RDQC.
- C2.5 Once approved, the form shall be forwarded to Registry (or the Doctoral School , as appropriate) in order for the details to be processed. Until the form has been received by the Doctoral School , a student shall remain enrolled for their current programme. Any incomplete modules will have an amended submission date which will be set once the student has returned to their studies.
- C2.6 Interruption of studies shall normally include interruption of supervision, access to IT and Library services etc. However, a student may apply to continue to receive these services when applying to interrupt their studies.
- C2.7 Shortly before the student is due to return to their studies, the Doctoral School shall contact them to confirm the date of return and any details, relating to their studies, that needs to be confirmed.
- C2.8 Where the reasons for interrupting study relate to medical or health issues, the University may require specific evidence to demonstrate that the issues have been addressed before permitting the student to resume their studies. Such evidence shall normally be detailed at the point of interruption.
- C2.9 Students recommencing study following interruption shall re-enrol on the programme, before they are permitted to continue. When students resume study, they shall sign up for the Regulations and the programme, subject and module specifications in force at the time of resumption.
- C2.10 Students, who are permitted to interrupt their studies and subsequently find they are unable to resume their studies, must complete the Form U Withdrawal Form (available from the intranet).
- C2.11 Students who fail to contact the University to either arrange their return to study or discuss other options to retain their registration no later than 20 working days after their expected return date shall be deemed to have unofficially withdrawn and their registration shall normally be terminated with effect from their expected return date.

## **Section C3      Applications to Repeat Modules**

- C3.1 Students who have failed one or more modules, excluding the Thesis module, are either ineligible to proceed to the next academic year of study or ineligible to graduate, may apply to repeat the failed module(s).
- C3.2 Professional Doctorate students may apply to repeat up to a maximum of one third of the credit for their programme, excluding the Thesis module. An exception may be made for students with valid extenuating circumstances. (See paragraph C3.7 below for details about how to apply for an exception).

- C3.3 Students who wish to repeat study shall complete and submit the appropriate application form to Registry in accordance with University procedures.
- C3.4 The decision to accept or reject applications to repeat study, regardless of whether the student has valid extenuating circumstances or not, is at the discretion of the relevant Programme Leader and subject to PSRB and programme requirements. Programme Leaders also have discretion to set conditions on students returning to study, (e.g. restriction to an exit award, regular progress reviews) and may require students to withdraw at any point if conditions are not met.
- C3.5 Students shall not normally be offered the opportunity to retake modules that have already been passed. The only exception would be where students have valid extenuating circumstances and where the modules concerned would affect their final award (see paragraph C3.7 below for details about how to apply for an exception). Where a Programme Leader permits a student to retake a module, which has already been passed, or take a new module to replace a module that has already been passed, the original result would be set aside and the result for the repeated or replacement module would stand, even if the result were lower than the result for the original module.
- C3.6 Results for repeated modules or modules taken to replace failed modules shall normally be capped at the minimum pass mark, unless the student has valid extenuating circumstances or the student is required to take additional modules to meet the requirements for a new programme, pathway or subject (see paragraph 3.7 below for details about how to apply for an exception).
- C3.7 If a student has extenuating circumstances that they wish to be taken into account, with regard to paragraphs C3.2, C3.5 or C3.6 above, they shall submit valid evidence of extenuating circumstances together with their Repeat Study Application Form. The relevant Faculty PGR Lead or Programme Leader will determine if the extenuating circumstances apply. The Programme Leader or Chair of RDQC may then consider this when deciding whether to accept the student's application to repeat study as detailed in C3.4 above.

## **SECTION D PROGRAMME STRUCTURE AND CREDITS**

*Full details of programme requirements may be found in the individual Programme Specifications for Professional Doctorates and Postgraduate Certificate in Research Skills and the Programme Outlines for MPhil/PhD, PhD by Publication (See appendix 6 for award and classification rules and credit framework summary for Postgraduate Research Degrees)*

- D1 All aspects relating to a Postgraduate Research Programme shall normally be conducted in English, including interviews, upgrades and vivas.
- D2 The MPhil and PhD consist of research training and supervision sessions leading to the production of a thesis in English which, depending on the nature of the discipline, may include the production of creative work or performance.
- D3 The PhD by Publication consists of a period of supervised study in which the student prepares a context statement for one or more works completed prior to registration which, depending on the nature of the discipline, may include the production of one or more creative works or performances. The context statement and the works together make up the Thesis.
- D4 Every student shall take part in an individualised assessment of their research training and personal and professional developmental needs with their supervisor(s) at the start of their programme. Training needs shall be monitored and re-assessed on an annual basis as part of the annual progress reporting process.
- D5 PhD students (except those enrolled on a PhD by publication) shall also be required to take and pass the Postgraduate Certificate in Research Skills prior to submitting their thesis, unless they can provide evidence and/or documentation of equivalent experience and qualifications through the RPL process. MPhil students are required to complete the first two modules and have the option to complete the certificate.

D6 PhD students (except those enrolled on a PhD by publication) are normally required to register initially for the degree of MPhil (Refer to paragraph E2 below for details of the process for upgrading to a PhD).

D7 In addition to meeting the Qualification Descriptors defined in *Appendix 4* of these Regulations, students are required to meet the following requirements for their intended award:

**MPhil/PhD** A thesis which must be presented and defended at a viva voce

**PhD by Publication**

A thesis consisting of a Context Statement and a copy or portfolio of the work contributing to a professional and/or public area, which must be presented and defended at a viva voce.

D8 Students who exit a Professional Doctorate without completing a thesis may be considered for a Professional Masters award.

## **SECTION E PROGRESSION**

### **Section E1 Annual Progress Review**

E1.1 Progress shall be reviewed annually for all students.

E1.2 Progression for students undertaking taught or supported self-study modules shall be determined by a Faculty Progression and Award Board or the Doctoral School Exam Board (PGR Student Progress Committee) which shall meet at least one a year to confirm module results, progression and exit awards, as appropriate.

E1.3 A student shall normally pass all modules for which they were registered in an academic year before being permitted to progress from one year to the subsequent year of study, except in the case of modules which cross academic years. This includes MPhil/PhD students who are required to take and pass the Postgraduate Certificate in Research Skills modules.

E1.4 A Professional Doctorate student shall normally pass all taught modules and satisfactorily complete their research proposal and pass their Thesis Progression Viva before being permitted to undertake the writing of the thesis.

E1.5 Students working on their MPhil/PhD/Professional Doctorate thesis shall be required to submit an *Annual Progress Report (Form D)* including an Action Plan (approved by their Supervisory Team), normally in May of each year with the following exceptions

a) students registered for the PhD by Publication shall be formally reviewed when they complete *Form J – Intention to Submit and Exam Arrangements*, at least 4 months before the final submission of the Thesis.

b) Students who have submitted their thesis for their final examination.

E1.6 Students who wish to apply for an extension shall do so using the application for *Extenuating Circumstances Form* and submit it to the Doctoral School, together with written concessionary evidence of extenuating circumstances. Refer to the University's *Supporting Students to Succeed Procedure for Postgraduate Research Degrees*. for further details.

E1.7 A Supervisory Team, which has concerns about a student's progress at any time, may request that a one-off review is undertaken and considered by the Chair of the PGR Student Progress Committee.

E1.8 Where a student fails to meet attendance requirements for their research programme and/or demonstrates unsatisfactory progress (for example non-submission of the *Annual Progress Report Form* and Action Plan or failure in a module from the Postgraduate Certificate in Research Skills), the Chair of the PGR Student Progress Committee or the Faculty Progression and Award Board (as appropriate) may require the student to:

- a) continue their studies for a defined period under the terms of an agreed action plan pending a further review; and/or
- b) transfer their registration to an alternative programme; or
- c) withdraw from the programme.

E1.9 Students shall not normally be permitted to progress to the next academic year of their programme, nor will they receive any academic award, unless they have paid at least 80% of their tuition fees and have an agreed payment plan in place for the balance (in accordance with the *Student Finance Regulations*).

E1.10 Any student required to withdraw under paragraph E1.8 above shall have the normal rights of appeal in accordance with the *Academic Appeals Regulations*.

## **Section E2 Upgrade from MPhil to PhD**

E2.1 Students wishing to upgrade from an MPhil to PhD shall submit *Form G: Upgrade Arrangements* to the Research Degrees Quality Committee and have taken and passed the relevant requirements of the Postgraduate Certificate in Research Skills. Once the Committee has approved the arrangements, the student shall:

- a) complete a written submission;
- b) attend an Upgrade Viva at which they must successfully defend their research proposal.

E2.2 The Upgrade Viva shall be conducted by a Panel consisting of two appropriately qualified members of academic staff:

- a) an Independent Chair, who shall be appointed by the Doctoral School and drawn from a list of staff who have received appropriate training;
- b) an External Assessor, who may be a member of staff at the University or external to the University but is not directly associated with the student's work. The External Assessor shall have a high level of subject knowledge, sufficient to impart a critical independent expert evaluation and, ideally, previous experience of postgraduate research examinations (as Chair or Examiner of at least three upgrades or vivas). In exceptional cases where the proposed External Assessor does not have the necessary experience, a second External Assessor may be appointed who does possess sufficient experience to ensure that, between them, the two Assessors shall meet the level of examining experience required. No person who is enrolled for a research degree may act as an assessor.
- c) Assessors are appointed for the full duration of the examination process, including periods of amendment, correction, revision and second attempts. In exceptional cases (such as approved Extenuating Circumstances) an assessor may be changed. Where the assessors cannot reach agreement on the recommendation, a new upgrade viva voce shall normally be arranged with new assessors .
- d) **Termination of appointments**  
If the University has cause to terminate an Assessor's contract before the end of the term of appointment, the Head of the Doctoral School or Director of Research and Innovation will write to the Assessor with an explanation of the reason(s).

In the event that an Assessor needs to terminate their contract before the end of the term of appointment, they should write to the Head of the Doctoral School or Director of Research and Innovation .

E2.3 All members of the Supervisory Team are normally required to attend unless the student would prefer not to.

- E2.4 Following the upgrade viva voce, the External Assessor(s) shall recommend one of the following courses of action:
- a) upgrade is recommended;
  - b) upgrade is deferred pending submission of a revised written submission;
  - c) the student be required to attend for a further Upgrade viva examination only;
  - d) the student be required to submit a revised written submission and attend a further Upgrade viva;
  - e) the Upgrade is not recommended and no further submissions shall be attempted.  
(This decision shall normally only be given following a second submission and/or viva.)
- E2.5 Where a student is successful and transfers their registration, the date of initial registration for the postgraduate research programme continues to apply for the purposes of determining minimum and maximum registration periods.
- E2.6 Students are normally only permitted two attempts to apply to upgrade their research proposal to a PhD (definition of attempt is in Section G4.7.1).
- E2.7 The student has a right to appeal against the decision of the Panel in accordance with the *Academic Appeals Regulations*.

For further details of the upgrade process and documentation, please refer to the *PGR Student and Supervisors Handbook*.

### **Section E3 Progression from Taught Modules to the Thesis Module for a Professional Doctorate**

- E3.1 Students wishing to continue their DProf after completing the taught modules shall submit *Form N Request for Approval of the Supervisory Team* as soon as possible after they start their final module and no later than the date of submission of their final assessment.
- E3.2 Once they have completed their taught modules, and the modules have been confirmed by an exam board the student shall work with their proposed Director of Studies to complete *Form C DProf Progression viva and registration of thesis*. Following submission of Form C the student shall be invited to attend a Thesis Progression Viva at which they must successfully defend their research proposal.
- E3.3 The Thesis Progression Viva shall be conducted by a Panel of Assessors consisting of an independent Chair (normally the Faculty PGR Lead, a Faculty Head of RKE or their nominee, who is not directly associated with the student's work) and an External Assessor.
- a) The External Assessor shall have a high level of subject knowledge, sufficient to impart a critical independent expert evaluation and, ideally, previous experience of postgraduate research examinations (as Chair or Examiner of at least three upgrades or vivas). In exceptional cases where the proposed External Assessor does not have the necessary experience, a second External Assessor may be appointed who does possess sufficient experience to ensure that, between them, the two Assessors shall meet the level of examining experience required. No person who is enrolled for a research degree may act as an assessor. The Director of Studies and proposed second/third supervisors may attend as observers.
  - b) Assessors are appointed for the full duration of the examination process, including periods of amendment, correction, revision and second attempts. In exceptional cases (such as approved Extenuating Circumstances) an assessor may be changed. Where the assessors cannot reach agreement on the recommendation, a new Thesis progression viva voce shall normally be arranged with new assessors.

#### **c) Termination of appointments**

If the University has cause to terminate an Assessor's contract before the end of the term of appointment, the Head of the Doctoral School or Director of Research and Innovation will write to the Examiner with an explanation of the reason(s).

In the event that an Assessor needs to terminate their contract before the end of the term of appointment, they should write to the Head of the Doctoral School or Director of Research and Innovation.

- E3.4 Following the Thesis Progression Viva, the Assessors shall recommend one of the following courses of action:
- a) progression to supervised study is recommended;
  - b) progression is deferred pending submission of a revised written submission only;
  - c) the student be required to attend a further Thesis Progression Viva only;
  - d) the student be required to submit a revised written submission and attend a further Thesis Progression Viva;
  - e) the progression to supervised study is not recommended and no further submissions shall be accepted. An exit award may be considered by the Faculty Exam and Progression Board. (This decision shall normally only be given following a second submission and/or viva.)
- E3.5 Where a student is successful in making the progression to supervised study, the date of initial registration for the postgraduate research programme continues to apply for the purposes of determining minimum and maximum registration periods.
- E3.6 Students are normally only permitted two attempts to apply to make the progression to supervised study (an attempt is defined in G4.7.1)
- E3.7 The student has a right to appeal against the decision of the Panel in accordance with the *Academic Appeals Regulations*.

For further details of the progression process and documentation, please refer to the *PGR Student and Supervisors Handbook*.

## **SECTION F ASSESSMENT**

The regulations governing assessment for the taught modules in the pre-Thesis stage of Professional Doctoral programmes and for the Postgraduate Certificate in Research Skills are contained in the *Assessment Regulations*.

## **SECTION G THESIS REQUIREMENTS AND EXAMINATION**

*This section applies to students studying for an MPhil or Doctoral award only.*

### **Section G1 Notice of Intention to Submit a Thesis**

A student who is about to submit a thesis shall complete and submit *Form J: Intention to Submit and Exam Arrangements* at least four months' prior to submission and shall have completed and passed the Postgraduate Certificate in Research Skills unless exempt.

### **Section G2 Thesis Word Lengths**

The word length may vary in accordance to the subject of study but the following ranges and maxima are offered as a guide, there is no minimum word count but students must meet the criteria as outlined in Appendix 4.

#### **G2.1 For students registered pre - 01 September 2021**

Professional Doctorate	Thesis: maximum 60,000 words
Master of Philosophy	Thesis: maximum of 50,000 words
Doctor of Philosophy	Thesis: between 75,000 - 100,000 words
Doctor of Philosophy by Publication	Context statement: normally between 10,000 - 20,000 words

**For students registered from 01 September 2021**

Professional Doctorate	Thesis: maximum 60,000
Master of Philosophy	Thesis: maximum of 40,000 words
Doctor of Philosophy	Thesis: 80,000 words excluding appendices
Doctor of Philosophy by Publication	Context statement: normally between 10,000 - 20,000 words

The wordcount includes: in text citations including footnotes and the abstract

The word count excludes: appendices, the bibliography/reference list, words within tables, figures, diagrams and pictures, contents page

Where students submit original, creative or practical work in part fulfilment of the award requirements, the relative weighting of practical work and written thesis would normally be between 50% critical element: 50% creative element [40,000 and 40,000 words] and 25% critical element: 75% creative element [20,000 and 60,000 words].

The weighting shall be agreed between the supervisory team and the student at the research proposal stage (for DProf programmes) or the upgrade viva (for PhD programmes). For the PhD by Publication the interview panel shall give initial guidance about the weighting between the Work(s) and the Context Statement in the Thesis. This will be developed with the supervisory team and the final weighting agreed between the student and the Director of Studies prior to submission.

- G2.2 Permission to exceed the maximum word lengths listed above may only be approved by Research Degree Quality Committee on the recommendation of the Director of Studies. Students who exceed the stated limit without Research Degree Quality Committee permission shall be required by the examiners to resubmit their thesis within the stipulated length.
- G2.3 Post-viva amendments may on occasion result in exceeding these word counts for which permission is not required.

**Section G3 Submission of Thesis**

- G3.1 Following completion of the necessary period of study, a thesis shall be submitted for examination in accordance with the *Thesis Presentation Guidelines*. The responsibility for the decision to submit is the student's and submission does not imply the endorsement of the Supervisory Team. If the student has submitted against the advice of the Supervisory Team, this shall be noted on *Form J Supplement Declaration for Final Thesis Submission*, which is submitted at the same time as thesis submission.
- G3.2 The submission of a thesis shall be made no later than the expected end date of the maximum period of registration, as defined in Section C1.2 above.
- G3.3 Students who wish to apply for an extension to the deadline for submission of the thesis or performance of a practical assessment associated with the thesis must complete and submit *Form T: Extension to Period of Registration*. Such requests shall be submitted to the Research Degrees Quality Committee.

## Section G4 Thesis Examination

G4.1 For each student, normally one internal and one external examiner shall be appointed to examine the thesis; in exceptional cases, one additional external examiner shall be appointed, or in those cases where it is not possible to appoint an internal examiner with expertise on the subject matter. In the case of Professional Doctorates: at least one of these two examiners shall have relevant professional experience. All University staff shall normally have two external examiners appointed to examine the thesis, but no internal examiner. The examiners shall have a high level of subject knowledge, sufficient to impart a critical independent expert evaluation and, ideally, previous experience of postgraduate research examinations (as Chair or Examiner of at least three upgrades or vivas). No person who is enrolled for a research degree may act as an examiner.

Members of the supervisory team, and other researchers who have had a substantial involvement in the student's work such that there would be a conflict of interest or a potential lack of objectivity may not be appointed as internal examiners.

G4.2 The thesis examination is a two stage process where each stage counts as an attempt:

**Stage 1** The appointed examiners will review the submitted thesis and make a provisional decision on whether the thesis is ready to be examined at a viva voce. Their provisional decision will be submitted to the Doctoral School at least five working days in advance of the viva. If both examiners agree that the thesis is not ready for viva voce then the viva voce will be postponed. The student will be informed and normally allowed to re-submit their thesis within one year for a second attempt (see G4.7.1). In the event that the examiners do not agree on their provisional decision the viva will take place as planned. Submission of a thesis for examination is normally considered an attempt even if the examiners determine that the thesis is not ready for final viva.

**Stage 2** The viva voce examination

G4.3 Students shall normally be required to attend a viva voce examination. In conducting the viva voce examination, arrangements shall be made to accommodate the requirements of students with special communication needs, where necessary. The length of the viva voce examination shall normally not exceed two hours, not including attendance at a practical element, where required.

G4.4 Normally, a suitably qualified academic member of staff from the University, with no connection to the project under examination, shall chair the viva voce examination.

G4.6 Normally, members of the supervisory team shall attend the viva voce unless the student would prefer not to.

G4.7 Following the viva voce, the examiners shall recommend one of the following courses of action:

- a) that the degree for which the student has submitted a thesis be awarded (i.e. there are no corrections to be made to the thesis);
- b) that the degree for which the student has submitted a thesis be awarded subject to minor\* amendments to the thesis normally within 1 month after the formal notification to the student;
- c) that the degree for which the student has submitted a thesis be awarded, subject to the correction of modest\*\*amendments, normally within 6 months after the formal notification to the student;
- d) that the student be required to attend for a further *viva voce* examination;
- e) that the student be permitted to submit a revised thesis for the same degree for re-examination on one subsequent occasion, normally within 12 months after the formal notification to the student;
- f) that, in the case only of a PhD student who has failed to satisfy the examiners, the student may be awarded an MPhil, subject to amendments to the thesis being made, normally within 3

months after the formal notification to the student. In such circumstances, the work shall meet the normal criteria for the award of the MPhil degree apart from the normal word count;

- g) that the degree be not awarded and that resubmission of the thesis be not permitted.<sup>2</sup>

**\*Minor amendments** may include minor errors, typographical errors, occasional stylistic or grammatical flaws, corrections to references, addition or modification of one or two figures, and minor changes to layout and require no new research or revision.

**\*\*Modest amendments** may include omissions of substance and/or require limited further analysis or development but shall not affect the originality of the central thesis. They shall be of a scale to require certification by both the internal and external examiners, though normally not so extensive that a *viva voce* is required.

G4.7.1 Students are normally only permitted two attempts to pass. An attempt is defined as a submission of written work or attendance at a viva, which involves the participation of one or more examiners. Modest and minor corrections are considered part of that attempt. If at any stage a submission including a student's defence (performance) at a viva does not meet the criteria to pass that will be considered a failed attempt.

G4.7.2 Examiners are appointed for the full duration of the examination process, including periods of amendment, correction, revision and second attempts. In exceptional cases (such as approved Extenuating Circumstances) an examiner may be changed. (Also note G5.8: *Where the examiners cannot reach agreement on the recommendation, a new viva voce shall normally be arranged with new examiners* and L1: *Students have a right to appeal against the decision of either the Faculty Progression and Award Board or Research Degrees Quality committee, the Upgrade Viva Panel and the Examiners for the Viva Voce, in accordance with the Academic Appeals Regulations*).

### G4.7.3 Termination of appointments

If the University has cause to terminate an Examiner's contract before the end of the term of appointment, Head of the Doctoral School or Director of Research and Innovation will write to the Examiner with an explanation of the reason(s).

In the event that an Examiner needs to terminate their contract before the end of the term of appointment, they should write to the Head of the Doctoral School or Director of Research and Innovation.

G4.8 The student has a right to appeal against the decision of the Examiners in accordance with the *Academic Appeals Regulations*.

G4.9 Where the examiners cannot reach agreement on the recommendation, a new viva voce shall normally be arranged with new examiners.

G4.10 Failure to attend a viva voce or practical assessment associated with a thesis, without good cause, shall result in a fail. Permission to attend a rescheduled viva voce or practical assessment shall be at the discretion of the Research Degrees Quality Committee.

G4.11 If a student is unable to attend a viva voce and/or practical assessment associated with a thesis, due to illness or other good cause, a medical certificate or other documentary evidence (in accordance with the Supporting Students to Succeed for Postgraduate Research Degrees) shall be submitted to the Doctoral School before the examination, where possible, or no later than 5 working days after the viva voce/practical assessment was due to be held. Where the evidence is accepted, the student

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<sup>2</sup> This action may be taken following an initial viva voce or a subsequent viva voce.

shall normally be permitted to attend the viva voce and/or practical assessment again at a time to be confirmed by the Research Degrees Quality Committee.

G4.12 A student who fails to submit a corrected or revised thesis by the date set by the examiners shall normally be regarded as having failed the examination.

G4.13 Extensions to the deadline for submission of corrections or an amended thesis may only be approved by the Research Degrees Quality Committee. Such requests must be submitted to the Research Degrees Quality Committee in accordance with the Supporting Students to Succeed for Postgraduate research Degrees.

## **SECTION H AWARDS**

### **Section H1 Conferment of Awards**

H1.1 The Faculty Progression and Award Board shall confirm the awards for exit awards for students who are unable or ineligible to continue their intended programme.

H1.2 The Research Degrees Quality Committee shall confirm the awards for Professional Doctorates, MPhil and PhD awards.

H1.3 Students shall not be permitted to attend a Graduation Ceremony while in debt to the University (in accordance with the *Student Finance Regulations*).

### **Section H2 Posthumous Awards**

H2.1 Senate may exceptionally, on the recommendation of the PGR Student Progress Committee, approve the conferment of a posthumous award to a student who has died. Examiners or Assessors shall consider the work presented. The following cases may be considered for a posthumous award:

- a) Where a student dies following a successful upgrade from MPhil to PhD but before completion of the thesis or submission of *Form J, Intention to Submit for Final Viva*, an MPhil may be awarded.
- b) Where a student dies following the submission of *Form J, Intention to Submit for Final Viva*, the Director of Studies may request that the Research Degrees Quality Committee accept the draft thesis, together with any relevant published work by the student, for examination.

H2.2 In considering whether to accept the work, the Research Degrees Quality Committee shall assure itself that the work available is of sufficient quality to demonstrate to examiners that the student had achieved the objectives of the research programme.

H2.3 If deemed appropriate for examination, the work shall be sent to the Examiners as allocated and they shall be asked to make a recommendation in accordance with the options listed in paragraph G4.7 above, as appropriate.

## **SECTION I AVAILABILITY OF THESES**

Research work submitted for a postgraduate research degree shall be available in the University Library (if hard copy submitted) and electronically in the British Library and via the Electronic Repository, normally with no restriction on access. Restrictions on access may be requested against specific criteria as outlined in the University's Open Access Policy (Please refer to the *Guidance for PGR Students in respect of Open Access and the Data Repository*, available via the intranet pages of the Doctoral School for further information). Students may publish or otherwise perform or disseminate the whole part of their work prior to its submission as a thesis, provided that in the published work it is nowhere stated that it is in consideration for a higher degree.

## **SECTION J ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT**

Suspected cases of academic misconduct (including plagiarism, ethical misconduct, cheating and other forms of unfair advantage) shall be dealt with under the University's *Academic Misconduct Policy*.

## SECTION K REVOCATION OF AWARD

The University may revoke an award made under these regulations in accordance with the Policy for the *Confirmation and Revocation of Awards*.

## SECTION L APPEALS AND COMPLAINTS

L1 Students have a right to appeal against the decision of either the Faculty Progression and Award Board or the PGR Student Progression Committee the Upgrade Viva Panel and the Examiners for the Viva Voce, in accordance with the *Academic Appeals Regulations*.

L2 Students who wish to complain may do so in accordance with the *Complaints Policy.es*

## APPENDIX 1 DEFINITIONS AND TERMINOLOGY

*As a means of helping to ensure that the University's academic regulations are consistently interpreted and applied, the following definitions are used:*

- 1.1 **'The University'** means the University of Winchester.
- 1.2 **'Senate'** is the senior academic body of the University.
- 1.3 **'Senate Academic Development Committee'** (SADC – formerly known as Academic Standards Committee (ASC) is the Senate committee responsible for the academic standards and quality assurance of the University of Winchester.
- 1.4 **'Research Degrees Quality Committee'** (RDQC) is a Sub-Committee of SADC with delegated responsibility for all matters relating to the provision of Postgraduate Research Programmes. The Committee also acts as an Exam Board for Postgraduate Research Programmes with delegated responsibility for ratifying marks and taking decisions regarding progression and the award of qualifications for postgraduate research programmes.
- 1.5 PGR Student Programme Committee (PSPC) is a Sub-Committee of Senate with delegated responsibility for ratifying marks and taking decisions regarding progression and the award of qualifications for postgraduate research programmes.
- 1.6 The 'Faculty Progression and Award Board' is a Sub-Committee of Senate with delegated responsibility for ratifying marks and taking decisions regarding progression and the award of qualifications for taught programmes.
- 1.7 **'Programme'** means an approved course of study, which leads to an award from the University of Winchester. Postgraduate Research Programmes lead to awards at levels 7/8.
- 1.8 **'Student'** means a person who has enrolled at the University in accordance with section B1 for either the PGR Preparation Module or a Postgraduate Research Programme.
- 1.9 **'Thesis'** means the dissertation or complete body of work, which may include creative practice, to be presented for examination for an MPhil or Doctoral award.
- 1.10 **'Examination'** means either:
  - a) the independent assessment of work undertaken other than by private study and under controlled or time-constrained conditions, which is capable of external moderation on an individual basis. This definition conventionally implies a written and unseen paper exercise but it is intended to permit examination by performance;
  - b) the submission and defence of the Thesis at a viva voce.
- 1.11 A **'Module'** is the basic component of a taught programme with a defined number of CATS credits and defined learning outcomes.

- a) a Mandatory module must be taken by all students on a particular pathway/programme;
  - b) a Core module must be taken and passed by all students on a particular pathway/programme;
  - c) an Optional module may be taken by students on a particular pathway/programme.
- 1.12 **'PGR Preparation Module'** is a six-month programme in which students prepare an MPhil/PhD proposal under supervision.
- 1.13 **'Valid extenuating circumstances'** or **'Valid evidence of extenuating circumstances'** means approved, relevant extenuating circumstances as defined by the University's *Extenuating Circumstances Policy*.
- 1.14 **RPL** means Recognition of Prior Learning and is a generic term for the process by which recognition may be given for past learning experiences. (For further information, please refer to the *RPL Policy*).
- 1.15 **'CATS'** refers to the Credit Accumulation Transfer Scheme operating at the University in which modules have a national currency. All references to module credits in these Regulations refer to CATS credits, unless stated otherwise. The number of credits is based on the estimated notional learning hours (where one credit represents 10 notional hours of learning).

#### **Level 7**

Learning at this level shall display mastery of a complex and specialised area of knowledge and skills, employing advanced skills to conduct research, or advanced technical or professional activity, accepting accountability for related decision-making, including use of supervision.

#### **Level 8**

Learning at this level shall display creation and interpretation, construction and/or exposition of knowledge which extends the forefront of a discipline or professional practice, usually through original research, enabling students to conceptualise, design and implement projects for the generation of significant new knowledge and/or understanding and make informed judgements on complex issues in specialist fields and/or professional practice and take an innovative approach to tackling and solving problems.

- 1.16 **'ECTS'** refers to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System operating throughout Europe. ECTS is based on the principle that 60 credits measure the workload of a full-time student during one academic year. The University equates one ECTS credit to two CATS credits.

## **APPENDIX 2 ACADEMIC YEAR AND START DATE OF REGISTRATION**

- 2.1 The Academic Year Calendar is approved by Senate and published by the Academic Registrar.
- 2.2 Students studying for an MPhil/PhD or PhD by Publication may register in September or April each year
- 2.3 Professional Doctorate students normally shall register at the start of a semester.

## **APPENDIX 3 ENTRY REQUIREMENTS, READMISSIONS, ADVANCED STANDING AND TRANSFERS**

### **3.1 Entry Requirements**

- 3.1.1 Students are admitted to the University at the discretion of the Vice-Chancellor or other appropriate officer, on fulfilment of specified entry requirements for the purposes of following a specified programme normally leading to an award.
- 3.1.2 The general entry requirements are defined in the University's *Postgraduate Research Programmes Admissions Policy*. Programme-specific entry requirements for programmes including taught modules are defined in the relevant Programme Specification or Programme Outline.
- 3.1.3 All applications for an MPhil/PhD programme or progression to thesis for Professional Doctorate students are subject to confirmation by the University that satisfactory arrangements for supervision and arrangements for financial support for the student and facilities for the project (including the provision of any additional support strategies, specialist equipment or assistive technology required by disabled students) have been approved.

### **3.2 Re-Admission following termination of registration or exclusion**

- 3.2.1. If the University has terminated a student's registration and an application for repeat study has been rejected or disallowed or the student has been excluded or expelled in accordance with the *Disciplinary Procedures for Students*, a student may apply for re-admission. However, when considering such an application, the programme is expected to respect the decision of the University and not readmit the student until at least 24 months has elapsed. Where a student's registration has been terminated on academic grounds and they wish to return to the same programme, the programme is expected to be very particular as to why they are re-admitting. Reasons for re-admitting might be that the applicant has been able to show they had kept up with the subject material and/or provided evidence that any circumstances that contributed to the termination of registration have been overcome.
- 3.2.2 If readmitted, previous credit may be recognised and accredited in accordance with the *RPL Policy*.

### **3.3 Entry with Advanced Standing via RPL and Transfers**

- 3.3.1 An applicant for a programme including taught modules may be permitted to enter with advanced standing and awarded credit for specified modules through RPL (formerly known as AP(E)L). For further details, please refer to the *RPL Policy*.
- 3.3.2 Internal transfers between programmes is not permitted
- 3.3.3 Applicants may be permitted to transfer from another University with or independent of their Director of Studies/Supervisor subject to the satisfactory provision of: an official release (including details of the duration of the student's previous research study), progress reports, confirmation and details of any upgrade from MPhil to PhD (as appropriate). Where this occurs, the minimum period of registration at the University must be at least 12 months full time or 24 months part time.
- 3.3.4 On transfer of registration, the registration for the original degree shall lapse.

## APPENDIX 4 QUALIFICATION AND GRADE DESCRIPTORS

### 4.1 Descriptor for a Higher Education Qualification at Level 8

Doctoral degree graduates are required to meet this descriptor in full.

A Doctoral degree (level 8 qualification) is awarded to students who have demonstrated:

- a) the creation and interpretation of new knowledge, through original research or other advanced scholarship, of a quality to satisfy peer review, extend the forefront of the discipline, and merit publication and/or public performance and other public dissemination.;
- b) a systematic acquisition and understanding of a substantial body of knowledge which is at the forefront of an academic discipline or area of creative or professional practice;
- c) the general ability to conceptualise, design and implement a project for the generation of new knowledge, applications or understanding at the forefront of the discipline, and to adjust the project design in the light of unforeseen problems;
- d) a detailed understanding of applicable techniques for research and advanced academic enquiry.

Typically, holders of the qualification shall be able to:

- e) make informed judgements on complex issues in specialist fields, often in the absence of complete data, and be able to communicate their ideas and conclusions clearly and effectively to specialist and non-specialist audiences
- f) continue to undertake pure and/or applied research and development at an advanced level, contributing substantially to the development of new techniques, ideas or approaches.

And holders shall have:

- g) the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and largely autonomous initiative in complex and unpredictable situations, in professional or equivalent environments.

### 4.2 Descriptor for a Higher Education Qualification at Level 7

Masters degree graduates are required to meet this descriptor in full.

A Masters degree (level 7 qualification), is awarded to students who have demonstrated:

- a) a systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of their academic discipline, field of study, or area of creative or professional practice;
- b) originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline;
- c) conceptual understanding that enables the student to:
- d) evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline;
- e) evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses;
- f) a comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship.

Typically, holders of the qualification shall be able to:

- g) deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, make sound judgments in the absence of complete data, and communicate their conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences
- h) demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level
- i) continue to advance their knowledge and understanding, and to develop new skills to a high level.
- j) And holders shall have:
- k) the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring:

- i) the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility
- ii) decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations
- iii) the independent learning ability required for continuing professional development.

### 4.3 Grade Descriptors for Marks achieved at Level 7

The grading descriptors that follow offer representations of achievement by marks from 100 to 0. The pass mark for modules which accrue level 7 credit is 50%.

#### **Pass with Distinction 100 - 70%**

An outstanding piece of work in every regard which demonstrates:

- a) a thorough and wide-ranging knowledge of the subject
- b) a thorough and insightful understanding of the issues involved
- c) an ability to analyse critical contributions on the subject
- d) an ability to independently research and bring together material to support an argument
- e) an ability to express an original, reasoned argument in a lucid manner
- f) an ability to make valid generalisations in moving from the empirical to the abstract
- g) excellent research competencies in terms of presentation, language and referencing.

#### **Pass with Merit 69 – 60%**

A very good piece of work which demonstrates:

- a) a detailed knowledge of the subject
- b) a well developed knowledge of the critical contributions on the subject
- c) an ability to use and organise research material in a focussed manner
- d) good analytical skills combined with careful, systematic coverage of the topic
- e) detailed research in terms of presentation, language and referencing
- f) an ability to make appropriate connections and distinctions and present a clear, convincing argument.

#### **Pass 59 - 50%**

A good piece of work which demonstrates:

- a) a sound to reasonable understanding of the subject and the issues involved
- b) a good knowledge to general familiarity of the critical contributions on the subject
- c) an ability to use and organise research material to support ideas and arguments
- d) sound analytical skills combined with competent coverage of the topic
- e) good to competent research competencies in terms of presentation, language and referencing
- f) at the upper end of the scale, students may also demonstrate an ability to make appropriate connections and distinctions and present a clear, convincing argument.

#### **Fail 49 - 2%**

All work awarded a mark below 50% at the first attempt may be redeemed for a maximum of 50%.

Work at the upper end of this scale which demonstrates:

- a) a general, but incomplete understanding of the subject
- b) some knowledge of the literature on the subject
- c) some ability to develop and support an argument
- d) a tendency to express ideas through description and anecdote rather than analysis
- e) difficulties with presentation, language and referencing.

Work at the lower end of this scale which shall be unsatisfactory and demonstrates:

- f) little understanding of the subject and its implications
- g) a limited amount of reading and poor knowledge of the previous contributions on the subject
- h) limited ability to formulate and sustain a clear argument
- i) poor presentation skills and serious problems with language and referencing.

**Fail 1%**

This mark indicates the work has been submitted but was failed on grounds of one of the following:

- a) poor academic practice;
- b) proven academic misconduct;
- c) second or exceptional third attempt submitted after the deadline;
- d) corrupt, unreadable files or incorrect format submitted for eSubmission.

**Fail 0%**

Work not submitted.

**4.4 Grade Descriptors for Level 8**

Assessments at level 8 are graded pass/fail only and shall have no accompanying percentage mark. Results shall be recorded as follows:

**Ungraded Pass UP**

**Fail F**

Programme Leaders may adopt specific criteria for individual assignments, as appropriate.

## APPENDIX 5 LIST OF DEGREE TITLES AND THEIR ABBREVIATIONS

<b>Programme</b>	<b>Award title on certificate</b>
MPhil	Master of Philosophy *
MRes	Masters of Social Research in Education
ProfM	Professional Masters (in one of the following disciplines: Education, Business Administration or Theology and Practice)
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy *
PhD by Publication	Doctor of Philosophy by Publication
EdD	Doctor of Education *
DBA	Doctor of Business Administration *
DTh	Doctor of Theology and Practice *

\* followed by the title of the Thesis

## APPENDIX 6 AWARD AND CLASSIFICATION RULES AND CREDIT FRAMEWORK SUMMARY FOR POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH DEGREES

### 1. CREDIT REQUIREMENTS FOR POSTGRADUATE AWARDS

Where there is more than one Award Pattern for an award, eg A, B, C please refer to Section 2 below to confirm which pattern applies to which programme(s).

Award Code	Award Pattern	Level 7	Level 7 or 8	Level 8
PgCertA	Postgraduate Certificate A	60 credits		
PgCertB	Postgraduate Certificate B		60 credits	
PgCertC	Postgraduate Certificate C			60 credits
PgDipA	Postgraduate Diploma A	120 credits		
PgDipB	Postgraduate Diploma B		120 credits	
PgDipC	Postgraduate Diploma C			120 credits
MResA	Masters in Social Research in Education A	180 credits		
MResB	Masters in Social Research in Education B		180 credits	
ProfMA	Professional Masters A	160 credits		80 credits
ProfMB	Professional Masters B	120 credits		120 credits
ProfMC	Professional Masters C			240 credits
ProfDA	Professional Doctorate A	160 credits		380 credits
ProfDB	Professional Doctorate B	120 credits		420 credits
ProfDC	Professional Doctorate C			540 credits

The following awards have no credit load so are excluded from these Award Rules:

- MPhil
- PhD
- MPhil or PhD by Publication

### 2 AWARD CALCULATION AND CLASSIFICATION PATTERNS

Where there is more than one award pattern (e.g. PGCert A – C), the table below lists which programme(s) use which calculation method.

Where there is only one award pattern listed, all programmes offering that award as a terminal or exit award will use the same calculation and classification pattern.

Code	Award Calculation Method	Classification(s)	Applicable to these Award Patterns
PgCertA	Weighted average of the best 60 credits at level 7	<b>Distinction</b> Weighted average mark for level 7 modules is 70% or above  <b>Merit</b> Weighted average mark for level 7 modules is 60% or above	Postgraduate Certificate A

PgCertB	Weighted average of all level 7 modules up to a maximum of 30 credits.  30 credits at L8	<b>Distinction</b> Weighted average mark for level 7 modules is 70% or above  <b>Merit</b> Weighted average mark for level 7 modules is 60% or above  No award classification for credits at Level 8	Postgraduate Certificate B
PgCertC	60 credits at L8	No award classification	Postgraduate Certificate C
PgDipA	Weighted average of 120 credits at level 7	<b>Distinction</b> Weighted average mark for level 7 modules is 70% or above  <b>Merit</b> Weighted average mark for level 7 modules is 60% or above	Postgraduate Diploma A
PgDipB	Weighted average of all level 7 modules up to a maximum of 90 credits.  Minimum 30 credits at L8	<b>Distinction</b> Weighted average mark for level 7 modules is 70% or above  <b>Merit</b> Weighted average mark for level 7 modules is 60% or above  No award classification for credits at Level 8	Postgraduate Diploma B
PgDipC	120 credits at L8	<b>No award classification</b>	Postgraduate Diploma C
ProfM	240 credits at L7/8	<b>No award classification</b>	Professional Masters A, B and C
ProfD	540 credits at L7/8	<b>No award classification</b>	Professional Doctorate A, B and C