

Resubmission and Re-examination of Postgraduate Research Degrees Policy

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**Research Degrees and Researcher Development
Directorate of Research and Business Engagement**

CONTENTS

1. Introduction	4
2. Duration of the resubmission period	5
3. Supervisory arrangements	6
4. Notice of resubmission	6
5. Timeframe for organising the re-examination	7
6. Examination of a resubmitted thesis	7
7. Recommendations for a resubmitted <u>doctoral</u> degree thesis	9
7.1 CATEGORY A: AWARD (recommendation A(i) and A(ii))	
7.1.1 A(i) Award without revisions	9
7.1.2 A(ii) Award with minor revisions	10
7.2 CATEGORY C: REJECT (recommendations C(i), C(ii) and C(iv))	12
7.2.1 C(i) Reject but award the degree of Master of Philosophy (MPhil)	12
7.2.2 C(ii) Reject but award the degree of Master of Philosophy (MPhil) subject to minor revisions being made to the thesis	12
7.2.3 C(iv) Reject and no further submission permitted	13

8.	Separate examiners' statement: only applicable to recommendation C(ii)	13
9.	Recommendations for a resubmitted <u>Master of Philosophy (MPhil)</u> degree thesis	14
9.1	CATEGORY A: AWARD MPHIL (recommendation A(i) and A(ii))	14
	9.1.1 Award MPhil with no revisions	14
	9.1.2 Award MPhil subject to minor revisions	15
9.2	CATEGORY C: REJECT MPHIL - no further submission permitted	15
10.	APPENDIX 1: Faculty and central graduate office contact details	16
11.	APPENDIX 2: Documents relating to postgraduate research degree examination	16

1. Introduction

1.1 This policy is a continuation of the main University of Manchester policies on postgraduate research degree examinations entitled *Examination of Doctoral Degrees Policy* and *Examination of Master or Philosophy Degrees (MPhil) Policy*, but specifically relates to **resubmission** and **re-examination**. It applies to full-time and part-time postgraduate research students of the following degrees:

- Master's degrees: Master of Philosophy (MPhil)
- Doctoral degrees: Doctor of Philosophy (PhD); Doctor of Medicine (MD); Doctor of Business Administration (DBA)

1.2 Examination procedure for the master's-level postgraduate research degrees of Master of Science (MSc) by Research and Master of Enterprise (MEnt) are detailed in the relevant individual Ordinances and Regulations for the degree (see <http://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/services/rbess/graduate/ordinancesandregulations/>) and in the Examination of Master of Science (MSc by Research) Degrees Policy: <http://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/services/rbess/graduate/code/submissionandexamination/>

1.3 This policy is intended for use by examiners, academic and administrative staff and the postgraduate research students of the degrees specified in section 1.1.

1.4 Any deviation from this policy will only be considered in the most exceptional circumstances and must be agreed in writing with the candidate before the examination takes place. Enquiries should initially be directed to the appropriate Graduate Office in the School, and then to the Faculty Graduate Office and Faculty Associate Dean for Postgraduate Research, where appropriate. If necessary, cases may be referred to the Associate Vice-President for Postgraduate Research.

Enquiries to the Associate Vice-President for Research should be directed to the Graduate Education Team based in the University's Research Office.

- 1.6 This document should be referred to along with the relevant degree Ordinances and Regulations and other policies that comprise the Code of Practice for Postgraduate Research Degrees, particularly the relevant main examination policy: either *Examination of Doctoral Degrees Policy* or *Examination of Master or Philosophy Degrees (MPhil) Policy*.

See appendix two for a full list of University policy and guidance documents relating to the examination of postgraduate research degrees, which form part of the University's Code of Practice for Postgraduate Research Degrees, available at <http://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/services/rbess/graduate/code/>

2. Duration of the resubmission period

- 2.1 The terms 'resubmission' and 'referral' used throughout this policy refer to a thesis that must be revised, resubmitted and re-examined after the first examination. The resubmission period begins from the date stipulated in the recommendation letter sent to the student detailing the revisions required. A copy of the letter and the examiners' statement must also be sent to the candidate's supervisor and the internal examiner at the same time, and the date of the letter recorded on the candidate's record.
- 2.2 If examiners select either recommendation B(i) or B(ii) at first examination, candidates normally have up to six months in which to revise and resubmit their thesis for a second further examination and may be granted up to 12 months in which to revise and resubmit their thesis for a second further examination. The decision to allow additional time for a candidate to resubmit their thesis must be based on the quantity of work required and the length of time it is feasible to complete the revisions. The decision must not be based on personal circumstances of the candidate.
- 2.3 If examiners select recommendation B(iii) at first examination, candidates have up to one year to conduct further research, revise and resubmit their thesis for a second further examination.

- 2.4 If examiners select recommendation C(iii) at first examination (doctoral examination only), candidates have up to six months in which to revise and submit their thesis for consideration for the degree of Master of Philosophy (MPhil) at second examination.

3. Supervisory arrangements

- 3.1 The candidate is required to meet with their supervisor(s) once the examiners' statement has been uploaded via the University's progression monitoring system in order to discuss preparations for the revisions. The candidate should be advised to consult with the internal examiner only if further clarification is required on the examiners' statement of revisions.
- 3.2 Regular contact must be maintained between the supervisor(s) and the candidate throughout the resubmission period. The frequency of meetings will be determined by the nature and extent of the work required as detailed by the examiners in their statement and should be agreed in advance by the supervisor(s) and candidate.
- 3.3 Where the supervisor is no longer able to provide supervision, alternative supervision arrangements must be made by the Head of School.

4. Notice of resubmission

Candidates must follow the same procedure for giving notice of resubmission as with first submission by completing a *Notice of Resubmission Form* available in the University's progression monitoring system, giving at least six weeks up to a maximum of six months' notice of their intention to submit their thesis to enable preparations for the examination to be made. A resubmission fee must be paid when the *Notice of Resubmission Form* is submitted.

5. Timeframe for organising the re-examination

- 5.1 The procedures and timeframes for examination of a resubmitted thesis are identical to a first submission: examiners must not normally take longer than twelve weeks to read and assess the thesis and write their pre-oral examination reports where required. The oral examination if appropriate, must take place without undue delay, normally within twelve working weeks of the re-submitted thesis being sent to the appropriate examiner by the School or Faculty Graduate Office
- 5.2 Candidates must be available to attend the oral examination from the time that the thesis is submitted. Candidates may only delay their oral examination in very exceptional circumstances and must apply to the appropriate School or Faculty Graduate Office for permission.
- 5.3 Where an oral examination is not required, the relevant completed *Examiners Report Form (Resubmission)* must be uploaded to the University's progression monitoring system via the internal examiner or independent chair within eight weeks of the thesis first being sent to the examiners.

6. Examination of a resubmitted thesis

- 6.1 The examination of a resubmitted thesis should normally be undertaken by the original examiners. Where this is not possible, replacement examiners must be selected and approved following the procedure detailed in the University's [*Nomination of Examiners & Independent Chairs for Postgraduate Research Degree Examinations Policy*](#). If the examiners are changed this must be done in consultation with the student.
- 6.2 Examiners will be sent the resubmitted thesis with the original examiners' report and statement of revisions and a new *Pre-Oral Examination Report Form* (if an oral examination is to be held) and *Examiners' Report Form (Resubmission)*. New examiners may request to see a copy of the original thesis, if required.

- 6.3 Examiners must only assess the thesis/documents sent to them via the Faculty/School Graduate Office.
- 6.4 In cases where the candidate has resubmitted a thesis that has not been adequately revised in accordance with examiners' instructions, Examiners are not permitted to return the thesis to the candidate for further amendment after the thesis has been formally submitted for re-examination.
- 6.5 A specific examiners' report form is provided for use in the examination of a resubmitted thesis: either *Examiners' Report Form (Resubmission)* for doctoral degrees OR *Examiners' Report Form (Resubmission)* for MPhil degrees. Unlike the first submission forms, these forms do not allow for the recommendation of thesis referral (Category B).

Further guidance on the joint Examiner Report Form can be found in section 19 of the relevant main examination policy: either *Examination of Doctoral Degrees Policy* or *Examination of Master of Philosophy Degrees (MPhil) Policy*.

- 6.6 When conducting the examination of a resubmitted thesis, if applicable, examiners should pay attention to the manner in which the candidate has revised the thesis in response to the original statement of revisions. If a thesis has not been adequately revised, the thesis may be rejected and any further examination of the thesis will not be permitted. Examiners may only make new recommendations on material that has been added since first submission and which were not previously raised in the first submission.
- 6.7 A candidate whose thesis is referred under recommendations B(ii) and B(iii) at first examination is required to undergo a second oral examination. However, if the examiners' recommendation upon assessment of the resubmitted thesis is to award the degree (ie; recommendation A(i) or A(ii)) and the examiners are in joint agreement, they may dispense with the second oral examination. Examiners must inform the appropriate School or Faculty Graduate Office staff as soon as possible if they wish to dispense with the oral examination so that the candidate can be informed and any refund given.

Candidates referred under recommendation C(iii) at first examination (doctoral examination only) may be required to undergo an oral examination at the discretion of the examiners.

7. Recommendations for a resubmitted doctoral degree thesis (*see section 9 for recommendations for resubmitted Master of Philosophy (MPhil) degree theses*)

NB: regardless of which recommendation is selected, examiners are required to jointly complete the appropriate *Examiners' Report Form (Resubmission)* and submit the form via the University's progression monitoring system e within **five working days** of the oral examination, where one has taken place.

There are two categories of recommendations for a resubmitted doctoral thesis: A (award) and C (reject). A resubmitted doctoral thesis does NOT allow the recommendation of referral under category B. Within both A and C categories, examiners must select a sub-recommendation, as follows.

7.1 CATEGORY A: AWARD (recommendation A(i) and A(ii))

7.1.1 A (i) award without revisions

The examiners should select recommendation A(i) if the thesis is satisfactory in every way and there are no revisions to be made to it.

Recommendation A(ii) should be selected if some minor revisions are necessary to the thesis, as detailed in section 7.1.2.

The examiners may recommend the award if they are satisfied that the thesis is satisfactory in every way and that:

- the candidate possesses an appropriate knowledge of the particular field of learning within which the subject of the thesis falls;

- the research which is reported in the thesis contributes a substantial addition to knowledge;
- the results of the research show evidence of originality and independent critical judgement;
- the thesis is presented in a lucid and scholarly manner;
- the thesis has been submitted in the form prescribed by University regulations;
- no part of the thesis has previously been submitted for the award of a degree at this or any other University;
- the thesis and the work reported in it are the candidate's own.

7.1.2 A (ii) award with minor revisions

Recommendation A(ii) should be selected if the examiners are satisfied that the thesis meets the criteria for the degree (see section 7.1.1 above) but some minor revisions are necessary to the thesis.

Minor revisions permissible under box A(ii) include:

- typographical errors;
- minor amendments and/or replacement of, or additions to, the text or to references or diagrams;
- other more extensive revisions may be made as long as they do not require significant (as defined by the examiners) re-working or re-interpretation of the intellectual content of the thesis.

A list of revisions must be provided by examiners in section four of the *Examiners' Report Form (Resubmission)* for the benefit of the candidate. Once carried out by the candidate, the revisions must be approved by the internal examiner. There is no requirement for a further oral examination.

The time permitted for minor revisions to be completed by the candidate and approved by the internal examiner is normally **no more than four weeks**, but exceptionally no more than twelve weeks, from the date the candidate receives the list of corrections via the University's progression monitoring system. The notification that the minor revisions have been approved by the internal

examiner must be submitted via the University's progression monitoring system.

The decision to allow additional time for minor revisions to be completed, in twelve weeks from the date the candidate receives the list of revisions, must be based on the quantity of the work required and length of time it is feasible to complete the revisions.

In examinations where there is no internal examiner, the independent chair must ensure that minor revisions are approved by an external examiner or other person nominated by the School and recorded in the University's progression monitoring system within 2 weeks of the submission by the candidate.

The examiners' decision to recommend an A(ii) should be made on the grounds that the thesis will NOT require a further examination. The decision to recommend an A(ii) should not be determined by the candidate's personal circumstances. The decision to allow additional time for the student to revise and resubmit must be based on the quantity of the work required and length of time it is feasible to complete the work.

The candidate is expected to be available in the period after the oral examination, where appropriate, to complete minor revisions as part of their responsibilities in the examination of their degree. In very exceptional circumstances, the candidate may apply to the appropriate School or Faculty Graduate Office for permission to submit the revised thesis later than within the four-week or twelve week timeframe. Candidates who submit their revised thesis late without prior permission may be subject to a late submission fee by the School or Faculty.

Candidates and examiners should refer to the appropriate School or Faculty Graduate Office if further guidance on minor revisions is required (see appendix one for contact details).

7.2 CATEGORY C: REJECT (recommendations C(i), C(ii) and C(iv))

Where examiners are not satisfied that the thesis and oral examination have met the standards required, they may recommend:

7.2.1 C(i): Reject but award the degree of Master of Philosophy (MPhil)

For recommendation C(i), examiners must refer to the degree criteria in the MPhil Ordinances and Regulations and justify their decision to recommend the award of MPhil. On approval of the recommendation, the candidate must re-submit the thesis, by uploading it to the institutional repository via eThesis submission in MyManchester with a new title page, indicating that it is a master's (and not a doctoral) thesis.

7.2.2 C(ii): reject but award the degree of Master of Philosophy (MPhil) subject to minor revisions being made to the thesis

For recommendation C(ii), examiners must include a statement detailing the required revisions(see section 9) as part of the *Examiners' Report Form*. Examiners must refer to the degree criteria in the MPhil Ordinances and Regulations and justify their decision to recommend the award of MPhil, subject to minor revisions.

The time permitted for minor revisions to be completed by the candidate is **normally no more than four weeks**, but exceptionally no more than twelve weeks from the date the candidate receives the list of revisions available via the University's progression monitoring system. The minor revisions must be approved via the University's progression monitoring system within 2 weeks of the candidate submitting the revisions

The decision to allow additional time for minor corrections to be completed, up to twelve weeks from the date the candidate receives the list of revisions, must be based of the quantity of the work required and length of time it is feasible to complete the revisions.

On completion of minor revisions and approval of the recommendation, the candidate must re-submit the thesis,

via MyManchester, with a new title page, indicating that it is a master's (and not a doctoral) thesis.

7.2.3 C(iv): reject and no further submission permitted

For recommendation C(iv), examiners must justify their decision not to recommend the doctoral or the MPhil degree in the *Examiners' Report Form (Resubmission)*. When the recommendation of the examiners is not to award a doctoral or MPhil degree, the internal examiner or independent chair, will normally be invited to the next meeting of the appropriate Faculty postgraduate research degrees Committee to assist in its consideration of the case and to answer any questions.

8. Examiners' statement: only applicable to doctoral resubmission recommendation C(ii)

Where examiners reach a decision to give a C(ii) recommendation for a resubmitted doctoral thesis, examiners must include a statement as part of the *Examiners' Report Form*, which will be submitted via the University's progression monitoring system and therefore be made available to the candidate. Examiners should give sufficient detail of the defects of the resubmission and recommend ways in which the thesis should be revised in order to make a satisfactory revision of the thesis for the degree of Master of Philosophy (MPhil).

The internal and external examiners must agree this statement and ensure it is uploaded to the University's progression monitoring system within **five working days** of the examination. The candidate will be contacted by the Graduate Office once the result has been confirmed by the appropriate Faculty postgraduate research degrees Committee. Following this communication they can view the report in the University's progression monitoring system with the official written notice of the result.

9. Recommendations for a resubmitted Master of Philosophy (MPhil) degree thesis (see section 7 for recommendations for resubmitted doctoral degree theses)

NB: regardless of which recommendation is selected, examiners are required to jointly complete the appropriate *Examiners' Report Form (Resubmission)* and submit the form via the internal examiner or independent chair in the University's progression monitoring system. This should be submitted within **five working days** the oral examination where one has taken place.

There are two categories of recommendations for a resubmitted Master of Philosophy (MPhil) degree: A (award) and C (reject). A resubmitted MPhil thesis does NOT allow the recommendation of referral under category B.

9.1 CATEGORY A: AWARD MPhil (recommendation A(i) and A(ii))

9.1.1 Award MPhil with no revisions (recommendation Ai)

The examiners should select recommendation A(i) if the thesis is satisfactory in every way and there are no revisions to be made to it.

Recommendation A(ii) should be selected if some minor revisions are necessary to the thesis, as detailed in section 7.1.2.

The examiners may recommend the award of MPhil if they are satisfied that the thesis is satisfactory in every way and that:

- the candidate possesses an appropriate knowledge of the particular field of learning within which the subject of the thesis falls;
- the results of the research show evidence of the capacity of the candidate to pursue research and scholarship and represent original work;
- the thesis is presented in a lucid and scholarly manner;
- the thesis has been submitted in the form prescribed by University regulations and policy;

- no part of the thesis has previously been submitted for the award of a degree at this or any other University;
- the thesis and the work reported in it are the candidate's own.

9.1.2 Award MPhil subject to minor revisions (recommendation A(ii))

Recommendation A(ii) should be selected if the examiners are satisfied that the thesis meets the criteria for the MPhil degree (see section 9.1.1 above) but some minor revisions are necessary to the thesis.

Examiners should follow the same procedure and guidance as for doctoral minor revisions as detailed in section 7.1.2.

9.2 CATEGORY C: REJECT MPhil - no further submission permitted.

For recommendation C, examiners must justify their decision not to recommend the MPhil degree in the *Examiners' Report Form - MPhil (Resubmission)*. When the recommendation of the examiners is not to award a MPhil degree, the internal examiner, or independent chair, will normally be invited to the next meeting of the appropriate Faculty postgraduate research degrees Committee to assist in its consideration of the case and to answer any questions.

10. APPENDIX 1: Faculty and central Graduate Office contact details

NB: queries should be directed to the appropriate School Office within the relevant Faculty in the first instance. For School Graduate Office contact details, contact the Faculty Graduate Office or consult the University website:

<http://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/services/rbess/graduate/contacts/>

11. APPENDIX 2: Documents relating to postgraduate research degree examination

FORMS

To be completed by:

Form	Completed by	Location of form
Notice of submission form	Candidate	Online monitoring system
Nomination of Examiners form	Supervisor	Online monitoring system
Oral details form	Internal Examiner	Online monitoring system
Pre-Oral Examination Form	Each Examiner	Online monitoring system
Joint Examiners Report Form	Jointly by both/ all examiners	Online monitoring system

POLICY & GUIDANCE

- *Presentation of Theses Policy*
- *Academic Malpractice: Guidelines on the Handling of Cases*
- *Nomination of Examiners & Independent Chairs for Postgraduate Research Degree Examinations Policy*
- *Examination of Doctoral Degrees Policy*
- *Examination of Master of Philosophy (MPhil) Degrees Policy*
- *Resubmission and Re-examination of Postgraduate Research Degrees Policy*
- *Conducting Oral Examinations by Video Link Policy*
- *Posthumous Award of Postgraduate Research Degrees Policy*

Policy/guidance is available from the appropriate School or Faculty Graduate Office or from the central graduate education web pages at <http://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/services/rbess/graduate/code/>

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Related Statutes, Ordinances, General Regulations:	
Equality relevance outcome: High / Medium (delete as applicable)	
Related policies:	http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/DocuInfo.aspx?DocID=7444 http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/DocuInfo.aspx?DocID=20718
Related procedures:	
Related guidance and or codes of practice:	Code of Practice for Postgraduate Research Degrees (http://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/services/rbess/graduate/code/)
Related information: (list or state N/A)	
Policy owner:	Graduate Education (Helen Baker)
Lead contact:	Graduate Education (Helen Baker)