26. The assessment procedure ................................................................. 22
27. Re-submission and re-examination .................................................. 24
28. Failure at examination ................................................................. 25
29. Examiners not in agreement ....................................................... 25
30. Awards and outcomes ................................................................. 26
31. Appeals ...................................................................................... 26
32. Regulations specific to the award of Professional Doctorates ....... 26
   Definition of award ........................................................................ 26
   Entry requirements ........................................................................ 26
   Supervision .................................................................................. 26
   Directed Studies and Research Study ........................................... 27
   Progression Points ....................................................................... 27
   Final Assessment ......................................................................... 28
33. Regulations specific to the award of PhD by published work ..... 28
   Eligibility .................................................................................... 28
   Admission ..................................................................................... 28
   Supervision .................................................................................. 29
   The portfolio ................................................................................ 29
   Appointment of examiners ........................................................ 29
   Stages of assessment of the portfolio and oral defence .................. 31
   Assessment outcomes ................................................................. 31
   Re-submission and re-examination ............................................. 31
34. Regulations specific to the award of Higher Doctorates ................ 32
   Accountability ............................................................................. 32
   Awards ....................................................................................... 32
   Eligibility ..................................................................................... 32
   Admission .................................................................................... 32
   Supervision .................................................................................. 34
   The portfolio ................................................................................ 34
   Appointment of assessors .......................................................... 34
   Assessment .................................................................................. 35
Document record

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document title</th>
<th>Academic Regulations Section 4: Regulations for Research Degrees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Document reference number</td>
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<td>Document currency</td>
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| Document history               | • Please note corrections of a purely typographical nature have not been listed in this cover sheet.  
• Addition of a Definitions table.  
• Removal of unnecessary text that refers to policy and process as listed below:  
  - 11.1, 11.12, 15.1, 15.5, 17.1, 18.1, 25.1, 25.6, 25.10, 26.2, 26.9, 26.15, 31.1. and 34.1  
• 4.1.6.2 – Removal of regulation as it refers to policy.  
• 4.1.10.3 – Removal of regulation as it refers to policy.  
• 4.1.10.12 – Removal of regulation as it refers to policy.  
• 4.1.12.3 – Removal of regulation as it refers to process.  
• 4.1.13.7 – Removal of regulation due to incorrect stated policy.  
• 4.1.14.7 - Removal of regulation as it refers to process.  
• 4.1.22.5 - Removal of regulation as it refers to process.  
• 4.1.22.6 - Removal of regulation as it refers to process.  
• 4.1.23.3 – Removal of regulation as it is covered in amendments in 24.1  
• 4.1.24.9 – Removal of regulation due to repetition  
• 4.1.24.10 – Removal of regulation due to repetition  
• 4.1.25.3 – Removal of regulation so students automatically receive all reports related to their examination.  
• 4.1.25.8 – Removal of regulation due to repetition  
• 4.1.25.11 - Removal of regulation as it refers to policy.  
• 4.1.26.5 – Removal of regulation as covered in amendments in 4.1.26.1  
• Removal of appendix as refers to policy and procedure that has been moved to the Code of Practice  
• Addition of Section 1 Compliance and the following regulations:  
  - 1.1 All stakeholders are required to comply with the Academic Regulations, Appendices and associated Academic Policies.  
  - 1.2 The University establishes academic awards under its degree awarding powers. The arrangements for the establishment of awards and their approval are detailed in the University’s Academic Quality Framework. The awards approved for conferment by the University of Bedfordshire are stated in the academic regulations below together with the conferment arrangements. |
1.3 Academic Regulations and programme specifications in force when a student registers will normally apply to that student until completion of the programme. Academic Policies are subject to regular review and updated versions apply irrespective of the year of a student’s registration.

1.4 Deviations from the regulatory framework may be considered in exceptional circumstances.

1.5 All stakeholders must comply with other University Regulations and policies.

11.8 – Supervision meeting frequency changed from weekly to regular.

Addition of Regulation 12.3 to the Ethics Policy section 12.

14.2 Removal of mention that supervisory engagement will take place at the University.

Substantial changes to Section 20 Interruptions and extensions of studies to remove process and policy and align with the governance of Interruptions and extensions of studies.

25.8 – Regulation changed to Examiners have the right to make comments in confidence to the university in a separate report. Such comments should not be concerned with the performance of the student but may cover, for example, matters which they wish to draw to the attention of the RDC or RGS.

25.10 – Regulation amended to remove supervisor from contact with examiners as there is no possible oversight of this and academic colleagues are likely to converse during the examination period. The key, mandatory element is that the candidate must not have any contact with their examiners.

26.9 – changes made regarding participation of supervisor in viva.

26.11 - amended due to reference of process and to align the University with the 2010 Equality Act and reasonable adjustments.

26.18 – amended to make clear that examination deadlines are subject to approved and confirmed Interruptions and extensions.

**APPROVED by Academic Board September 2022**
Definitions
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Full title</th>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic Progress Panel</td>
<td>APP</td>
<td>The Academic Progress Panel is convened if a student or supervisor(s) have concerns about progress, to discuss the issues and agree a way forward. APPs are supportive, developmental and designed to help ensure that there is a clear, recorded plan of study for successful continuation and completion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candidate</td>
<td></td>
<td>The Candidate is how a PGR student is referred to when they move to the final examination or viva voce stage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of Studies</td>
<td>DS</td>
<td>First or primary supervisor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time equivalent</td>
<td>FTE</td>
<td>Full Time Equivalent refers to the unit of measurement equivalent to a student’s unit of work in a way that makes workloads comparable across a variety of contexts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Approved Extension Period</td>
<td>PEP</td>
<td>The Pre-Approved Extension Period refers to the fee structure that students submitting outside of the standard programme length will be required to pay. If a student enters the PEP, there are no fees due for the first three months. A student will then pay one third of the annual fees at the then current rate after each of three, six and nine months into the PEP until submission.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programme Approval Document</td>
<td>PAD</td>
<td>The Programme Approval Document</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progression Point 1</td>
<td>PP1</td>
<td>Further information about the PP1 can be found <a href="#">here</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progression Point 2</td>
<td>PP2</td>
<td>Further information about the PP2 can be found <a href="#">here</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education</strong></td>
<td>QAA</td>
<td>The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) is an independent charity working to benefit students and higher education, and one of the world’s experts in quality assurance. We are trusted by higher education providers and regulatory bodies to maintain and enhance quality and standards. We work with governments, agencies and institutions globally to benefit UK higher education and its international reputation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Degrees Committee</td>
<td>RDC</td>
<td>The Research Degrees Committee has oversight of research governance matters across the University, to promote best practice and encourage consistency in matters of research governance across the University, monitor compliance with University policies and procedures relating to research governance and external regulatory requirements, to oversee the development of policies and procedures relating to research governance, to ensure that the University continues to comply with relevant regulatory requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Research Graduate School</strong></td>
<td>RGS</td>
<td>The Research Graduate School offers the operational advice and regulatory framework for PGR students, supervisors, professional support colleagues and external stakeholders.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Training Needs Analysis is the UoB systematic approach for identifying what training needs to take place for PGR students.

UK Visas and Immigration is responsible for making millions of decisions every year about who has the right to visit or stay in the country.

### Defining phases of Research Degrees

The following table identifies the typical phases of research degrees programmes. The table in Award Framework defines the minimum, normal and maximum periods of registration for different research degree programmes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Full-time</th>
<th>Part-time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Part 1</td>
<td>Year 1</td>
<td>Years 1 &amp; 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part 2</td>
<td>Year 2, if applicable</td>
<td>Years 3 &amp; 4, if applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part 3</td>
<td>Year 3, if applicable</td>
<td>Years 5 &amp; 6, if applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-approved extension period</td>
<td>Period between end of normal period of registration and maximum period of registration. This is a maximum of one year for both full time and part time study.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examination period</td>
<td>Period between the Research Graduate School (RGS) accepting the submission of a thesis and the RDC confirming the final outcome</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 1. General regulations for research degrees

**Compliance**

1.1 All stakeholders are required to comply with the Academic Regulations, Appendices and associated Academic Policies

1.2 The University establishes academic awards under its degree awarding powers. The arrangements for the establishment of awards and their approval are detailed in the University’s Academic Quality Framework. The awards approved for conferment by the University of Bedfordshire are stated in the academic regulations below together with the conferment arrangements.

1.3 Academic Regulations and programme specifications in force when a student registers will normally apply to that student until completion of the programme. Academic Policies are subject to regular review and updated versions apply irrespective of the year of a student’s registration.
1.4 Deviations from the regulatory framework may be considered in exceptional circumstances.

1.5 All stakeholders must comply with other University Regulations and policies.

2. Award Framework

2.1 The table below summarises the University’s research degree awards, the minimum, normal and maximum periods of registration, and the length of the written thesis.

2.2 Exceptionally, where there is evidence that a student is progressing ahead of schedule, the RDC may approve a shorter registration period.

2.3 Where a student is permitted to change their mode of study from full-time to part-time or vice versa, their minimum and maximum registration periods will be calculated pro rata taking into account the time already spent on study in a different mode.

2.4 A change of mode is not permitted during the Progression point examination periods.

2.5 Where the pro rata calculations do not provide a whole number the calculation will be rounded up to a whole month to the advantage of the student.

2.6 Changes to the mode of study cannot be approved in retrospect or in the last three months of registration.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Minimum period of registration</th>
<th>Normal period of registration</th>
<th>Maximum period of registration</th>
<th>Maximum word length of thesis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Doctor of Philosophy (via transfer from Master of Philosophy, including the period of MPhil registration)</td>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>33 months full-time 45 months part-time</td>
<td>36 months full-time 72 months part-time</td>
<td>48 months full-time 84 months part-time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctor of Philosophy (direct registration)</td>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>24 months full-time 36 months part-time</td>
<td>36 months full-time 72 months part-time</td>
<td>48 months full-time 84 months part-time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctor of Philosophy (by published work)</td>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>18 months</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Professional Doctorate:
- Doctor of Osteopathy (DOst)
- Doctor of Professional Practice in:
  - Leadership in Children’s & Young People’s Services and Professional Doctorate in Children and Young People’s Services (change in title in 2016) (DProf)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>See Programme Approval Document</th>
<th>60 months part-time</th>
<th>80,000 words excluding appendices and bibliography</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional Doctorate:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctor of Osteopathy (DOst)</td>
<td></td>
<td>36 months part-time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctor of Professional Practice in:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership in Children’s &amp; Young People’s Services and Professional Doctorate in Children and Young People’s Services (change in title in 2016) (DProf)</td>
<td></td>
<td>36 months part-time</td>
<td>See Programme Approval Document</td>
<td>60 months part-time</td>
<td>80,000 words excluding appendices and bibliography</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Master of Philosophy</th>
<th>MPhil</th>
<th>18 months full-time</th>
<th>24 months full-time</th>
<th>36 months full-time</th>
<th>48 months part-time</th>
<th>35,000 words excluding appendices and bibliography</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>30 months part-time</td>
<td>36 months part-time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Master of Arts by Research | MA (Res) | 10 months full-time | 12 months full-time | 15 months full-time | 30 months part-time | 30,000 words excluding appendices and bibliography |
|                          |          | 18 months part-time | 24 months part-time |                    |                     |                                                  |

| Master of Science by Research | MSc (Res) | 10 months full-time | 12 months full-time | 15 months full-time | 30 months part-time | 30,000 words excluding appendices and bibliography |
|                               |           | 18 months part-time | 24 months part-time |                    |                     |                                                  |

3. Credit

3.1 Research degrees are not credit-rated and no staged or incremental credit will be awarded.

4. General entry requirements

4.1 Applicants must be able to demonstrate the motivation to undertake research at the appropriate level within the proposed field of study, and the potential to fulfil all of the learning outcomes as described in the FHEQ descriptors appropriate to the intended award. This will be tested by the development of a
research proposal and at interview.

4.2 A Masters by Research requires a minimum of a lower second-class honours, while the minimum entry requirement for all other research degrees is a first or upper second class honours undergraduate degree, or a master’s degree, awarded by a university or other institution with degree-awarding powers in the United Kingdom, or equivalent.

4.3 An applicant holding qualifications other than those described in 4.2, will be considered on his or her merits and in relation to the nature and scope of the programme of work proposed. Professional experience, publications, written reports or other appropriate evidence of accomplishment shall be taken into consideration. An applicant wishing to be considered under this regulation must provide the names of suitable persons from whom the University may seek an opinion about his/her academic attainment and fitness for research.

4.4 Applicants must demonstrate sufficient proficiency in English Language to successfully support study for the research degree to which the application is made. This will be assessed through interview and possession of an approved English Language Qualification at the appropriate level(s), as described here.

4.5 Applicants for research degrees in certain disciplines or certain research degree programmes may be required to fulfil particular entry requirements in respect of: subject-specific knowledge, professional qualification and/or experience, English Language proficiency or participation in an admissions assessment task. The discipline specific and programme-specific entry requirements will be listed on the Research Institute websites.

4.6 The proposed research study must be considered to be:
- capable of leading to a scholarly outcome contributing to the advancement of knowledge at the appropriate level,
- capable of meeting the University’s ethical requirements; and
- feasible within resource availability.

4.7 An appropriate supervision team must be available.

5. Admission

5.1 Applications for research degrees are reviewed to ensure they fulfil the initial screening criteria. These include but are not limited to: meeting or having the potential to meet the general entry requirements for research degrees and, for international students, satisfying or having the potential to satisfy UKVI requirements. Applications fulfilling the initial screening criteria will be passed to the relevant Research Institute Director or their designated nominee for consideration by at least two members of academic staff.

5.2 Each person whose application shows promise in relation to the requirements for the award for which the application is made, and for which it is thought that a supervision team could be identified, should be interviewed (in person or by video-link or similar) to:
- assess the extent to which the applicant and application fulfil the general entry requirements and any discipline-specific or programme-specific entry requirements,
• assess the proposed research study in relation to its fit with the research interests and expertise of the Research Institute(s) and/or Academic Department(s) which will host the applicant’s study,
• to determine whether bench fees are required for the study to progress, and
• inform the appointment of supervisors and, where necessary, additional advisors.

5.3 At least one interviewer should be a potential supervisor for the applicant’s research study.

5.4 Approval for admission is granted by the RGS on behalf of RDC, upon the recommendation of the Director(s) of the Research Institute(s); or their designated nominee.

5.5 Applicants for PhDs are admitted to the degree of Master of Philosophy with the possibility of transfer to PhD (MPhil/PhD). Exceptionally direct registration for the degree of PhD may be considered where a student’s supervisor from another institution has moved to the University. In order to be considered for direct entry, the use of any previous research completed elsewhere will be reviewed as part of the admissions process to establish the further period of research required.

5.6 An applicant whose work forms part of a larger group project may register for an MPhil/PhD. Each individually registered project must be distinguishable for the purposes of assessment and be appropriate for the award sought. The application must clearly indicate each individual’s contribution and its relationship to the group project.

6. Registration and re-registration

6.1 All new research students are required to register within a specified time period. Registration includes a binding contractual commitment by a person, who has chosen to take a course or programme of study at the University to pay the tuition fees due, as well as setting the fee anniversary and maximum registration dates. This commitment takes place when a student signs the terms and conditions or otherwise indicates an intention to be bound by its terms in a way that is acceptable to the University following provision of personal and academic information online and/or in person and paying all they owe or a part of the tuition fees with an agreed payment.

6.2 Subsequent academic progression and fee liabilities are measured relative to the date of initial registration, except when periods of RDC-approved interruption of studies or RDC-approved individual extensions defer progression points and fee anniversary dates.

6.3 Continuing research degree students’ must re-register at the beginning of their academic year. No person is recognised as being registered as a student of the University, and is not a student, until tuition fees have either been paid in full for the current academic year, or other arrangements have been made for that payment of fees, which are acceptable to the University; and all other fees and sums due to the University incurred in the previous academic year or academic
period have been discharged in full.

7. **Collaborating establishments**

7.1 Co-operation on a programme of research may be formalised with one or more collaborating establishments external to the University. Collaboration normally implies the applicant's use of facilities and other resources, including supervision, provided jointly by the University and the collaborating establishment.

8. **Studies not based at the University of Bedfordshire**

8.1 For studies not to be based at a University of Bedfordshire campus, the RDC must be satisfied that:
- The facilities, resources and support available for the research study are of an adequate standard.
- The arrangements proposed for supervision enable frequent and substantial contact between the student and all supervisors, in line with the general regulations for supervision (section 11) and provide contact with at least one supervisor on a monthly basis (full-time students) or every 2 months (part-time students).
- A timetable for intended study visits has been agreed and will be renewed annually.

8.2 Unless there is prior agreement, or exceptional circumstances, the student is expected to spend at least six weeks per year at the University of Bedfordshire and must attend for the progression point and final examinations.

8.3 Part-time Masters by Research programmes may be undertaken either at the University or as a work-based study. For applicants applying to undertake their research project in industry, commerce or another workplace, the application must be accompanied by formal, written approval by the line manager. If the applicant is a University of Bedfordshire staff member the additional regulations in the [Staff PGR Policy](#) must be followed.

9. **Application to submit a portfolio of research studies**

9.1 In some subject areas it may be appropriate for applicants for the Masters by Research to conduct a series of studies rather than a single study. Such a proposal, and the consequent intention to submit a portfolio of research projects for final examination, should be clearly delineated in the description of the approved research topic at the time of admission.

9.2 If a registered student wishes to change from preparing a portfolio of research studies to conducting a single study as the basis for their thesis, or vice versa, the change of research project process will ensue.

10. **Staff**
10.1 Students, who are members of staff of the University of Bedfordshire, or a Partner Institution, are subject to additional regulations codified in the Policy on Staff PGR Policy.

11. Supervision and associated record-keeping

11.1 The Research Institute Director or their designated nominee will appoint the supervisory team for individual students when an offer is made on the basis of the requirements set out in this section and in consultation with the Head(s) of School or line manager(s) of the staff concerned.

11.2 All research degree students will have at least two supervisors who are members of the University's academic staff. A student should not normally have more than three supervisors.

11.3 In case of a member of the supervisory team (Director of Studies or second supervisor) leaving the University, and in agreement with the student, he/she may be appointed as an additional supervisor to provide continuity to supervision. They will not be permitted to be employed as a Director of Studies or second supervisor.

11.4 Directors of Study must hold the minimum of a fractional appointment of 0.2 FTE with the University. Second supervisors should normally hold the minimum of a fractional appointment of 0.2 FTE with the University; other arrangements will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

11.5 One supervisor will be designated as the Director of Studies. This supervisor will be the first point of contact for the student and lead the regular supervision process.

11.6 At least one supervisor will have experience of supervising students to the successful completion of a research degree at the level at which the student is studying.

11.7 Members of a supervisory team are normally expected to have attained a research degree at the same or a higher level than the level at which the student is being assessed.

11.8 The Director of Studies and/or another supervisor will have meetings with the student on a regular and frequent basis, as defined by University policy determined by the RDC. In the absence of the Director of Studies, the second supervisor will ensure supervisory meetings occur on a regular and frequent basis.

11.9 Records of engagement between the student and the Director of Studies, or second supervisor, must be maintained using the University's preferred system or other agreed record keeping mechanism.

11.10 Failure to maintain a record of work undertaken and of the content and outcomes of meetings may be taken as evidence of failure to engage with studies. Records may be used in any appeal or complaint.

11.11 A research student, other than a student for a PhD by published work or a
student for a Higher Doctorate, whether based at the University of Bedfordshire or at another institution, is ineligible to act in any supervisory capacity for another research student.

11.12 Supervisors are required to undertake a training needs analysis with each student in line with University policy.

12. Research integrity and Ethics

12.1 Students must conduct their research degree studies in line with the University’s Ethics policy.

12.2 Ethical approval for the research study must be obtained before data collection commences and if the approved research study is refined or changed it must be re-screened by the Director of Studies to determine whether it requires additional scrutiny. If there are substantive changes the research proposal must be resubmitted for further ethical approval.

12.3 All human subject research is subject to a proportionate level of ethical scrutiny. There is an ethical clearance process which is designed to ensure that all research activities involving human subjects undertaken by University staff and students are carried out in a way that safeguards the dignity, rights, health, safety, and privacy of those involved.

13. Research topic

13.1 The approved research topic must be described at the time of admission or, for Professional Doctorate Programmes, at the point designated in the Programme Approval Document.

14. Attendance, time commitment, leave and additional paid work

14.1 Full-time students are expected to devote a minimum of 37 hours per week to their research and related activities. Part-time students are designated 0.5FTE and therefore expected to devote a minimum of 18.5 hours per week to their research and related activities.

14.2 All students must be available to undertake their research, attend related training or other relevant events, and meet supervisors throughout the normal working week.

14.3 International Students must comply with visa monitoring processes in relation to attendance and engagement with their research degree studies, and visa restrictions and associated University processes in relation to leave and paid work.

14.4 All students must have a research data management plan agreed with their supervisory team prior to data collection. This is expected to be refined and adjusted as the student’s research progresses.

14.5 Students who have agreed absences for data collection and conference
attendance must maintain regular contact with their supervisors.

14.6 Full-time and part-time students must undertake any mandatory training as determined by their Director of Studies.

14.7 Full-time students must declare any paid work they undertake to their Director of Studies and must comply with the Policy on Staff PGR Policy if that work takes place at the University of Bedfordshire. Full-time students may engage in limited number of hours of paid work. This constitutes up to 20 hours a week of non-teaching activity OR an average of 4 hours of teaching a week (equivalent to 0.2 FTE) within a 12-week rolling period.

14.8 Part-time students, whether or not University staff, who undertake paid work for the University or a Partner Institution must consult the Policy on Staff PGR Policy to ensure they observe the strict limit on hours of work.

15. Progression points

15.1 For Master’s by Research students there will be a single progression point assessment (MiPP) at the mid-point of their studies and which must be completed successfully prior to submission of the final thesis or portfolio. Students who do not complete the MiPP successfully will have their registration withdrawn under regulation 22.1.

15.2 For MPhil, MPhil/PhD and Professional Doctorate students there will be a summative assessment (Part 1 Progression Point, ‘PP1’) which must be completed successfully during Part 1 of the research degree programme and confirmed by RDC. Students who do not complete PP1 successfully within Part 1 will have their registration withdrawn under regulation 22.1.

15.3 For MPhil/PhD and Professional Doctorate students there will be a summative assessment (Part 2 Progression Point, ‘PP2’) which must be completed successfully during Part 2 of the research degree programme.

15.4 For students registered on the PhD via transfer from MPhil programme, successful completion of the PP2 is the point at which transfer to PhD registration occurs.

15.5 Students who do not complete PP2 successfully within Part 2 will remain on the MPhil programme.

15.6 For each Professional Doctorate programme, the progression point summative assessments will be detailed in the Programme Approval Document.

15.7 The only official confirmation of outcomes of progression point assessments will come from the RGS.

16. Application to transfer from PhD to MPhil registration

16.1 A student who is registered for the degree of PhD and who is unable to
complete the approved research may, at any time prior to the submission of the
thesis for examination and within their maximum registration period, apply for
their registration to be changed to that of the degree of MPhil.

17. Application to transfer from MPhil only to PhD registration

17.1 Exceptionally, with the support of the supervisory team and the Director of the
Research Institute or their designated nominee, a student initially registered for
the degree of MPhil only, may apply to transfer his or her registration to PhD.
For full-time students, such an application should be made no less than 12
months after the date of initial registration and no more than 18 months after
the same date. For part-time students the application may be made between
18 and 27 months following the date of the initial registration.

17.2 The process of approving such a transfer enables the student to progress to
Part 2 of their studies.

18. Student progress monitoring

18.1 An annual monitoring process will be used to review the progress of each
research student.

18.2 Academic Progress Panels (APPs) may be undertaken at the request of the
supervisory team, the student, or the RGS, in line with agreed University
Policy.

19. Programme of related studies

19.1 A student may be required to follow a programme of related studies, as
determined through the training needs analysis, for the attainment of
competence in research methods or of knowledge related to the subject of the
thesis or portfolio.

19.2 The supervisory team and student must identify how the programme of related
studies will be achieved and record this in the supervision record. Monitoring of
progress through to completion must also be recorded in the supervision
record.

19.3 The University may exceptionally permit a student to register for another
course concurrently with the research degree, provided that either the research
degree or the other course is by part-time mode of study and that, and the
same work is not being counted towards different awards.

20. Interruptions and extension of studies

20.1 An Interruption of Studies (IoS) is when a student is formally permitted by their
Research Institute, Director of Studies (and funder, where appropriate) to
interrupt their studies for an agreed period.
20.2 An interruption may be requested in the case of mitigating circumstances. The reasons could include: illness, paternal/adoption leave, personal and family reasons, financial hardship, internships not directly related to the research project, and major restructuring of a department or research group. It should be noted that these reasons are not exhaustive, and Research Institutes may grant interruptions for other reasons they consider acceptable.

20.3 Interruptions will not normally be permitted based on a change of research topic, lack of progress, fieldwork or time spent training or in an industry where this does not form part of the research programme.

20.4 Submission deadlines are adjusted accordingly for approved interruptions. Students should remain aware of, and adhere to, the maximum period of registration for their period.

20.5 The student’s registration is suspended for the duration of the approved interruption period, however they will retain limited access to University resources such as email but not supervision.

20.6 The maximum period of interruption that can be applied for the duration of the student’s research programme, which is considered to be until completion and ratification of award, is 12 months. This can be applied for at different points in the student journey but must accumulate to 12 months in total. Exceptionally, a further 12 months of interruption may be approved during the research programme. The application and evidence approval must be sought from the Research Institute Director and the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Research and Innovation).

20.7 Retrospective interruptions and requests for extensions are not allowed. An interruption of studies will not be granted retrospectively, unless there are valid and overriding reasons that prevented the student from applying at the time.

20.8 Students may apply for parental leave, as described in the relevant policy and this does not count towards their maximum period of allowed interruption.

20.9 Students may return from the interruption, either an approved IoS or parental leave, before the interruption end date.

20.10 It is the student’s responsibility to return from interruption on or before the interruption end date. If the student does not return from interruption or contact the RGS to apply for another period of interruption before the interruption end date the RDC will terminate their registration as per section 22.

20.11 If a student has experienced issues that have prevented progression to a key milestone deadline but want to continue their research programme they should submit a fully completed extension request form. An extension request requires supervisory and Research Institute Director support before submission.

20.12 Applications for extensions must be accompanied by a plan of work which will demonstrate the student’s awareness of the need to complete the work within the time allocated and commitment to doing so.

20.13 Extensions should not exceed 12 months in total; further extensions may be
applied for under exceptional circumstances.

20.14 Students with an agreed extension have the right of access to supervision and University facilities.

21. Withdrawal from studies

21.1 Students wishing to withdraw must inform the University using procedures published by the Registry / Research Graduate School.

22. Termination of registration

22.1 The registration of a student can be terminated where:
   i. academic progress is unsatisfactory;
   ii. recommended on the basis of a student’s breach of financial standing and/or visa requirements;
   iii. recommended under the University’s policies relating to research misconduct, student misconduct or academic offences;
   iv. a student fails to return from an interruption on the interruption end date;
   v. a student fails to re-register at the beginning of each academic year;
   vi. a student fails to submit his/her thesis/portfolio before the maximum period of registration.

23. The thesis

23.1 A student’s thesis must embody the results of the research conducted during the approved period of registration at the University.

23.2 The students must submit their research data management plan within their thesis.

23.3 The student should ensure that the thesis conforms to the format as outlined in the University ‘Style Guide, Requirements and Procedure for Thesis Submission’. When submitted, all students must also submit their data on an encrypted USB. This will be retained until after the award is confirmed and will not form part of the archived submission.

23.4 The student may submit a thesis for examination only after the minimum registration period has passed and before their maximum registration (see section 4.2). The decision to submit a thesis rests with the student. However, the supervisory team should be given adequate time to read and comment upon the final draft of the thesis, giving their opinion on whether the thesis is ready to be submitted and raising concerns about the quality of the thesis where warranted. This should in no way be understood as indicating the potential outcome of the viva.

23.5 The thesis must comply with the maximum word length as specified in section 4.2. Students, with the support of their Director of Studies, may make a case to the Research Institute Director or their designated nominee for approval of an
extended word length up to 100,000 words (Level 8) or up to 40,000 MA by Research or MSc by Research (Level 7). This can be agreed by the RID or their designated nominee on the basis of the nature of the research undertaken. This should be agreed at least three months prior to submission.

23.6 Where a student wishes to submit a thesis in excess of 100,000 words (40,000 MA by Research or MSc by Research) this must be agreed by the RDC.

24. Stages of assessment of the thesis or portfolio and oral defence

24.1 To qualify the research award each candidate must meet the required learning outcomes and satisfy the examiners of that their achievement is of sufficient merit and the thesis contains evidence of originality and independent critical ability. The assessment will consist of two stages:
   a) assessment of the thesis and any supplementary material as described in section 23, by the examiners; and
   b) the defence of the thesis by the student in an oral examination and such other tests as the examiners may prescribe.

24.2 Both stages of assessment must be completed to the satisfaction of the examiners.

24.3 All students are required to abide by the regulatory framework governing assessments and examinations. Failure so to do constitutes an offence and may be dealt with in accordance with the Student Conduct Policy.

25. The Postgraduate Research Examination Board

25.1 A candidate will be examined by at least two and normally not more than three examiners. At least one examiner must be external to the University of Bedfordshire and any Partner Institution. No more than one examiner can be internal to the University or, where applicable, a Partner Institution.

25.2 An internal examiner will be defined as an examiner who is at appointment:
   • a member of staff of the University on a full or part time contract; or
   • a member of staff appointed by the University from a partner institution.

25.3 It is not permitted for a member of the candidate's current or previous supervisory team to act as an examiner.

25.4 It is not permitted for the same Examination Board to examine more than one student in any one academic year. No external examiner should examine more than two theses in any one academic year and each examination should be for a different Director of Studies.

25.5 Where the candidate is a member of substantive staff at the University or a Partner Institution, a minimum of two external examiners must be appointed and no internal examiner will be appointed.

25.6 An independent Chair may be appointed to oversee examinations. Normally, the Chair should be an experienced academic with a track record of successful
completions and examinations of a research degree. The Chair attends the private meetings of the examiners, but is not an examiner and does not receive a copy of the thesis. For each examination the Chair and the examiners are constituted as the Postgraduate Research Examination Board.

25.7 If the examiners note cases of plagiarism or other research misconduct in the thesis they must alert the RGS before the oral examination is due to take place to ensure that the correct research misconduct process is followed and that the oral examination does not take place.

25.8 Examiners have the right to make comments in confidence to the university in a separate report. Such comments should not be concerned with the performance of the student but may cover, for example, matters which they wish to draw to the attention of the RDC or RGS.

25.9 The criteria for examiners shall be as follows:
   a) examiners shall be expert in the field of the thesis and able to make an independent assessment of the student;
   b) at least one examiner shall have experience in the examination of research degrees in the UK;
   c) the examiners should have examined at least three research degrees of appropriate level between them;
   d) examiners should not have had any significant research or other contact with the student, nor should they have had any role in the assessment or supervision of the student. There should be no personal link between the examiner and student;
   e) reciprocal examining with a supervisor from another institution is not permitted. The repeated nomination of an examiner by a supervisor will not normally be permitted until one year has passed from the completion of the last appointment;
   f) former lay members of Council, students or employees of the University shall not normally be appointed before a period of three academic years has elapsed;
   g) the student's supervisor shall not be an examiner;
   h) an internal examiner will not have been involved in the supervision of the student during the research period;
   i) an internal examiner will not have been part of the PP2 assessment panel of the student;
   j) an internal examiner will not have been supervised by the student's supervisors for their own degree or post-doc;
   k) an internal examiner will not have a close personal relationship with the student's supervisor;
   l) a supervisor will not be able to use the same internal examiner more than once per academic year.

25.10 Once the examiners have been appointed there must not, for the duration of the examination process, be any direct contact between the examiners and the candidate on matters relating to the thesis or the examination.

25.11 All matters relating to the examination will be treated as confidential. Examiners are not permitted to divulge the content of previously unpublished material in a
student’s thesis until any restrictions on access to the thesis, granted by the university, are removed.

26. The assessment procedure

26.1 Assessment is on the basis of the submitted thesis and the oral examination. Any presentation does not constitute a formal part of the assessment.

26.2 Each examiner must consider whether the thesis satisfies the requirements for the degree by demonstrating that the candidate has met the appropriate FHEQ level learning outcomes. Each examiner must present a preliminary report on the thesis, independently of other parties, to the University.

26.3 Examiners and the Chair must be present for the entirety of the viva voce examination, including deliberations and delivery of the outcome.

26.4 Normally the viva will be conducted in person on campus. The university may, however, agree that the examination be conducted online or as a hybrid if there are circumstances which make this expedient.

26.5 Vivas will normally take place with both the student and examiners in the same physical location. In exceptional circumstances, where a physical meeting is not possible, alternative arrangements may be agreed by the Research Institute in line with university recommendations. Different arrangements may be in place for joint awards involving a partner institution.

26.6 Students are required to present themselves for oral, practical or written examinations at such place and time as the university may direct.

26.7 If circumstances beyond the candidate’s control prevent them from attending the viva they must inform RGS as soon as possible. If the candidate does not attend the viva the viva will be cancelled and the RDC (or the RDC scrutiny sub-panel) will investigate the reason for non-attendance. If the reason proves to be valid and supported by documented evidence the viva will be rescheduled. If the reason proves not to be valid or there is no supporting evidence the outcome will be a fail with no permission to resubmit.

26.8 The student may indicate to the RGS whether their supervisor(s) shall be present at the oral examination as an observer. The supervisor(s) does not have the right to participate in the examination of the student but may contribute if invited to do so by the examiners. Otherwise the oral examination shall be held in private.

26.9 Only a member of the candidate’s supervisory team may attend the viva. If none of the supervisory team members can attend the viva a substitution may be made with prior approval by the Head of Research Development or Chair of RDC. Care must be taken to avoid potential conflicts of interest.

26.10 We have a duty to make Reasonable Adjustments. The University will take into consideration its duties under the Equality Act 2010 and make reasonable adjustments for disabled students under these regulations. This includes taking into consideration requests for reasonable adjustments to the outlined processes. In accordance with the Equality Act 2010 the University will
consider any reasonable adjustments to these regulations to take into account the needs of individual students.

26.11 Following the oral examination, the Postgraduate Research Examination Board will agree on one of the following outcomes:
   a) that the candidate is recommended for the award of the degree for which he or she was registered. The thesis may contain minor errors deemed by the examiners to have no academic impact which need to be addressed before ratification.
   b) that the candidate is awarded the degree subject to minor amendments and corrections being made to the thesis within three months of the RGS confirmation of the examination outcome (two months for a Research masters at FHEQ level 7)
   c) that the candidate is awarded the degree subject to substantive amendments and corrections being made to the thesis within six months of the RGS confirmation of the examination outcome (four months for a Research masters at FHEQ level 7);
   d) that the candidate is permitted to re-submit for re-examination for the degree on one further occasion within 12 months (six months for a Research masters at FHEQ level 7);
   e) that the oral examination is reconvened at a later date
   f) that the candidate is awarded the degree of MPhil subject to the presentation of the thesis amended to the satisfaction of the examiners within 12 months. The examiners may determine whether a further viva is required. This does not apply to MPhil or Masters by Research students.
   g) that the candidate is not awarded the degree and is not permitted to be re-examined (see section 28).

26.12 Where minor or substantive amendments and corrections are required, the Postgraduate Research Examination Board will indicate these to the candidate in an agreed written statement via the RGS within ten working days of the viva. This will also identify which examiner(s) will be responsible for approving the amendments and corrections.

26.13 Where appropriate the Chair initiates the collation of the list of corrections/amendments and liaises with the examiners to ensure that they agree on the content. If there is not a Chair the examiners will liaise with each other to ensure the amendments have been mutually agreed.

26.14 Once corrections and amendments have been completed to the satisfaction of the examining team then a recommendation to award will be made.

26.15 Following ratification by the RDC the examiner Joint Report and the list of required amendments (if applicable) will be released to the student by the RGS.

26.16 The examiners are expected to provide their report or verdict on the completed corrections and amendments no later than within one calendar month of the submission of the corrected thesis.
26.17 Candidates who do not submit their corrections and amendments by the deadline, subject to approved and confirmed extensions or interruptions of study, will have the examiners decide the outcome on the basis of the original thesis submission and viva.

26.18 Where corrections and amendments are not completed to the satisfaction of the Postgraduate Research Examination Board, the student may be given one month to make further amendments in response to written feedback from the examiners, required to undergo re-submission and re-examination, see section 27, or recommended for a lower award in line with 26.12.

26.19 Where, following one month of further amendments, the candidate fails to complete the corrections to the examiners' satisfaction, both examiners will be asked to assess the corrections made and produce recommendations. In case of the examiners differing in their opinion on the quality of corrections, the RDC will act in accordance with section 29.

27. Re-submission and re-examination

27.1 The examiners formally appointed by the University are expected to perform this role through the entire examination process, including re-examination if applicable. However, where it is necessary to appoint new and/or additional examiners for the re-examination, this will follow the regulations for the appointment of examiners.

27.2 The candidate must submit for re-examination within the period of six months (for Masters by Research/MPhil) or one calendar year (for all other postgraduate research degrees) from the date of the corrections being officially confirmed.

27.3 Where resubmission is required, the Postgraduate Research Examination Board will provide the candidate with written guidance on the aspects of the first submission that require improvement to meet the learning outcomes.

27.4 The Re-examination follows the same procedure as for the initial examination. The Postgraduate Research Examination Board will determine whether there is a requirement for a further viva examination either at the initial assessment or when considering the corrected thesis.

27.5 The Re-submission thesis will be examined based on the resubmission guidelines provided by the examiners and holistically against the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) level requirements for the degree which they are being examined for.

27.6 The Postgraduate Research Examination Board for a re-examination will agree on one of the following recommendations:

a) that the candidate is awarded the degree for which he or she was registered possibly subject to the minor correction of typographical or other errors within a period of three months (one month for FHEQ level 7 Research degrees, and PhD by Publication).

b) in the case of a PhD or Professional Doctorate examination only, that the candidate is awarded the degree of MPhil subject to the
presentation of the thesis amended to the satisfaction of the examiners within three months.
c) that the candidate is not awarded the degree and is not permitted to be re-examined (see section 28).

28. Failure at examination

28.1 Where the Postgraduate Research Examination Board recommends that the degree not be awarded and no re-examination permitted, or where the candidate is recommended the degree of MPhil subject to the presentation of the thesis amended to the satisfaction of the examiners, then the Postgraduate Research Examination Board must prepare an agreed statement of the deficiencies of the thesis and the reason for their decision which will be forwarded to the student and to RDC.

28.2 The RDC has oversight of the statement, together with a report by the Chair of the Postgraduate Research Examination Board and all of the relevant examination documentation. Where the recommendation is upheld, the student’s registration for their original award is deemed to have been terminated. Where the recommendation for a lower award is upheld the student’s registration will be amended accordingly.

28.3 If the RDC has evidence to question the fail outcome of the viva it will consider the quality of the decision to determine whether there is evidence of process not being followed. Where the recommendation of a fail is not upheld by RDC the outcome “that the oral examination is reconvened at a later date” (26.12 e) will be recorded and the student and examiners will be informed of the outcome and the rationale for the change. A new examination team will be appointed in line with section 25 and the process for examination will be followed in line with section 26. The reconvened viva will be considered as the first examination (thus allowing for the outcomes listed in 26.12)

29. Examiners not in agreement

29.1 Where the examiners cannot reach agreement following an oral examination or after amendments, the RDC will consider the report of the Chair of the Postgraduate Research Examination Board, and the examiners’ separate (preliminary and post oral examination) reports and recommendations, and may:
• accept a majority recommendation (provided that the majority recommendation concurs with at least one external examiner)
• accept the decision of the external examiner (where there is only one on the examination team)
• appoint an additional external examiner who meets all relevant criteria for appointment.

29.2 Where an additional external examiner is appointed, they will prepare an independent preliminary report on the basis of the thesis and may decide to conduct a further oral examination. This additional examination will be considered part of the initial examination and should be chaired by the same
Chair where possible.

29.3 The newly appointed examiner may be informed that there has been a disagreement between the initial examiners but should not be informed of the specific recommendations of the other examiners. On receipt of the report from the additional examiner the RDC will reconsider the outcome as per 26.12.

30. Awards and outcomes

30.1 The date of award is the date of approval by the RDC.

30.2 In the case of proven cases of academic misconduct, the RDC may determine an appropriate penalty in accordance with the procedures for investigating Research Misconduct.

31. Appeals

31.1 A research student may appeal against the decision of the RDC in accordance with the University's policy regarding academic appeals.

31.2 The RGS will make a decision on if it is necessary to interrupt the student’s studies until such time as the appeal process has been concluded.

32. Regulations specific to the award of Professional Doctorates

Definition of award

32.1 A professional doctorate is a research degree located in a field of professional practice and an academic discipline. It provides a route to a doctorate that is distinct from a PhD in the same field/discipline.

32.2 The title of a professional doctorate award will normally reflect the field of professional practice.

32.3 In addition to the general regulations the following regulations apply to Professional Doctorates.

Entry requirements

32.4 Applicants may be admitted to an approved professional doctorate programme if:

a) the applicant meets the general University entry requirements for doctoral degrees as per Section 4;

b) the applicant meets any programme-specific entry requirements (detailed in the programme approval documents);

c) an appropriate supervision team is available; and

d) the minimum cohort size for the professional doctorate programme is reached.

32.5 An applicant will normally be in relevant employment and may be required to
hold a specified professional qualification and/or to have completed a specified period of professional practice in the field of the award.

Supervision

32.6 One of the supervisors shall normally be an appropriately qualified or experienced individual in the area of practice of the professional doctorate.

32.7 The supervisory team and student must identify the approved research topic at the point designated in the Programme Approval Document and record this in the supervision record.

Directed Studies and Research Study

32.8 Directed studies provide preparation for the research study and summative assessments of the programme (PP1, PP2 and the final thesis submission). Directed studies may include, but are not limited to, the following: taught modules, a series of participative workshops or similar, specified research-informed professional practice in the field of the doctorate, a publishable systematic literature review, a pilot study or similar preparatory work. The programme of directed studies for each professional doctorate programme will be detailed in the Programme Approval Document.

32.9 The research study will relate to an area of professional practice pertinent to the field of the professional doctorate programme and will meet the UK requirements for a doctoral award.

32.10 If a professional doctorate programme offers the possibility of an exit award at a lower level, the requirements for this award shall be detailed in the Programme Approval Document.

32.11 If a professional doctorate has a Programme of Directed Studies in the form of a taught stage units these are graded on a pass/fail basis only. Students must submit their assignments as specified in the assignment brief. Failure to submit by the published deadline will be classed as a non-submission. Students who submit all elements of assessment but do not successfully complete the taught stage unit have a further opportunity to pass the unit by undertaking a referral of any failed element of assessment at the next opportunity. Students who do not pass the taught stage unit at this point will be withdrawn from the professional doctorate programme.

Progression Points

32.12 Successful completion of the Programme of Directed Studies is required before undertaking the research study and submitting summative assessments (PP1, PP2 and the final thesis) and at any earlier date set in the Programme Approval Document.
32.13 The Programme Approval Document will specify two Progression Points: a summative assessment (or group of summative assessments) in Part 1 (Progression Point 1) that must be successfully completed to allow progression to Part 2, and a summative assessment (or group of summative assessments) in Part 2 (Progression Point 2) that must be successfully completed to allow progression to Part 3.

32.14 Official notification of the outcomes of the Progression Points will be confirmed by the RDC.

**Final Assessment**

32.15 A doctorate shall be awarded to a student who, having critically investigated and evaluated an approved topic resulting in an independent and original contribution to professional practice and demonstrated an understanding of research methods appropriate to the chosen field, has presented and defended a thesis, by oral examination, to the satisfaction of the examiners and in line with national expectations for doctoral awards.

32.16 The arrangements for examination and, where necessary, re-examination, of the final thesis follow those for the assessment of other doctorates as set out elsewhere in these regulations.

33. Regulations specific to the award of PhD by published work

33.1 Unless specified in this section, the regulations for the Doctor of Philosophy based on Published Work follow the same regulations as those governing a PhD.

**Eligibility**

33.2 The University will normally only consider applications from current members of staff of the University, or of a formally recognised collaborative partner institution, for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy based on published work.

33.3 Students must remain members of staff of the University or of the partner institution throughout the period of registration.

**Admission**

33.4 A formal application for admission must be submitted to the RDC, via the RGS. This does not preclude preliminary discussions between a potential applicant and a potential Director of Studies to refine the candidature proposal.

33.5 The formal application will comprise:
   - Evidence of eligibility
   - A list of works upon which the candidature is to be based.
• Details of where and when the research upon which the listed works were based was undertaken.
• An outline discussion (of not less than 3,000 words) of the contribution of the published works to the advancement of the field of study.

33.6 The RGS will screen the application for eligibility and circulate to the relevant Director(s) of Research Institute(s) or their designated nominee.

33.7 Eligible applications should be reviewed by at least two members of academic staff from the relevant research institute(s) or academic department(s), who will make a recommendation to the Director(s) of Research Institute(s) or their designated nominee. The applicant may be interviewed. The recommendation shall be ‘admit’ or ‘reject’ based upon both the quality of the application and the availability of a Director of Studies.

Supervision

33.8 During the period of registration, a member of staff of the University of Bedfordshire will be appointed as Director of Studies to supervise the compilation of the final submission (portfolio) and to ensure that procedures relating to the appointment of examiners and examination arrangements are completed.

The portfolio

33.9 The portfolio shall comprise:
   a) The publications and any other artefacts upon which the candidature is based.
   b) A declaration of the student’s contribution to each of any jointly authored or jointly produced artefacts upon which the candidature is based.
   c) A substantial introduction and critical commentary, typically between 5,000 and 10,000 words, which sets the publications and any non-textual artefacts in the relevant historical, theoretical, critical or design context and demonstrates that the assessment criteria have been met.

33.10 The portfolio must conform to the format as outlined in the University ‘Style Guide, Requirements and Procedure for Thesis Submission’.

33.11 The research may include creative work forming, as a point of origin or reference, a significant part of the intellectual enquiry. The creative work must be clearly presented in relation to the argument of the commentary. The portfolio must include some permanent record of the creative work, where practicable, bound with the commentary.

33.12 The portfolio must be presented in the English language.

Appointment of examiners
33.13 A student will be examined by a minimum of two external examiners. Where the research topic is interdisciplinary, external examiners must be appointed, to represent each discipline or the interdisciplinary nature of the work.

33.14 An independent Chair will be appointed by the RGS to oversee examinations. Normally, the Chair should be an experienced academic with a track record of successful completions and examinations of a research degree. Those looking to be appointed as Chairs should undertake the Viva Chair training session. The role of the Chair is to coordinate the process and ensure that it is carried out fairly and in accordance with University PGR regulations. Therefore, the Chair should be well versed in the University PGR regulations and be prepared to enforce these in a professional and collegiate manner. The Chair attends the private meetings of the examiners, but is not an examiner and does not receive a copy of the thesis. For each examination the Chair and the examiners are constituted as the Postgraduate Research Examination Board.

33.15 In any instance where the RDC is made aware of a failure to comply with the procedures of the examination process to the detriment of the student, it may at a full meeting of the committee declare the examination null and void, and may appoint new examiners. All involved parties must be informed of the circumstances and where appropriate be provided with the opportunity to respond.

33.16 The external examiners must have specialist experience in research in the topic(s) of the student's portfolio.

33.17 The criteria for examiners shall be as follows:
   a) examiners shall be expert in the field of the thesis and able to make an independent assessment of the student;
   b) at least one examiner shall have experience in the examination of research degrees in the UK;
   c) the examiners should have examined at least three research degrees of appropriate level between them;
   d) examiners should not have had any significant research or other contact with the student, nor should they have had any role in the assessment or supervision of the student. There should be no personal link between the examiner and student;
   e) reciprocal examining with a supervisor from another institution is not permitted. The repeated nomination of an examiner by a supervisor will not normally be permitted within a two year period;
   f) former lay members of Council, students or employees of the University shall not normally be appointed before a period of three academic years has elapsed;
   g) the student's supervisor shall not be an examiner;
   h) an internal examiner will not have been involved in the supervision of the student during the research period;
   i) an internal examiner will not have been part of the upgrade assessment panel of the student;
   j) an internal examiner will not have been supervised by the student’s supervisors for their own degree or post-doc;
k) an internal examiner will not have a close personal relationship with the student’s supervisor;
l) a supervisor will not be able to use the same internal examiner more than once per academic year.

33.18 Once the examiners have been appointed there must not, for the duration of the examination process, be any direct contact between the examiners and the student or the Director of Studies on matters relating to the portfolio or the examination. Any questions relating to the portfolio or the examination must be addressed through the RGS.

**Stages of assessment of the portfolio and oral defence**

33.19 Assessment will consist of two stages:
   a) the submission to, and assessment of, the portfolio by the examiners; and
   b) the defence of the portfolio by the student by oral examination.

33.20 In examining the student, the Postgraduate Research Examination Board must determine whether the
   a) work submitted demonstrates that the student has completed research at least comparable in scope and depth to that required to prepare a PhD thesis in the field concerned;
   b) portfolio demonstrates that the student has personally made a systematic study (in a single field or closely related fields);
   c) student has shown originality by the exercise of independent critical power and has made a distinct contribution to knowledge; and
   d) student meets the same learning outcomes as those for a standard PhD.

**Assessment outcomes**

33.21 Following the oral examination, the Postgraduate Research Examination Board will agree on one of the following outcomes:
   a) that the student be awarded the degree for which he or she was registered (the thesis may contain minor errors deemed by the examiners to have no academic impact which need to be addressed before ratification);
   b) that the student be awarded the degree subject to minor amendments and corrections being made to the portfolio within three months of the viva
   c) that the student be awarded the degree subject to substantive amendments and corrections being made to the portfolio within six months of the viva;
   d) that the student be permitted to re-submit for the degree and be re-examined on one further occasion;
   e) that the student be not awarded the degree and be not permitted to be re-examined.

**Re-submission and re-examination**
33.22 The outcomes available to the Postgraduate Research Examination Board on conclusion of a re-examination are:
   a) that the student be awarded the degree for which he or she was registered (possibly subject to minor corrections to be completed within a period of one month);
   b) that the student be not awarded the degree and be not permitted to be re-examined.

34. Regulations specific to the award of Higher Doctorates

Accountability

34.1 University regulations and procedures for Higher Doctorates recognise that there is the potential for a conflict of interest between applicants and the Research Institutes in which they are likely to be active.

Awards

34.2 The University may confer an award of Doctor of Laws (LLD), Doctor of Letters (DLitt) or Doctor of Science (DSc) upon a candidate who is adjudged to have distinguished him/herself through published contributions to a field of study. A student must demonstrate:
   a) Contributions of originality and merit in the field;
   b) Sustained and substantial contributions to the advancement of knowledge, over a number of years;
   c) Seminal publications which have led to extensions or the development of knowledge by others; and
   d) Authoritative standing in the field of study.

Eligibility

34.3 Applicants should be either:
   a) a graduate of the University of not less than six years standing; or
   b) a member of the academic staff who has completed a minimum of three years' full or part-time service; or
   c) a member of staff of a recognised collaborative partner for taught or research provision where the partnership has been in operation for five years and the applicant has at least three years' full or part-time service.

34.4 Normally, applicants must have a minimum of ten years research experience at post-doctoral level.

Admission

34.5 A written application for admission must be submitted to the RDC, via the RGS.

34.6 An applicant is required to establish a prima facie case that s/he possesses an appropriate body of work and sufficient standing in the field of study in relation to the criteria for awards.
34.7 The application must include the following, in English:
   a) Evidence of eligibility (section 4);
   b) Proposed title;
   c) Identification of the intended award (LLD, DLitt or DSc);
   d) A curriculum vitae;
   e) A numbered publications list, indicating which of the listed publications the applicant plans to submit for the Higher Doctorate assessment (see section 34.12 for the minimum and maximum number of publications to be examined);
   f) Details of where and when the research was undertaken, upon which the listed publications were based;
   g) A statement as to whether or not the work or any part thereof has been submitted, successfully or unsuccessfully, for a degree of this type, at this or any other University;
   h) A statement describing any previous submission of a listed publication for a degree at this or any other university;
   i) For publications that the applicant intends to submit for the Higher Doctorate assessment (see point e above) a statement of the applicant’s contribution to the research upon which these publications were based, and in the case of jointly authored publications, a declaration of the applicant’s contribution to authorship. Note: the University reserves the right to consult with any of the co-authors or collaborators in respect of this declaration;
   j) An outline description (approximately 2,000 words), with reference to specific publications and items on the curriculum vitae, indicating how the applicant’s body of work and professional standing fulfils the requirements for the award (section).
   k) A sample of published works from the list the applicant plans to submit for the Higher Doctorate assessment (see point e above). The sample should include at least four and no more than ten key publications that are highlighted in the outline description. An electronic copy of each sample publication is preferred, but two paper copies may be provided instead.
   l) Declaration of any conflict of interest which may impinge upon the selection of reviewers for the application, or examiners for the final submission.

34.8 Eligible applications will be reviewed by two members of academic staff, at the level of professor or reader, from the relevant research institute(s) or academic department(s) and one from another research institute. Each reviewer must prepare a short report and make a recommendation to the RDC on whether the application should proceed.

34.9 The RDC will decide whether to accept the application, based upon the recommendations of the internal reviewers.

34.10 If an application is unsuccessful, no further application for a higher doctorate will be considered until at least two years has elapsed from the date of the original application.
Supervision

34.11 Given the evident standing of the applicant, the appointment of a Director of Studies is not appropriate. However, at the request of the student, the University may appoint an experienced academic to act as a critical friend in the preparation of the Portfolio.

The portfolio

34.12 The portfolio (three paper copies and one electronic copy) shall comprise:
   a) Title page including: title for the submission, the degree for which it is submitted, the student’s full name, prior degrees with awarding universities and dates of awards.
   b) An abstract, not normally exceeding 300 words, summarising the contribution to knowledge represented by the published works.
   c) A list of the publications submitted for assessment - at least four and no more than 50 publications, at least 75% of which should meet the criteria for submission to the UK’s Research Excellence Framework.
   d) A statement of the authorship (including contributions to joint authorship) of the submitted publications, and the extent of the student’s contribution to the work underpinning the submitted publications.
   e) A statement describing where and when the underpinning work was undertaken.
   f) A statement describing any previous submission of the publications for a degree at this or any other university.
   g) A curriculum vitae demonstrating the student’s standing in the field.
   h) A detailed critical appraisal (5000 words maximum) that through reference to selected publications and other achievements clearly demonstrates how the student meets the criteria for the award.
   i) The publications listed in c) above

34.13 The portfolio must conform to the format as outlined in the University ‘Style Guide, Requirements and Procedure for Thesis Submission’.

34.14 The portfolio may include creative work forming, as a point of origin or reference, a significant part of the intellectual enquiry. The creative work must be clearly presented in relation to the argument of the commentary. The portfolio must include some permanent record of the creative work, where practicable, bound with the commentary.

34.15 The portfolio must be presented in the English language.

Appointment of assessors

34.16 The portfolio will be assessed by a minimum of three assessors, at least two of whom will be external to the University and at least one of whom will be based outside the UK unless the RDC is satisfied that no suitable external assessor with the necessary expertise and/or independence can be appointed.

34.17 The assessors must have a significant knowledge of research in the field of the student's portfolio, as a researcher, commissioner of research or policy-maker.
Only people of seniority and experience, who are able to command authority within the field of research, will be appointed as assessors.

34.18 Each assessor must have experience of examining doctoral degree student's; normally three or more previous examinations at Doctoral level. At least one assessor should have experience of evaluating post-doctoral research (e.g. as a Research Effectiveness Framework reviewer or equivalent, a member of a research funding award panel, or prior experience of assessing a higher doctorate).

34.19 The RDC will consider recommendations for assessors from the Research Institute or senior faculty staff and ensure their independence from the student.

34.20 An independent Chair will be appointed by the Research Graduate School to assist the assessors and ensure that the assessment process is conducted fairly and in accordance with the University's regulations and procedures. The Chair is not an assessor and does not receive a copy of the portfolio. The Chair and the assessors are constituted as a Postgraduate Research Examination Board.

34.21 Once the assessors have been appointed there must not, for the duration of the assessment process, be any direct contact between the examiners and the student on matters relating to the portfolio or the assessment. Any questions relating to the portfolio or the assessment must be addressed through the RGS.

34.22 In any instance where the RDC is made aware of a failure to comply with the procedures of the assessment process to the detriment of the student, it may, at a full meeting of the committee, declare the assessment null and void and may appoint new assessors. All involved parties must be informed of the circumstances and where appropriate be provided with the opportunity to respond.

Assessment

34.23 Each assessor must consider whether the portfolio satisfies the requirements for the degree and submit an independent recommendation and brief report to the Chair, via the RGS. The recommendation will be either:
   a) The Higher Doctorate be awarded for the portfolio submitted; or
   b) No degree be awarded.

34.24 The Chair will review the independent recommendations and reports and verify compliance with University regulations and processes.

34.25 If the assessors' recommendations are unanimous, the Chair will make the appropriate recommendation to the University's Professorial Promotions Panel with a brief supporting statement.

34.26 If the assessors' recommendations are not unanimous, each will be furnished with the recommendations and brief reports of the others and the Chair will lead a discussion that aims to achieve a consensus recommendation.

34.27 If after discussion, facilitated by the Chair, a consensus is not reached, the Chair will make a report and recommendation to the Professorial Promotions
Panel. The Chair may recommend that the decision of the majority of assessors is accepted or that the case for the award is not unequivocally made.

34.28 Where the decision is that no degree be awarded, the student may reapply to be accepted as a higher doctorate student on one further occasion, after a minimum of three years has elapsed since the submission for assessment of the first portfolio.

34.29 The outcomes will be reported to Academic Board in the same manner as professorial appointments.