

VI. Study Regulations

Study Regulations for Research Degree Programmes

Note: The following regulations cover all students on research degree programmes. For students registered for the PhD by Published Works, 'supervisor' should be substituted with 'adviser', and 'thesis' should be substituted with the corpus of documents required for submission (see 7.2.13) in the following regulations.

Note: Where specific members of staff or committees are designated in these regulations to undertake particular School-related responsibilities, the relevant Head of School retains the discretion to appoint a nominee or equivalent committee as appropriate.

1. General

1.1 All research students must comply with relevant health and safety legislation, University health and safety regulations, and any specific health and safety requirements applying in the School where the research is being undertaken or in any location, including locations outside the University, where the student is undertaking research.

1.2 All research students must comply with the University's Code of Conduct and Integrity in Research; the Intellectual Property Policy; and policies and procedures for research ethics, including those applying in their discipline; and must obtain, through their supervisor(s), any necessary ethical approval for the research.

1.3 Students must comply with the University's training requirements, the training requirements of their funding body and with any compulsory or recommended training requirements in place in their School.

2. Registration

2.1 Students who have not previously matriculated shall be required to do so when registering for the first time.

2.2 Students must register at the start of research and at the beginning of every subsequent academic year. Registration in the second and subsequent years shall be subject to satisfactory progress reports (see regulation 6.5).

2.3 The following registration statuses are applicable:

- i. Full-time - Full-time registration is equivalent to periods of study, tuition or work experience (whether at University premises or otherwise) which together amount to an average of at least 21 hours per week over a period of more than 18 weeks. This incurs the full-time fee.
- ii. Part-time - Part-time registration is equivalent to periods of study, tuition or work experience (whether at University premises or otherwise) which are less than 21 hours per week over a period of more than 18 weeks. This incurs the part-time fee.
- iii. Thesis-only - Following confirmation by the progress review panel (see regulation 6.5) that the student has completed all the necessary research, and approval by the School Postgraduate Research Committee (SPRC), a student may

be registered as thesis-only (writing-up) for one year only (regardless of previous full-time or part-time status). This incurs the thesis-only fee. If, in exceptional cases, the thesis is not complete after the thesis-only year, students must seek approval to continue beyond the maximum period of study (see regulation 4). Enrolment will revert to either full-time or part-time and the student will be required to pay the appropriate fee. Students may not transfer to thesis-only registration until they have been enrolled for the normal period of study for their research degree programme.

- iv. Graduation Only - Once a thesis has been submitted/resubmitted for examination, the student's status will be changed to Graduation Only. No further tuition fee is incurred.
- v. Thesis Resubmission - Where a student is required to revise and resubmit a thesis, the status is changed to Thesis Resubmission and the student will be liable for a resubmission charge.

2.4 Students who have registered for a particular period as full-time, part-time or thesis-only must apply through their supervisors to the SPRC for permission for any change in registration during that period.

2.5 Registration for PhD by Published Works will be on a part-time basis. This incurs the PhD by Published Works fee.

2.6 Research students may not normally register for any other course of study leading to a degree, diploma or professional qualification, at this or any other institution, while they are registered as research students. In exceptional circumstances, and only with the agreement of the supervisors, the Head of School may grant such permission, normally for a short, fixed period of time. Exceptions to this regulation may be permitted for students registered on joint research degree programmes, where the registration arrangements should be outlined in a formal agreement between Queen's University Belfast and the partner institution(s).

3. External Students and Students Working Away from Queen's

3.1 Regulations in this section are not applicable for PhD by Published Works.

3.2 Students shall normally be in regular attendance at the University and have regular meetings with their supervisor(s) while registered as research students.

3.3 Students may, however, apply to the SPRC for permission to study for a research degree programme through a distance learning mode of study, whereby students would spend part or all of the period of study working away from the University. The SPRC shall grant permission only if it is satisfied that suitable arrangements for support, supervision and training are in place, and that the necessary resources are available at the student's location. However, if arrangements include a formal agreement of joint supervision with an external supervisor based at the student's external location, leading to either a single or joint

Doctoral award, the approval procedures for collaborative research degree programmes must be applied.

3.4 Permission to spend the whole period of research away from Queen's shall not normally be granted, and students shall normally be required to visit the University annually to take part in formal annual reviews of progress and to undertake the oral examination after the thesis has been submitted.

3.5 Students remain subject to University regulations for the research degree programme during any period spent away from the University.

4. Period of Study

4.1 Time spent in achieving a Master's degree does not count as part of the time allowed for completion of a Doctorate.

4.2 The minimum, normal and maximum (including thesis-only where appropriate) periods of full-time (FT) or part-time (PT) study in years (including for taught elements where appropriate) permitted for submission of research degree programmes shall be:

4.3 Table 1

Award	Minimum Period	Normal Period	Maximum Period
Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)	2 (FT) or 4 (PT)	3 (FT) or 6 (PT)	4 (FT) or 8 (PT)
Doctor of Philosophy (by Published Works) (PhD)	3 months (PT)	1 (PT)	1 (PT)
Integrated Doctor of Philosophy* (PhD)	3 (FT) or 6 (PT)	4 (FT) or 8 (PT)	5 (FT) or 10 (PT)
Master of Philosophy (MPhil)	1 (FT) or 2 (PT)	2 (FT) or 4 (PT)	3 (FT) or 6 (PT)
Doctor of Medicine (MD)	2 (FT) or 4 (PT)	2 (FT) or 4 (PT)	4 (FT) or 8 (PT)
Master of Surgery (MCh)	1 (FT) or 2 (PT)	1 (FT) or 2 (PT)	2 (FT) or 8 (PT)
Professional Doctorates:			
Doctor of Childhood Studies (DChild) (MChild (Research))	4 (PT)	6 (PT)	8 (PT)
Doctorate in Clinical Psychology (DClinPsych)	3 (FT)	3 (FT)	4 (FT)
Doctor of Education (EdD)	3 (FT) or 4 (PT)	3 (FT) or 6 (PT)	4 (FT) or 8 (PT)
Doctor of Education (EdD) TESOL	3 (FT) or 4 (PT)	3 (FT) or 6 (PT)	4 (FT) or 8 (PT)
Doctorate in Educational, Child & Adolescent Psychology (DECAP)	3 (FT)	3 (FT)	4 (FT)
Doctorate in Governance (DGov)	4 (PT)	4 (FT)	6 (FT)
Doctorate in Midwifery Practice (DMP)	3 (FT) or 4 (PT)	3 (FT) or 6 (PT)	4 (FT) or 8 (PT)
Doctorate in Nursing Practice (DNP)	3 (FT) or 4 (PT)	3 (FT) or 6 (PT)	4 (FT) or 8 (PT)
Juris Doctor (JD)	3 (FT)	3 (FT)	4 (FT)

* This refers to PhD programmes with an initial training year, where PhD milestones commence in year 2.

4.4 The maximum period within which students must submit all research elements required for the degree for examination and by which all taught elements must have been completed is calculated from the date of first registration. These periods exclude suspension, but not extension, of studies. Sponsored students may also be subject to their sponsors' requirements in respect of either submission or qualification rates.

4.5 Students shall be expected to submit within the normal period of study for their research degree programme. Any requests to submit earlier (within the minimum period), or later (within the maximum period) must be submitted to the SPRC for consideration and approval. In exceptional circumstances, a request to allow an extension beyond the maximum period must be endorsed by the SPRC, and approved by the Research and Postgraduate Committee.

4.6 For any extension beyond the normal period, an action plan shall be agreed with the student setting out what needs to be achieved during the extension period.

4.7 Special arrangements shall apply to part-time research students registered for the PhD programme, who are employed by the University as contract research assistants. Provided they have the support of their supervisors and the approval of the SPRC, such students may submit after a minimum period of three years from the date of first registration as an undifferentiated research student.

4.8 For students permitted to transfer from full-time to part-time registration, and vice versa, one unit of full-time registration shall be considered equivalent to two units of part-time registration.

5. Temporary Withdrawal

5.1 Students may apply to withdraw voluntarily from their programme on a temporary basis, subject to consultation with their supervisors and the approval of the SPRC. Students may be directed to withdraw temporarily by a SPRC, Occupational Health Service, Fitness to Continue in Study Panel or a Fitness to Practise Panel.

5.2 A person on temporary withdrawal does not possess entitlements to any rights or privileges associated with student status, unless this is expressly stated in a letter from the appropriate University authority stipulating the person's status and entitlements, including insurance status if appropriate.

5.3 The SPRC may permit students to withdraw temporarily from the programme for a period of up to one year at a time, normally up to a cumulative maximum of two years, where it is satisfied that good cause exists or continues to exist.

5.4 A period of permitted temporary withdrawal shall not count as part of the time allowed by the University for submission or completion.

5.5 Students who do not resume/re-register at the appropriate time, and who do not seek permission to withdraw temporarily shall be deemed to have withdrawn from the University. Students who are dissatisfied with such a ruling may submit an academic appeal (research degree programmes) if a ground for appeal is evidenced.

5.6 Any suspension or extension to the period of study of visa-holding students must be reported to the International Student Support Office as soon as it is known, for report to UK Visas and Immigration.

6. Progress

6.1 Supervision

6.1.1 Every registered research student in the University must normally have a principal supervisor and a second or co-supervisor. A third supervisor may, exceptionally, be appointed where a student's research is interdisciplinary, to provide a link between the disciplines. In no circumstances may a student have more than three supervisors at any one time. The principal supervisor shall have overall responsibility for the student and the research. Students registered for the PhD by Published Works must normally have one adviser in lieu of a supervisory team, to advise on the critical analysis that shall accompany the works, and to support the student through the process of submission and examination of the published works. Regulations which refer to the supervisor, or supervisory team, apply in relation to the adviser, as appropriate.

6.1.2 External supervisors shall normally only be appointed where a student has been given permission to work away from the University for an extended period, or is undertaking an external PhD (see regulation 3). The external supervisor shall be in addition to the internal supervisors, and must meet the criteria for appointment set out below. The student shall be expected to maintain effective contact with both the external and the internal supervisors. The principal supervisor retains overall responsibility for the supervision of the research.

6.1.3 Each member of the supervisory team shall normally be an academic member of the University staff, who is experienced in, and actively engaged in, research; who holds a research degree at the same level as, or higher than, the degree being supervised or who has appropriate equivalent experience or professional qualifications or status; and who has an understanding of University and School policies and procedures concerning research students and supervisory responsibilities.

6.1.4 At least one of the student's supervisors shall have successfully supervised a Doctoral thesis to completion, either individually or as part of a supervisory team.

6.1.5 At least one member of the supervisory team shall be currently engaged in research in the relevant discipline(s), so as to ensure that the direction and monitoring of the student's progress is informed by up to date subject knowledge and research developments.

6.1.6 The following categories of staff are eligible to be considered for appointment as principal supervisors (or advisers for PhD by Published Works): professors, readers, senior lecturers, lecturers (but not normally lecturers on probation), research fellows appointed under the Queen's University Research Fellowship scheme (who must be supported by an experienced second supervisor), or staff individually approved by the Research and Postgraduate Committee for the purpose of supervision (and who must be supported by an experienced second supervisor). The principal supervisor must be from the School/Institute where the student is carrying out the research. Staff in the University Colleges may be appointed as supervisors under the terms of the Agreements between the University and the University Colleges. All new supervisors must complete the University's training course for supervisors before appointment.

6.1.7 The following categories of staff are eligible to be considered for appointment as second or co-supervisors: those listed in 6.1.6 above, lecturers on probation and honorary title holders. The second or co-supervisor may, if appropriate, be from a different School to the one in which the student is carrying out the research. All new supervisors must complete

the University's training course for supervisors before appointment.

6.1.8 If, for any reason, a principal or co-supervisor shall be unavailable for contact by a student for a significant period which impinges negatively on the progress of the student's project, a permanent replacement shall normally be appointed as a main or co-supervisor.

6.1.9 A supervisor may not normally be the principal supervisor for more than six full-time (or equivalent) research students (pro rata for those with co-supervisors) at any one time.

6.1.10 Supervisory responsibilities can be changed at the request of a student or a supervisor, taking into account the requirements of sponsors. Normally, any change of supervisor shall be by mutual agreement between the student and the University. If, for any reason, a change of supervisor(s) is required during the period of the research, the above criteria shall apply to the appointment of the new supervisor(s).

6.1.11 At an initial supervisory meeting between the student and supervisory team, the following shall be agreed:

- i. Roles and responsibilities of the student and each member of the supervisory team.
- ii. The frequency, duration and format of formal meetings.

6.2 Research Plan

Both full-time and part-time research students must agree a research plan with their supervisors at the outset of the research (which should be updated as appropriate throughout the period of study), and attend courses and perform research work as specified in the research plan.

6.3 Initial Review

Students must submit a project summary and research plan, approved by the supervisory team, for independent Initial Review by the Head of School or nominee, normally within three months (FTE) of first registration. The independent reviewer shall determine the feasibility of the project and the research plan, outlining any required amendments, and taking account of the required timeframe for the degree. This shall not be required for PhD by Published Works.

6.4 Regular Progress Monitoring

6.4.1 There shall be at least six but normally ten formal meetings per year between the principal supervisor (and/or co-supervisor, if appointed) and full-time student (six for part-time students) to monitor progress against the research plan. All members of the supervisory team shall attend at least half of these meetings. Minutes of the meetings shall be retained as records.

6.4.2 A supervisor who has concerns about a student's progress at times other than the normal Annual Progress Review period outlined in regulation 6.5, shall inform the student in writing of the areas of concern and invite the student to a meeting to discuss the concerns. Following the meeting, and taking account of all known circumstances, the supervisors may do one of the following:

- i. Agree a plan of action for the student, with a review date, and monitor the student's attendance, progress and performance during that period. If the student's performance has not improved within the specified period,

the supervisors shall notify the Head of School or nominee and submit a report for review by the SPRC.

- ii. In exceptional circumstances, notify the Head of School or nominee and submit a report for review by the SPRC, without undertaking a period of monitoring.

6.4.3 In either case, where a supervisor report is made to the SPRC for review of the student's progress, the student shall also be given the opportunity to submit a report. The SPRC shall inform the student of the outcome of the progress review, and the appropriate registration status.

6.5 Annual Progress Review

6.5.1 The School shall appoint a progress review panel for each student. This should normally comprise two independent members of staff. One member of the supervisory team, preferably the principal supervisor, may be present to provide input, but may not take part in making the final recommendation concerning the student's progress. The progress of each student must be reviewed annually until the research degree is awarded. The SPRC may specify more frequent reviews at its discretion. For students who are required to differentiate to Doctoral status (e.g. PhD students), it is recommended that reviews are held within nine months to allow for any remedial actions arising from the review to be completed within the year. Registration at the beginning of an academic year shall be dependent on the completion of a satisfactory progress report by the end of the previous academic year. The normal outcome of the Annual Progress Review is that the student progresses to the next year, unconditionally or subject to the completion of specific targets.

6.5.2 The Annual Progress Review procedure shall be deemed equivalent to a Board of Examiners and therefore the University's Regulations Governing the Allegation and Investigation of Misconduct in Research shall apply to any reported or suspected research misconduct.

6.5.3 The exact format of the Annual Progress Review shall be determined, at School level, by discipline and year of study, but must contain the following three elements:

- i. A written submission from the student.
- ii. A meeting with the student, whereby the student can be questioned about their work by the progress review panel.
- iii. A documented outcome of the review and the progression decision.

6.5.4 The progress review panel shall make one of the following recommendations regarding progression, for the approval of the SPRC:

- i. That the student's performance is satisfactory, and that the student be permitted to proceed to the next stage. For students who are required to differentiate to Doctoral status (e.g. PhD students), this shall comprise a recommendation to permit registration on the appropriate research degree programme.
- ii. That, notwithstanding some concerns, which the student and supervisory team should act upon, the student's overall performance is satisfactory, and that the student be permitted to proceed to the next stage. For students who are required to differentiate to Doctoral status (e.g. PhD students), this shall comprise a recommendation to permit registration on the appropriate research degree programme.

- iii. That the student's performance is unsatisfactory, and that a further assessment be held within a specified period to determine whether progress on the programme shall be recommended. For students who are required to differentiate to Doctoral status (e.g. PhD students), this may comprise a recommendation that the student be permitted a second attempt at differentiation. Students may not normally make more than two attempts at differentiation/ Annual Progress Review. Students shall normally be offered a second attempt before recommendation iv or v is made.
- iv. That the student's performance is unsatisfactory and that a submission for the appropriate Master's degree examination (MPhil, or as specified in Professional Doctorate programme specifications) be recommended instead of a submission for a Doctoral degree examination, for students enrolled on a Doctoral programme.
- v. That the student's performance is unsatisfactory and that no submission for a Doctoral degree or Master's degree examination be recommended, and that registration be terminated.

6.5.5 For students who are completing the final year of their normal period of study, the progress review panel shall confirm whether or not the student has completed all the necessary research and should be permitted to register as thesis-only (see regulation 2.3 iii). If all the necessary research is not complete, the progress review panel may specify a further period of full-time or part-time registration to complete the research before the student can register as thesis-only.

6.5.6 The SPRC shall consider progress review panel recommendations and shall invite any student who has received a recommendation under iv or v above to appear before it before the decision is confirmed. The SPRC shall inform each student of the outcome of the progress review exercise, and the appropriate registration status.

6.5.7 Students who are dissatisfied with the outcome of the progress review may submit an academic appeal (research degree programmes) if a ground for appeal is evidenced.

6.5.8 Students registered for the PhD by Published Works shall normally have completed the programme within 1 year of registration, and therefore shall not be expected to engage in Annual Progress Review. However, it may be useful for the student to undergo a mock viva prior to submission in preparation for the oral examination. If an extension is granted beyond the normal 1-year period of study, due to extenuating circumstances, progress must be reviewed annually until the research degree is awarded.

6.6 School Postgraduate Research Committee (or equivalent)

6.6.1 Each School shall have a committee responsible for implementing University policy on admission of postgraduate research students, appointment of supervisors and internal examiners, differentiation, progress monitoring and review, and any other policies or issues affecting postgraduate research students. The Committee shall be chaired by the Head of School (or nominee of senior lecturer level or above), and normally include up to eight other members of academic staff. Where possible, there will be an equal gender balance on committees. A quorum shall comprise the Chairperson and three other members, as far as possible to include at least one male and one female member. Where appropriate (e.g. when considering students who are undertaking an interdisciplinary project) the School may invite staff from another School to

assist in its deliberations. Minutes shall be taken as a formal record of SPRC meetings, and retained.

6.6.2 Students asked to appear before a SPRC may be accompanied by a registered student of the University (which shall include a Students' Union Sabbatical Officer) or by a member of staff of the University or University Chaplaincy.

6.6.3 On of any case referred to it, a SPRC shall have the power to do any one or more of the following as it considers appropriate:

- i. To advise students of the course of action considered to be in their best interests with a view to completing a degree or other programmes of the University. This may include temporary withdrawal or transferring to another programme, if appropriate.
- ii. To require students to follow a specified course of action to meet specified targets, provided such targets do not normally exceed what would be required for the student to restore his/her good academic standing.
- iii. To require students who have persistently failed progress review to withdraw from their current pathway, or transfer to another programme.
- iv. To require students who have persistently failed progress review to withdraw from the University.
- v. To seek the advice of the University Occupational Health Service where the student's medical fitness is in question.
- vi. To refer the case to the Director of Academic and Student Affairs where the student's fitness to practise his/her chosen profession is in question.

6.6.4 Where students fail to satisfy a requirement imposed under ii, the SPRC may either impose a further requirement under ii, or require students to withdraw from the programme or University as appropriate to the circumstances of the case. In such cases the student shall have the right to appear before the SPRC meeting at which the withdrawal decision is taken or confirmed. All SPRC decisions shall be confirmed in writing to the student concerned within five working days of the decision being made.

7. Assessment/Award

7.1 Notice of Intention to Submit

7.1.1 Students shall prepare a detailed timetable for final preparation and submission of the thesis, in consultation with the supervisors, at least six months before the end of the normal period of study. This shall not be required for PhD by Published Works.

7.1.2 Students must give at least 3 months' notice to the SPRC of intention to submit their thesis. The Student Registry website provides hardbound thesis submission deadlines regarding eligibility for graduation.

7.1.3 Students must be registered as research students in the academic year in which the thesis is submitted.

7.1.4 Students who fail to submit the thesis by the notified date must notify the SPRC of a new date of submission, after consultation with their supervisors.

7.1.5 The principal supervisor must ensure that appropriate sections of the draft thesis (or critical analysis for PhD by Published Works) have been submitted to the University-recognised similarity checking service, and the report used for

feedback purposes, prior to the submission of the thesis (or critical analysis).

7.2 Title and Format of Thesis

7.2.1 Students shall specify the title of the thesis when giving notice of intention to submit. The title may not be changed thereafter, except with the permission of the SPRC.

7.2.2 Normally all theses must be written in English. Students may, however, apply to the SPRC at the time of registration to write a thesis in a language other than English where the language is relevant to the subject of the research. Where permission is given to write in a language other than English, the summary of the thesis and its title must be given both in English and the approved language.

7.2.3 The thesis should not normally exceed the following word limit (excluding appendices and the bibliography):

Research Degree Programme	Word Limit
Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)	80,000*
Integrated Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)	80,000*
Master of Philosophy (MPhil)	50,000**
Doctor of Medicine (MD)	80,000
Master of Surgery (MCh)	50,000
Doctor of Childhood Studies (DChild)	50,000
Doctorate in Clinical Psychology (DClinPsych)	2 research papers
Doctor of Education (EdD)	40,000
Doctor of Education (EdD) TESOL	40,000
Doctorate in Educational, Child & Adolescent Psychology (DECAP)	30,000
Doctorate in Governance (DGov)	50,000
Doctorate in Midwifery Practice (DMP)	40,000
Doctorate in Nursing Practice (DNP)	40,000
Juris Doctor (JD)	40,000

* A maximum page length of 300 pages may apply in lieu of the 80,000 word limit, where this is appropriate for the discipline and the research project.

** A maximum page length of 200 pages may apply in lieu of the 50,000 word limit, where this is appropriate for the discipline and the research project.

7.2.4 The layout of the thesis must conform to the format prescribed by Student Services and Systems. The thesis must be bound in a secure binding of a type approved by Student Services and Systems when it is submitted for examination.

7.2.5 The first page of the thesis must give the author's full names, degrees, School, the approved title of the thesis, the degree for which it is offered, and the date.

7.2.6 The submission of a creative practice research project for the degree of PhD shall comprise:

- i. Original creative work(s) presented in the appropriate form(s) for the subject field(s).
- ii. A critical analysis, written in English, defining the research objectives of the creative work(s); addressing its intellectual and theoretical contexts; reflecting on research methodologies, production processes and the relation

between them; analysing, and outlining other factors taken into account in its conception, development, and conclusions.

7.2.7 The written critical analysis (ii) shall be a maximum of 60,000 words (excluding references, appendices, and bibliography) and must be of Doctoral standard. It is expected that the relative weighting of the practice and critical components will be indicated at the Annual Progress Review/ differentiation interview in year 1 of the PhD.

7.2.8 Parts i and ii of the research project must be comprehensively and convincingly integrated and the complete submitted project must reach the required standard for research degree programmes. The practice component must demonstrate a high level of skill in the manipulation of the material of production and involve a research inquiry.

7.2.9 Where an exhibition or live performance is involved, it may be necessary to appoint external and internal examiners earlier than is customary for traditionally written PhDs. If process or product (perhaps presented well in advance of the written submission) is to be examined, external and internal examiners shall need access to that process and/or product.

7.2.10 In some cases, where multiple practice events form part of a submission, if the examiners are satisfied with the levels of access to practice they are afforded, it may not be a necessary condition of the assessment that they are given access to all the manifestations of practice. Such circumstances shall be agreed in advance. In such cases, it is expected that documentation of practice shall form an integral part of the submission.

7.2.11 Prior to attendance at any live performance/ exhibition, external and internal examiners must receive from the student a statement of no more than 1000 words contextualising the practice component and outlining the research questions being addressed.

7.2.12 Where live performance/exhibitions form part of the practice component, permanent records of this research practice (DVD recordings, audio recordings, photographs, or other appropriate records) must be submitted in appropriate form and be bound into the final version of the thesis. Other documentation relevant to the practice may be included as an appendix to the thesis.

7.2.13 The submission for the degree of PhD by Published Works shall comprise:

- i. A title page, giving the author's full names, degrees, School, the title of the work, the degree for which it is offered, and the date.
- ii. A statement, in the case of multi-authored, joint or collaborative work, of the extent of the student's own contribution, substantiated by the co-author(s) or collaborator(s). It is expected that the student will have been a major contributor to each published work.
- iii. A critical analysis, not normally exceeding 10,000 words, of the published works included in the submission. This shall include a statement of the contribution of the work to the advancement of the field of study, a critical account of its significance, an explanation of the inter-relationship between the material presented, and a critical appraisal and discussion of the corpus.
- iv. Copies of the published works which should comprise research outputs which match the criteria for submission to the periodic national research assessment exercises. A work shall be regarded as published only if it is traceable in ordinary catalogues, abstract or citation notices, and

web-based materials only if copies of it are, or have been, available to the general public through normal channels. Documents prepared for a restricted readership and/or on a confidential basis shall not normally be eligible for inclusion in a submission for this degree. Proofs of papers not yet published but accepted for publication shall be acceptable in their final format. Any material which has been previously submitted by the student for another degree must be clearly specified and will not be included in the assessment of the works. The degree will not be awarded unless substantial new work of the appropriate standard is also submitted. Only works published within the 10-year period prior to submission for the degree will be considered.

7.3 Requirements for the Master's Degree by Research

7.3.1 Master's degrees are awarded to students who have demonstrated:

- i. 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 an academic discipline, field of study, or area of professional practice.
- ii. A comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship.
- iii. 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.
- iv. Conceptual understanding that enables the student:
 - a. To evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline.
 - b. To evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses.

7.3.2 Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

- i. Deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, make sound judgements in the absence of complete data, and communicate their conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences.
- ii. Demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level.
- iii. Continue to advance their knowledge and understanding, and to develop new skills to a high level.

7.3.3 Holders will have:

- i. The qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring:
 - a. The exercise of initiative and personal responsibility.
 - b. Decision making in complex and unpredictable situations.
 - c. The independent learning ability required for continuing professional development.

7.4 Requirements for the Doctoral Degree

7.4.1 Doctoral degrees are awarded to students who have demonstrated:

- i. 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.
- ii. A systematic acquisition and understanding of a substantial body of knowledge which is at the forefront of an academic discipline or area of professional practice.
- iii. 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.
- iv. A detailed understanding of applicable techniques for research and advanced academic enquiry.

7.4.2 Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

- i. 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.
- ii. 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.

7.4.3 Holders will have:

- i. 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.

7.5 Procedure for Submission

7.5.1 Students must submit to Student Services and Systems sufficient copies of the thesis (normally two) for the internal and external examiners.

7.5.2 On submitting a thesis (or published works, to be substituted for references to a thesis below), students must sign a statement that:

- i. The thesis is not one for which a degree has been or will be conferred by any other university or institution.
- ii. The thesis is not one for which a degree has already been conferred by this University.
- iii. The work for the thesis is the student's own and that, where material submitted by the student for another degree or work undertaken by the student as part of a research group has been incorporated into the thesis, the extent of the work thus incorporated has been clearly indicated.
- iv. The composition of the thesis is the student's own work.

7.6 Appointment of Examiners

7.6.1 The SPRC shall appoint internal examiners and nominate external examiners for approval by the Research and Postgraduate Committee. There shall normally be at least one internal and one external examiner. For PhD by Published Works, there shall be at least two external examiners.

7.6.2 Where the student is a member of staff, or in any other case where personal interest might be involved, a second external examiner must be appointed in lieu of the internal

examiner. The two external examiners must each come from different institutions or organisations.

7.6.3 In any instance where an internal examiner is not appointed, the School shall appoint an independent member of the internal staff to co-ordinate the examination process.

7.6.4 Only persons of seniority and experience who are able to command authority within the area of research concerned shall be appointed as examiners.

7.6.5 The examiners shall not have had substantial co-authoring or collaborative involvement in the student's work, nor examine a thesis whose focus is the examiner's own work, nor have any links, including personal links, with the student which could be perceived to influence their judgement.

7.6.6 The external examiner shall be appointed from amongst the current professors, readers, or senior lecturers (or equivalent) from an external university. External examiners from outside the higher education system, for example from industry or the professions, may be appropriate for theses in some disciplines, subject to evidence of appropriate experience. An external examiner must not have been a member of staff or a student of the University at any time during the three years prior to appointment.

7.6.7 The internal examiner shall be appointed from amongst the current professors, readers, senior lecturers or lecturers (but not normally lecturers on probation) of the University, research fellows appointed under the Queen's University Research Fellowship scheme or staff of the University individually approved under regulation 6.1.6 for the purpose of supervision by the Research and Postgraduate Committee. Recognised teachers may be appointed as internal examiners in the Institute of Theology. In exceptional circumstances, honorary title holders may be appointed as internal examiners in Medicine, Health and Life Sciences.

7.6.8 The principal, second or co-supervisor (or any other supervisor) may not be appointed as an examiner.

7.7 The Examination Process

7.7.1 The examiners shall each prepare an independent report on the thesis before the oral examination.

7.7.2 There shall be an oral examination attended by the internal and external examiners and independently convened by a Director of Research (or nominee of equivalent experience, i.e. senior lecturer or above).

7.7.3 The oral examination shall take place in the University. In exceptional circumstances, and at the written request of the student, the SPRC may grant permission for an oral examination to be held elsewhere, or for it to be held via video-conferencing.

7.7.4 The student may not communicate with the examiners about the thesis before the oral examination.

7.7.5 After the oral examination, the examiners, via the School, must send Student Services and Systems all the independent reports plus a joint report which includes one of the following decisions:

- i. The Doctoral degree be awarded as the thesis stands.
- ii. The Doctoral degree be awarded subject to corrections* being made to the thesis that must be completed within three months.
- iii. The Doctoral degree be awarded subject to corrections* being made to the thesis that must be completed within six months.
- iv. The thesis be revised and re-submitted** for the Doctoral degree at a later date. Students are normally only permitted to revise and re-submit a thesis once, not counting corrections outlined in i or ii above. When making this decision, examiners may also propose one of v, vi, or vii below as a possible alternative. The student must confirm the preferred option.
- v. A Master's degree be awarded as the thesis stands.
- vi. A Master's degree be awarded subject to corrections* being made to the thesis that must be completed within three months.
- vii. A Master's degree be awarded subject to corrections* being made to the thesis that must be completed within six months.
- viii. The thesis be revised and re-submitted** for a Master's degree at a later date.
- ix. No degree be awarded.

For PhD by Published Works, 'thesis' shall be substituted with 'submission' and any required corrections shall relate to the critical analysis. Decision viii above is not applicable for PhD by Published Works.

* Normally the internal examiner must submit to Student Services and Systems, via the School, written notification of the corrections required, along with the completed examination forms, and normally within eight working days of the oral examination. Students must normally complete the corrections to the satisfaction of the internal examiner within three or six months (as determined within the Joint Report) from receipt of the examination outcome letter and notification of the corrections required.

** Revision and re-submission reflects that substantial revisions are required to make the thesis acceptable. Normally the internal examiner must submit to Student Services and Systems, via the School, written notification of the major revisions required, along with the completed examination forms, and normally within eight working days of the oral examination. (If the examiners have also proposed a possible alternative option from vi or vii above, normally the internal examiner must submit to Student Services and Systems, via the School, written notification of the appropriate amendments required by the appropriate deadline, and normally within eight working days of the oral examination.) Students must normally complete major revisions and resubmit the thesis for re-examination, within twelve months of receipt of the examination outcome letter and notification of the major revisions required. A new oral examination shall normally be required for the resubmission. The same examiners as for the original submission shall examine the resubmission.

7.7.6 Students who fail to submit a corrected or revised thesis by the date set by the examiners shall normally be regarded as having failed the examination and the decisions of the examiners shall lapse.

7.7.7 If the examiners cannot reach agreement on a decision, the internal examiner (or Convenor, if no internal examiner was appointed) shall notify the Chair of the SPRC, who shall arrange for an additional external examiner to be appointed following the procedures set out in regulation 7.6. The additional external examiner shall be informed that the original examiners have been unable to reach agreement and shall be sent the independent reports. The decision of the new external examiner shall be final.

7.7.8 If the Board of Examiners wishes to depart in any way from the normal examination procedures, the SPRC Chair shall

seek permission from the Director of Academic and Student Affairs.

7.7.9 Students who are dissatisfied with the outcome of the examination process may submit an academic appeal (research degree programmes) if a ground for appeal is evidenced.

7.8 Copyright

All copies of a thesis submitted, whether or not adjudged by the examiners to deserve the degree, remain the property of the University. The University shall assign the copyright of a thesis back to the author.

7.9 Library Regulations

7.9.1 Where the examiners decide to award a degree and before the result is officially posted, the student must submit to

Student Services and Systems two copies of the thesis bound in the manner of a book and certified by an examiner as being the accepted copy of the thesis (containing any amendments required by the examiners) and the approved summary of the work. One of these copies shall be deposited in the University Library and one given to the School concerned.

7.9.2 Students commencing a research degree programme from September 2016 onwards must also make the final, post-correction version of their thesis (as approved by the internal examiner) available in electronic format. The student must agree that the thesis be stored and made available publicly in electronic format unless an embargo period has been approved.