

**Senate: 24 June 2009**

**Regulations for Postgraduate Research Degrees**

**Person Reporting**

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**Synopsis**

This paper sets out proposed revisions to regulations for Postgraduate Research Degrees.

The revisions to the regulations proposed here have been subject to consultation involving the Associate Deans for Graduate Education. All revisions proposed here have been approved by the Graduate Education Group.

The current regulations for postgraduate research degrees can be viewed on the University website at <http://www.campus.manchester.ac.uk/researchoffice/graduate/ordinancesandregulations/>.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Senate is invited to approve the revisions to Regulations for postgraduate research degrees.

**Effective Date of Introduction**

24<sup>th</sup> June 2009

**Revisions to the regulations**

**1. Electronic Thesis Submission**

**EDIT SECTION (section 2c of the PhD regulations, MPhil regulations, MD regulations and ChM regulations; section 3c of the DBA regulations and Professional, Engineering and Enterprise Doctorate regulations)**

"Candidates shall be expected to submit one electronic copy and two paper copies of their thesis upon completion of the PhD degree unless they have received prior approval from the University to register for the submission pending period"

**ADD A NEW SECTION (section 10b of the PhD regulations, MD regulations and ChM regulations; section 11b of the DBA regulations and Professional, Engineering and Enterprise Doctorate regulations; section 9b of the MPhil regulations)**

"A PhD thesis submission shall consist of one electronic copy in Portable Document Format (PDF) with a plain-text metadata record, and two paper copies downloaded and printed directly from the submitted electronic copy.

The University shall have the right to retain both the electronic and paper copies. Full details of thesis presentation requirements can be found in the Presentation of Theses Policy”

**EDIT SECTION (section 12a of the PhD regulations, MD regulations and ChM regulations; section 13a of the DBA regulations and Professional, Engineering and Enterprise Doctorate regulations; section 11a of the MPhil regulations)**

Candidates shall submit one electronic copy and two paper copies of a thesis embodying the results of the research undertaken during the degree. The thesis may embody reprints of published material, must be free from restrictions on publication, and must be presented and bound in a satisfactory manner. The University shall have the right to retain both copies.

**EDIT SECTION (section 9 of the PhD by Published Work regulations)**

“Candidates shall be expected to submit upon completion one electronic copy of their thesis in Portable Document Format (PDF) with a plain-text metadata record, two paper copies downloaded and printed directly from the submitted electronic copy of their PhD by Published Work thesis and any additional material in support of the thesis. The University shall have the right to retain both the electronic and paper copies. ~~Two copies of the thesis and any additional material must be submitted.~~ Full details of the requirements for the format and binding of the thesis can be found in the document *Guidance for the PhD by Published Work*, which is available from the appropriate graduate office.”

**2. Examination (section 13 of the PhD regulations, MD regulations and ChM regulations; section 14 of the DBA regulations and Professional, Engineering and Enterprise Doctorate regulations, section 12 of the MPhil regulations)**

**EDIT SECTIONS** to reflect the new Examinations policy for postgraduate research degrees.

- a. The candidate shall be required to attend an oral examination on the subject of the thesis and matters relevant thereto. The candidate may also be required by the examiners to undergo a written or other examination. The oral examination shall be attended by the candidate and the examiners ~~and, if required, an independent chair. The examiners may, at their discretion and subject to the agreement of the candidate, invite the candidate's supervisors to attend an oral examination as silent observers and to answer questions put directly to them. If requested in writing by the candidate, an open invitation shall also be issued for the attendance of additional appropriate members of the University, for example, teaching staff and other postgraduate students. If such an invitation is issued, all attendees shall be required to give a prior undertaking in writing to maintain confidentiality in respect of the subject matter of the thesis, and in relation to any matters relevant thereto which may arise during the course of the examination.~~
- b. A PhD oral examination is open to members of University staff, including the candidate's supervisor, and other postgraduate research students of the University. The candidate, however, has the right to exclude particular individuals if they feel their presence will be detrimental to their

performance in the examination. The examiners and/or the independent chair have the right to exclude from the examination anyone they believe may jeopardise the smooth running or integrity of the oral examination. All attendees other than the candidate, examiners and, where applicable, independent chair, shall be required to give a prior undertaking in writing to maintain confidentiality in respect of the subject matter of the thesis, and in relation to any matters relevant thereto which may arise during the course of the examination.

- c. Each candidate shall be examined by two or more examiners of whom at least one shall be an external examiner. The appointment of examiners shall proceed in accordance with the policy set out in the University's ~~Guidance for the Examiners of Research Degree Theses (excluding MPhil)~~ Examination of Doctoral Degrees Policy.
- d. After examining the thesis presented by a candidate and considering the results of any oral or written examination which they have conducted, the examiners, at their discretion, shall make one of the following recommendations:
  - i. That the candidate be awarded the degree of PhD with no corrections to the thesis being required;
  - ii. That the candidate be awarded the degree of PhD subject to minor corrections being made to the thesis;
  - iii. That the candidate be invited to revise and resubmit the thesis for the degree of PhD. A candidate will be permitted to resubmit on only one occasion. A fresh examination of the thesis, normally by the original examiners, is required and may include further oral examination.
  - iv. That the candidate be awarded the degree of MPhil;
  - v. That the candidate be awarded the degree of MPhil subject to minor corrections being made to the thesis;
  - vi. That the candidate be invited to revise and resubmit the thesis for the degree of MPhil. A candidate will be permitted to resubmit on only one occasion. A fresh examination of thesis, normally by the original examiners, is required and may include further oral examination;
  - vii. That no award be made to the candidate and no resubmission be permitted.

### 3. MSc by Research

a. **Change all occurrences of the term 'programme' to 'degree'**

b. **Credits (section 3a and 3b). EDIT SECTION to state:**

A Master of Science by Research (MSc) degree will consist of 180 credits, of which at least 165 will be at level 4 (M Level). No more than 15 credits may be based on material partly shared with level 3 units, suitable enhanced to level 4.

The Master of Science by Research (MSc) programme will normally consist of a 120 credit research project, in addition to **no more than** 60 credits of taught content, making a standard 180 credits in total. A minimum of 120 and a maximum of 150 credits should be directly awarded for the research dissertation, and the final balance of credits will differ depending upon the background, experience and proposed subject of research of each student. The taught content will serve to provide the student with research skills and a depth of specialist knowledge that is directly applicable to the field of research.

**c. Progression and Assessment (Section 4c, 4d and 4e). EDIT SECTION to state:**

Students **must** ~~will normally~~ successfully complete the taught component of the Masters degree before they can progress to the dissertation. ~~and must successfully complete the taught component before submission of the dissertation.~~

A student who fails to satisfy the Examiners in any assessment of taught units may be permitted to resubmit the assessment or retake the examination on one further occasion. The student will take this opportunity during the next available University examination period or within a period as published in the **degree** programme handbook.

The maximum mark to be awarded for resubmitted coursework or retaken examination will normally be 50%; **the new mark will be entered** on transcripts and marked with an R.

**d. Dissertation (section 5e). EDIT SECTION to state:**

The dissertation **must** ~~will~~ be submitted before the end of the **degree** programme in order for a student to be eligible for the award of **merit** or distinction. ~~The maximum period for an extension to submit a dissertation will normally be four months for a full-time degree programme and eight months for a part-time degree programme. All students must register for the submission pending period ABPP and pay the relevant registration fee.~~

**e. Extension of the dissertation submission deadline (section 6a, 6b and 6c). EDIT SECTION to state:**

~~Extensions of the dissertation submission deadline may be granted at the discretion of the University to allow additional time for preparation of the dissertation.~~

~~Candidates shall normally be granted an extension of their dissertation submission deadline of up to four months for full-time students and 8 months for part-time students beyond the completion date of their Master of Science by Research (MSc) programme. A fee will be payable for any such extension that is granted by the University.~~

~~Further Periods of Extension of the dissertation submission deadline may be sought only in exceptional circumstances. A fee will be payable for each period of extension that is granted by the University.~~

**f. Examinations Board and External Examiners (section 7a). EDIT SECTION to state:**

The School Board of Examiners Graduate Committee will be responsible for confirming the marks of the taught element of the degree programme at the end of the first semester to allow the student to progress to the dissertation element. Normally, all staff who have been involved in the assessment of the taught units shall be present at the School Board of Examiner meetings. Each candidate's dissertation shall be examined by two or more examiners of whom at least one shall normally be an external examiner. A joint recommendation by the examiners should be made to the Faculty Postgraduate Research Degrees Panel or equivalent. The appointment of examiners shall proceed in accordance with the policy set out in the University's policy document on the Notes for the Guidance of Examiners: Nomination of Examiners & Independent Chairs for Postgraduate Research Degree Examinations.

**g. Recommendation for award (section 8c). ADD A NEW SECTION:**

*Merit*

- i.** A merit may be awarded to a student who satisfies the following criteria:
  - A.** An average at first assessment of 60% or more in the taught component of the degree;
  - B.** A mark of 60% or more for the dissertation;
  - C.** Submission of the dissertation by the end of the period of degree.