

Summary of changes to Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Research Awards 2023-24

The summary below outlines key changes to specific areas of the Regulations:

Section 1: SCOPE AND PURPOSE

All amendments, additions and variants to the Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Research Awards are now ratified by the Research and Knowledge Exchange Board. This responsibility previously lay with the Academic Council. Any changes, once ratified, are reviewed by the Research and Enterprise Training Institute. Significant changes should go to the Academic Council for noting.

Section D: REGISTRATION, CONTRACTUAL OBLIGATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT

D1 Registration: There has been a change to differentiate between the method used to set the reference date for postgraduate research programmes and the method used to set the reference date for professional doctorate programmes; where the reference date determines all relevant matters relating to the University's processes and procedures as they relate to the student. For the postgraduate research programmes, the date the student officially commences registration is the reference date. For professional doctorate programmes, the official start date of the programme is the reference date.

D2 Permitted Periods of Registration: For professional doctorate programmes, the period of registration commences from the official programme start date.

D4 Engagement: Student engagement is now governed by the University's Student Engagement Policy, replacing the University's Attendance and Engagement Policy.

Section E: PROGRESS AND PROGRESSION

E1 General Principles: Approved research proposals are referred, where necessary, to the specific Faculty's Research Ethics Committee, instead of the University's Research Ethics Committee, as previously.

E2 Master of Philosophy (MPhil) to Doctor of Philosophy (PhD): Change to the name of the form for transfer from MPhil/PhD to PhD from Form RDA2 to the Application for Transfer of Registration from MPhil to PhD.

E3 Doctorate (PhD/EdD) by Publication: Inclusion of a new section of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) by Publication. These regulations will be accompanied by a more detailed guidance document to be published alongside these regulations.

Section F: EXAMINATION AND ASSESSMENT

F1 Master of Philosophy (MPhil), Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), Doctorate by Published Work (PhD) and Professional Doctorates (EdD)

F1.2 Request for Final Examination: Clarification on submission of a thesis with chapters prepared in publication format (this must be clearly indicated on form RDA6a/b), and on submission of a thesis in the Doctorate by Publication format (which must meet the requirements for the award of PhD as per section B1).

Amendment to wording changing "work published jointly" to "work/publications that have been co-authored or published jointly with other authors", to ensure co-authoring is clearly included along with jointly publishing with other authors.

F1.6 Outcomes: Clarification of the regulation regarding non-response of an external examiner. This regulation has been divided to cover the following two circumstances: i) the inability of an external examiner to continue in their role, and, ii) the failure of an external examiner to provide a response within the specified timeframe. In the second circumstance, an additional 10 working days is available, after the specified timeframe, to contact the external examiner. The rest of the regulation remains unchanged.

F1.7 Resubmission and Re-examination: Amendment to the exit awards available to students who have not met the required standard to proceed to the oral examination. This makes it clear that on the basis of the thesis submission, PhD students may be permitted to transfer to the MPhil, EdD students may be awarded a Masters Degree (MedRes), or it may be decided that the thesis does not satisfy the criteria for a postgraduate research award.

Change to wording to clarify that a further oral examination takes place three months from the date of the official notification of the Examination Panel decision, not from the date of the actual panel.

Insertion of the words “a change” as follows: “following approval by the examiners of any amendments, corrections or revisions, [...] the title of a thesis must be the same as the original definitive title unless *a change* is recommended by the examiners.”

[Appendices](#)

Form RDA1a replaced by Research Plan Approval Form.

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