



# Postgraduate Research Degree Regulations

**2020-21**

Issued by the Research and Graduate School, November 2020.

This document relates to the current year. If you become aware of any previous versions that are available on line please notify [seo@bolton.ac.uk](mailto:seo@bolton.ac.uk) so that action can be taken to remove the document(s).

## **Preamble to the Regulations**

These *Regulations* will apply to all research degree programmes and to all enrolled postgraduate research students from September 2017.

The *Research Degree Regulations* defined in this document apply to all those programmes of study by research leading to the research degree awards of Master of Philosophy and Doctor of Philosophy of the University of Bolton, including any named MPhil awards, PhD awards pursued by Published Work or Practice, and the research element of programmes leading to professional doctorate awards<sup>1</sup> of the University.

The University has the authority to approve, supervise and examine research programmes of study and to confer the higher degrees of Master of Philosophy, Doctor of Philosophy and Professional Doctorate (precise award titles for the latter being approved at the time of programme validation).<sup>2</sup>

The admission of students for doctoral studies (MPhil and PhD), approval of programmes of study, supervisory arrangements, annual progression, transfer from Master of Philosophy to Doctor of Philosophy and all registration and examination arrangements is supervised by the Board of Studies for Research Degrees (hereinafter Board of Studies) of the University of Bolton Senate (whose role and responsibilities are defined in Annex 1) and in subsidiary bodies acting under the authority of the Board of Studies. The Board of Studies is also empowered, on the basis of the reports it receives from examiners, to recommend the conferment of research degree and professional doctorate awards to Senate.

A wide range of supporting documents and forms relevant to research degree matters is available to staff, students and examiners. These documents and forms encompass all of the regulatory, policy, practice, quality assurance, guidance and procedural matters relevant to research degrees. Specific documents and forms may be accessed by searching from the University's home page at: [www.bolton.ac.uk](http://www.bolton.ac.uk).

---

<sup>1</sup> The Framework for Professional Doctorates is included in Annex 6.

<sup>2</sup> The University's higher degree awards may be added to by decision of Senate and incorporated into University Regulations.

# POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH DEGREE REGULATIONS

## Contents

1. Principles
2. The Admission of Research Students
3. University Registration of the Research Degree Programme of Study
4. The Registration Period and Student Progress
5. Supervision
6. Transfer of Registration from Master to Doctor of Philosophy and Mid-programme Assessment for PhD Direct Students
7. Examination Arrangements and Presentation of the Thesis or equivalent
8. The Student's Responsibilities in the Examination Process
9. Examiners
10. First Examination
11. Re-examination
12. Form of the Thesis or equivalent
13. Appeals Procedure
14. Investigating and Resolving Allegations of Misconduct in Research
15. Specimen Thesis Title Page

## Annexes

1. The Role and Responsibilities of the Board of Studies for Research Degrees
2. Notes on Programmes of Study Leading to the Award of Research Degrees
3. Workload allowances for supervisors
4. Regulations and Procedures Governing the Award of the Degrees of Doctor of Philosophy by Published Work and Doctor of Philosophy by Practice
5. Guidance on the use of 'videoconferencing' in viva voce examinations
6. Professional Doctorates Framework: Principles and Regulations
7. Policy and Procedures for Investigating and Resolving Allegations of Misconduct in Research
8. Framework for Research Degrees by Distance Learning

## 1. Principles<sup>3</sup>

- 1.1 The University of Bolton (hereinafter the University) shall award the degrees of Master of Philosophy (MPhil), Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) and the Professional Doctorate to registered candidates who successfully complete approved programmes of research, including PhD programmes based upon the candidate's prior and/or prospective published work or professional practice and professional doctorate programmes based partly on taught input.
- 1.2 Programmes of research may be proposed in any field of study subject to the requirement that the proposed programme is capable of leading to scholarly research and to its presentation for assessment by appropriate examiners. The written thesis or equivalent may be supplemented by material in other than written form. All proposed research programmes shall be considered for research degree registration on their academic merits and without reference to the concerns or interests of any associated funding body.
- 1.3<sup>4</sup> **The MPhil shall be awarded to a candidate who, having critically investigated and evaluated an approved topic 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.**

### **Masters degrees are awarded to students who have demonstrated:**

- (i) a systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of their academic discipline, field of study, or area of professional practice;
- (ii) a comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship;
- (iii) originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline;
- (iv) conceptual understanding that enables the student:
  - to evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline; and
  - to evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses.

---

<sup>3</sup> Where applicable, these *Regulations* take account of the *UK Quality Code for Higher Education, particularly Part B: Assuring and enhancing academic quality, Chapter B11: Research Degrees*, The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, 2012.

<sup>4</sup> Principles 1.3 and 1.4 are mainly drawn from the *UK Quality Code for Higher Education, Part A: Setting and maintaining threshold academic standards, Chapter A1: The national level*, The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, 2011.

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

- (a) deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, make sound judgments in the absence of complete data, and communicate their conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences;
- (b) demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level;
- (c) continue to advance their knowledge and understanding, and to develop new skills to a high level;

**and will have:**

- (d) the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring:
  - the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility;
  - decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations; and
  - the independent learning ability required for continuing professional development.

**1.4 The PhD and Professional Doctorate shall be awarded to a candidate who, having critically investigated and evaluated an approved topic resulting in an independent and original contribution to knowledge and demonstrated an understanding of research methods appropriate to the chosen field, has presented and defended a thesis or equivalent by oral examination to the satisfaction of the examiners.**

**Doctorates are awarded to students who have demonstrated:**

- (i) the creation and interpretation of new knowledge, through original research or other advanced scholarship, of a quality to satisfy peer review, extend the forefront of the discipline, and merit publication;
- (ii) a systematic acquisition and understanding of a substantial body of knowledge which is at the forefront of an academic discipline or area of professional practice;
- (iii) the general ability to conceptualise, design and implement a project for the generation of new knowledge, applications or understanding at the forefront of the discipline, and to adjust the project design in the light of unforeseen problems;
- (iv) a detailed understanding of applicable techniques for research and advanced academic enquiry.

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

- (a) make informed judgments on complex issues in specialist fields, often in the absence of complete data, and be able to communicate their ideas and conclusions clearly and effectively to specialist and non-specialist audiences;
- (b) continue to undertake pure and/or applied research and development at an advanced level, contributing substantially to the development of new techniques, ideas, or approaches;

**and will have:**

- (c) the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and largely autonomous initiative in complex and unpredictable situations, in professional or equivalent environments.

1.5 The University shall encourage co-operation with industrial, commercial, professional or research establishments for the purposes of research leading to research degree awards. Such co-operation shall be intended to:

- (i) encourage outward-looking and relevant research;
- (ii) extend the candidate's own experience and perspective on the work;
- (iii) provide a wider range of experience and expertise to assist in the development of the project;
- (iv) be mutually beneficial and, where appropriate, to enable the candidate to become a member of a research community.

1.6 Co-operation may be formalised with one or more bodies external to the University. For the purpose of the *Research Degree Regulations* these shall be referred to as Collaborating Establishments.

1.7 Formal collaboration shall normally involve the candidate's use of facilities and other resources, including supervision, which are provided jointly by the University and the Collaborating Establishment. In such cases a formal letter from the Collaborating Establishment confirming the agreed arrangements must be submitted with the application to register for a research degree, except where collaboration is an integral part of the project (as for instance with Knowledge Transfer Partnerships or CASE awards).

## **2. The Admission of Research Students**

2.1 The normal entry requirement for admission to a programme of research leading to the degree of MPhil or PhD via MPhil is at least a UK upper second class honours Bachelor's degree of an institution of higher education or an equivalent qualification granted by a professional or other body. Applicants whose first language is not English must demonstrate a sufficient level of

competence in English, for example via an IELTS score of at least 6.5, or equivalent evidence deemed acceptable by the admitting authorities.

- 2.2 Applications from students holding qualifications other than those in 2.1 above will be considered on their merits and in relation to the nature and scope of the programme of work proposed. A student wishing to be considered under this regulation must include in the application the names of two suitable persons who may be consulted concerning the student's fitness to carry out a programme of research.
- 2.3 Admission to a programme of research leading directly to the degree of PhD may be permitted to students who hold a UK Master's degree (or equivalent qualification) from a higher education institution, provided that the degree is in a discipline which is appropriate to the proposed research and that the Master's degree included training in research and the execution of a research project. The Board of Studies will decide on a student's registration at the time it considers the application to register for a research degree.
- 2.4 Students wishing to follow a programme of study leading to a research degree may be admitted as full-time or part-time students of the University. In either case, applicants may signal their intention to undertake the programme of research significantly or wholly at a distance from the University. In the case of those wishing to study at a distance then there are additional requirements for admission, detailed in Annex 8.

All applicants will be required to demonstrate, both on application and on subsequent registration, that:

- (i) the periods for which (s)he will be free from other obligations will be sufficient for the purposes of carrying out the proposed research, **and**
  - (ii) the subject matter is suitable for the intended mode and means of study, **and**
  - (iii) the required period of attendance in the University and/or, in the case of applicants who wish to pursue their research remotely from the University whether or not through a collaborative partner (for distance learning refer to Annex 8), the means of maintaining communication and contact, is sufficient for consultation with the supervisors, contact with fellow researchers and the completion of any necessary programmes of related studies or research training. A full-time student shall normally devote on average at least 35 hours per week to the research; a part-time student on average at least 12 hours per week.
- 2.5 Applicants for admission to a programme of study leading to a higher degree must complete the designated University application form and return it as directed. The University's central Admissions office will request copies of relevant certificates at this time.

- 2.6 The admitting authorities in the academic department<sup>5</sup> must check by means of the application form and interview (and references if appropriate) that the applicant fulfils the admission requirements defined in paragraphs 2.1 to 2.4, that they have the potential to undertake and successfully complete the chosen research degree within the appropriate timescale, that the proposed research programme is viable, that adequate supervisory expertise is provisionally available and that a suitable research environment can be offered to the applicant. A supervisor who it is intended shall act as the applicant's Director of Studies shall be proposed at this stage.
- 2.7 The acceptance form, completed in the academic department and authorised by the Research Co-ordinator<sup>6</sup> and/or the Head in the academic department (or their nominee), must be submitted to the Research Degrees Administrator. The Research Degrees Administrator will make available the application form, acceptance form and supplementary offer information, including web links to key regulations and codes, for formal approval by the University's designated research management post-holder. The Research Degrees Administrator will in turn arrange for a formal offer letter (including the supplementary offer information), to be sent to the applicant from the University's central Admissions Office.
- 2.8 In the case of international applicants intending to study in the UK, the relevant procedures will be followed to ensure compliance with the prevailing requirements of Government agencies in respect of immigration regulations including, where necessary, supplying of a statement of the intended research.
- 2.9 Following the offer letter, applicants will be sent an invitation and instructions to enrol with the University as postgraduate students by research. Once enrolment is confirmed, the Research Degrees Administrator sends further instructions, including web-links to further materials, and a request that the student contact their Director of Studies.
- 2.10 At the time of enrolment, fee-paying students will be required to undertake to pay an annual supervision fee. (Students are reminded that in some areas an additional bench fee may be charged for specialist facilities; this will be notified in the offer letter). The University reserves the right to terminate or suspend a student's registration in the event of non-payment of fees or failure to re-enrol.
- 2.11 Once enrolled, all students must complete each of the following documents within the given timescales:
- (i) **Project Planning** - *records the aims of the research and specific techniques to be used (complete within one month, or two months if part-time).*

---

<sup>5</sup> Depending upon the prevailing organisational structure of the University, the 'academic department' might be an Academic Group, Faculty, Institute, School, Centre, Subject Department, Group, Field, Area or Division, or any other unit which is constitutionally empowered to undertake the relevant activities.

<sup>6</sup> The role of the Research Coordinator is defined in the *Code of Practice for Research Students and Supervisors*. Different role titles with equivalent responsibilities should be taken as being comparable to the Research Coordinator.



- (ii) **Postgraduate Induction** - *an overview of awareness of the facilities (refer to the Code of Practice for Research Students and Supervisors for the requirements with regard to facilities) and services necessary for the research (complete within one month, or two months if part-time).*
- (iii) **Research Student-Supervisor Agreement** - *sets out the rights and responsibilities of the student and the University (complete within one month, or two months if part-time).*
- (iv) **Research Action Plan** - *a section to help track research and skills development (complete within two months, or four months if part-time and annually thereafter).*
- (v) **Application to Register for a Research Degree** - *a research proposal conforming to the prevailing requirements, for consideration by the Board of Studies and acceptance for registration (complete within the timescales published separately).*

2.12 Once registered, a research student may be permitted to interrupt his/her programme of study for approved purposes and subject to approval being obtained from the Board of Studies.

2.13 An applicant whose work forms part of a larger group project may register for a research degree. In such cases each individually registered project shall in itself be distinguishable for the purposes of assessment and be appropriate for the award being sought. The application shall indicate clearly each individual contribution and its relationship to the group project.

2.14 Where a research degree project is part of a piece of funded research, the Board of Studies shall establish to its satisfaction that the terms on which the research is funded do not detract from the fulfilment of the objectives and requirements of the student's research degree.

2.15 The University may approve an application from a person proposing to work outside the UK, provided that:

- (i) there is satisfactory evidence as to the facilities available for the research both in the University and abroad, **and**
- (ii) the arrangements proposed for supervision enable adequate contact between the student and the supervisor(s) based in the UK.

The arrangements for access to facilities and equipment, the research literature, and supervisory support will be further scrutinised by the local Standing Panel of the Board of Studies when it consider a candidate's application to register for the research degree.

### 3. University Registration of the Research Degree Programme of Study

3.1 Following admission and enrolment the student, with the assistance of their supervisors, shall prepare a research degree proposal<sup>7</sup> which, once approved by their supervisors and the designated authorities at local level, shall be submitted by the student's Director of Studies to the Research Degrees Administrator who will record its receipt and initiate the procedures for consideration of the application by a local Standing Panel of the Board of Studies.

The proposal shall set out each of the following:

- (i) the title and form of the student's intended programme of work, including a plan of work and details of the research facilities/resources available to the student;
  - (ii) the programme of related studies and research methods training to be incorporated within the research;
  - (iii) details of any collaborative arrangements with external bodies;
  - (iv) the award to which the programme of study will lead;
  - (v) the full details and extent of **ANY** confidentiality request, made explicitly clear.
- 3.2 It shall be the responsibility of the Board of Studies to consider and require any necessary amendments to proposed programmes of study, supervisory arrangements and programmes of related studies/research training. In doing so it shall draw upon the advice and expertise of the membership of the Board and other staff and external referees as appropriate to individual cases.
- 3.3 It shall be the responsibility of the student and his/her supervisors to make any amendments to a proposed programme of study and/or supervisory arrangements in the light of the comments of the Board of Studies and to resubmit the proposal to the Board for further consideration.
- 3.4 All programmes of study must be approved by the Board of Studies before the student can be registered for the award of a particular research degree.

### 4. The Registration Period and Student Progress

4.1 The normal **completion** periods and the normal **registration** periods (i.e. the official course lengths, beyond which a student must seek to extend their

---

<sup>7</sup> In preparing a research degree proposal students and supervisors should consult Annex 2 of these *Regulations (Notes on Programmes of Study leading to the Award of Research Degrees)* and the separate document, *Guidance and Procedures for the Preparation, Submission and Consideration of Research Proposals using Forms R1*.

registration) for programmes of study leading to the award of research degrees are as follows:

		Normal periods (months)	
		Completion	Registration
MPhil	Full-time	18	24
	Part-time	36	48
PhD by thesis (via MPhil and including the period of MPhil registration)	Full-time	36	48
	Part-time	60	84
PhD by published work or practice (Route A – Retrospective) [also see Annex 4]	Part-time	12	24
PhD by thesis (direct) and PhD by published work or practice (Route B – Prospective) [also see Annex 4]	Full-time	36	48
	Part-time	60	84
Professional Doctorates	Full & Part-time	Refer to Annex 6, paragraph 5.3	

4.2 Where there is evidence that the research is proceeding exceptionally well, the Board of Studies may approve a shorter completion period than normal. **Applications for such a variation should be made to the Board of Studies prior to application for approval of examination arrangements.** The Board will expect to see a written progress report and written confirmation of support from all supervisors and the designated authority at local level before making a decision. Variation in the minimum registration period should **not** normally allow submission before the following:

- 9 months from initial registration in the case of MPhil by full-time study or PhD by published work or practice (Route A – Retrospective). Annex 4 (paragraph 5) provides guidance;
- 18 months from initial registration in the case of MPhil by part-time study;
- 24 months from initial registration in the case of PhD by full-time study;
- 36 months from initial registration in the case of PhD by part-time study;
- For professional doctorates refer to Annex 6, paragraph 5.3 for guidance.

The Board will use this power only in exceptional and well-supported cases.

4.3 The Board of Studies may extend a student's period of registration beyond the normal periods given in 4.1 above, normally for not more than twelve months at a time. A student seeking such an extension shall apply on the appropriate form. The **maximum registration periods**, beyond which the Board of Studies shall only exceptionally countenance any further extensions to the period of registration, shall normally be approximately **twice the normal completion periods** given in 4.1 above. Periods during which registration has been suspended shall not be included in any calculation of whether a student has reached their maximum period of registration.

4.4 Where a student changes from full-time to part-time study or vice versa, the registration periods shall normally be calculated as if (s)he were a part-time student. Notification of such a change shall be made on the appropriate form.

- 4.5 Registration may be backdated by **up to** four months (in the case of full-time students and part-time students of the PhD by Published Work or Practice) and six months (in the case of all other part-time students) from the date of submission of the research degree proposal to the Research Degrees Administrator for consideration by a local Standing Panel of the Board of Studies. Longer periods of backdating may be permitted exceptionally at the discretion of the Board of Studies.
- 4.6 Where a student has previously undertaken research as a registered student for a research degree, or other postgraduate qualification (including a significant research project and training in research methods) or has substantial research experience evident from published work or similar public output, the Board of Studies **may** approve a shorter period of registration than usual, which takes account of all or part of the time already spent by the student on such research. In such cases the minimum periods of registration noted in Regulation 4.2 will normally be applied.
- 4.7 A student seeking a change to a registered research degree programme shall apply in writing to the Board of Studies for approval.
- 4.8 At least once a year the Board of Studies shall establish whether the student is still actively engaged on the research programme and is maintaining regular and frequent contact with the supervisors. This will be done through the Annual Progress Review process approved by the Board of Studies. The DoS will be responsible for ensuring any actions from this review are completed.
- 4.9 A student shall submit the thesis or equivalent to the Research Degrees Administrator before the expiry of the maximum period of registration.
- 4.10 Where a student has discontinued the research, the withdrawal of registration shall be notified to the Board of Studies on the appropriate form. In cases where the termination, suspension or extension of a student's registration is proposed, the procedures outlined in the following paragraphs shall apply.

#### **Procedures to be followed in cases of unsatisfactory performance by a research student**

- 4.11 In cases where a student fails to make satisfactory progress with a programme of research the procedures described in paragraph 11.16 in the Code of Practice for Research Students and Supervisors shall be followed.

#### **Suspension**

- 4.12 Where a student is prevented by ill-health or other good cause, from making progress with a research programme, the registration may be suspended upon application to the Board of Studies, normally for not more than one year at a time. Applications for suspension should be made on the appropriate form and be supported by a recommendation from the Director of Studies.

## Extension

- 4.13 The normal completion periods and normal and maximum registration periods are stated in paragraphs 4.1 and 4.3 above. Great importance is attached to completion of research degree programmes within the stated times and extensions to registration periods will only be agreed to by the Board of Studies where there are valid reasons. Applications for extension of registration periods should be submitted on the appropriate form as soon as possible prior to the end of the registration period and be accompanied by supporting medical or other evidence. The Board of Studies will consider each case on its merits and may extend a student's registration by **up to one year at a time**. Any extensions beyond this period will require a separate application to the Board.

## Writing Up

- 4.14 Students are considered to be writing-up where they have completed their substantive research work and will not undertake any significant additional research. The R1 must have been successfully completed in all cases and for the PhD direct route the R2 must have been successfully completed. Such students will normally still receive some supervision and have access to facilities but they may be treated as writing-up if their Director of Studies confirms this in writing (form R11, which cannot be backdated) to the Research Degrees Administrator, in which case the student will be eligible to pay the prevailing writing-up fee rather than the tuition fee.
- 4.15 Writing-up status will not however normally apply to students who remain within the normal completion period appropriate to their award and mode of study. Even if they are writing up their research, such students will continue to be liable for the normal tuition fees associated with their programme and mode of study until the normal completion period has expired and it is confirmed that they are writing-up.

## 5. Supervision

- 5.1 A research degree student shall have at least two and normally not more than three supervisors, at least one of whom shall have had experience of supervising students to the successful completion of a research degree, normally from a UK institution. **A supervision team shall have normally had a combined experience of supervising not fewer than two students to successful completion. In the case of a PhD, at least one of the supervisors shall have successfully supervised at PhD level.** Except in the case of collaborative PhD partnership arrangements with other organisations, it shall be normal practice to appoint an external member to the supervisory team only in those cases where there is not substantial supervisory experience amongst the internal members.
- 5.2 Supervisors without completed supervisions, or academic staff new to the University, will attend the research supervisors' workshop sessions and be mentored within an existing supervisory team. Supervisors may gain the

equivalent of one research degree completion through attendance at and obtaining a pass mark in the assessment of the Research Degree Supervision Module (EDM7037). Supervisory teams should not comprise solely of supervisors who have only gained completions through completion of this module.

- 5.3 Supervisors are required to attend the research supervisors' workshop sessions every three years in order to ensure currency of knowledge in relation to University regulations, policies and procedures relating to research students.
- 5.4 One supervisor shall be the Director of Studies (first supervisor) with responsibility to supervise the student on a regular and frequent basis and monitor progress on behalf of the Board of Studies in accordance with Code of Practice for Research Students and Supervisors. The Director of Studies must hold a higher degree at the level of the student's award registration (as a minimum) and (i) normally be a member of staff of the University or (ii) hold a Visiting/Honorary Academic Staff appointment whilst meeting the qualifications requirements for a Director of Studies. (Note that collaborative partner staff must first have been approved by the Off Campus Research Degrees Committee as meeting the qualifications requirements to be a Director of Studies). A Director of Studies who has no completed supervisions may be appointed to the role but s/he must attend the research supervisors' workshop sessions and be mentored by a nominated member of the supervisory team who has previous successful experience of research degree completion as a Director of Studies. For Route B of the PhD by Published Work and the PhD by Practice, supervisors have additional responsibilities and these are explained in Annex 4 at paragraph 5.
- 5.5 As a general principle supervisors are not expected to supervise more research students than his/ her experience and commitments justify. Due regard should be given to the experience of that supervisor when determining an overall allocation of research students. Normally for a Director of Studies no more than 8fte (baseline figure) research students should be allocated (where a full-time student is 1fte and a part-time student is 0.5fte). However, recognizing that research students will be writing up or completing their research it is reasonable for a supervisor to be allocated 1fte student per year over this baseline figure subject to the caveat at the start of this paragraph. This will be monitored by the Board of Studies during its scrutiny of R1 proposals. It is acknowledged that the nature of research varies by subject area and as a consequence the baseline allocation may be exceeded. In such cases the academic School concerned must give assurances to the Board of Studies that this will cause no detriment to the quality of supervision received by the student. This will be done through a written note to the Board of Studies briefly stating why the situation has occurred and giving the necessary assurances. A copy of the projected workload for the supervisor should also be attached.
- 5.6 In addition to the supervisors, an adviser or advisers may be proposed to contribute some specialised knowledge or a link with an external organisation.

- 5.7 A person studying for a research degree shall normally be ineligible to act as Director of Studies for another research degree student but may in exceptional circumstances and with the explicit approval of the Board of Studies act as a second supervisor or adviser.
- 5.8 Notwithstanding 5.7 above, the Board shall not approve arrangements in which a student and any of their second supervisors act in a reciprocal capacity for each other, nor any other arrangements which in the Board of Studies judgement might result in a potential conflict of interest. Specifically, in cases where students are staff members of the University, supervisors shall not have a familial relationship to their student and supervisors shall not be in a direct line management relationship with their student.
- 5.9 A proposal for a change in supervision arrangements shall be made to the Board of Studies on the appropriate form.

## **6. Transfer of Registration from Master to Doctor of Philosophy and Mid-programme Assessment of Progression for PhD Direct Students<sup>8</sup>**

- 6.1 **A student registered initially for MPhil with possibility of transfer to PhD**, who wishes to transfer to PhD, shall apply on the appropriate form (R2) to the Board of Studies when sufficient progress has been made on the work to provide evidence of the development to PhD (normally after 12-18 months of full-time study or the part-time equivalent).
- 6.2 In support of the application, the student shall either (a) prepare for the Board of Studies a progress report on the work undertaken, or (b) shall write up and submit the MPhil thesis for examination under the arrangements described in these *Regulations*, in which case a successful outcome will validate the transfer to PhD but without conferment of the award of MPhil.
- 6.3 The format of the required progress report is described in detail in the relevant guidance notes<sup>9</sup>.

**Candidates must clarify with their Director of Studies the precise requirements in their individual case.**

- 6.4 The report must include:
- (i) a brief review and discussion of the work already undertaken **and**
  - (ii) a statement of the intended further work, including what the precise nature of the PhD stage will be and details of the original contribution to knowledge which is likely to emerge.

---

<sup>8</sup> This procedure does not apply to candidates taking the retrospective route (Route A) to the PhD by Published Work or Practice.

<sup>9</sup> Procedures and Notes for Guidance on Transfer from Master of Philosophy to Doctor of Philosophy and on Mid-Programme Assessment for PhD Direct Candidates.

- 6.5 Before approving transfer from MPhil to PhD the Board of Studies shall be satisfied that the student has made sufficient progress and that the proposed programme provides a suitable basis for work at PhD standard which the student is capable of pursuing to completion. A *viva voce* assessment by a Standing Panel of the Board of Studies established at local level will normally be used by the Board of Studies as part of its consideration of the case for transfer. In addition the Board will take into account the views of the supervisors.
- 6.6 **A student registered for the degree of MPhil only** may apply to transfer the registration to PhD. In such cases the student's full progress report shall be submitted to the Board of Studies along with the application for transfer.
- 6.7 A student who is registered for the degree of PhD via MPhil or PhD direct via the normal route (by thesis), or for PhD by Published Work and PhD by Practice by Route B (Prospective)<sup>10</sup> and who is unable to complete the approved programme of work may, at any time prior to the submission of the thesis for examination, apply to the Board of Studies for the registration to revert to that for MPhil. Note that this does not apply to candidates for the degrees of PhD by Published Work or PhD by Practice by Route A (Retrospective) or to candidates registered for a Professional Doctorate.
- 6.8 The Board of Studies may impose the above requirement on a student where their progress is such that completion of the PhD is not effected within a reasonable period of time.
- 6.9 **A student registered for PhD direct (including candidates for PhD by published work or practice by Route B – Prospective, but excluding candidates for PhD by published work or practice by Route A – Retrospective)** shall, normally no later than approximately 18 months following initial registration (or the part-time equivalent), submit a progress report and be subject to assessment as described in 6.2 and 6.3 above to provide evidence that the research is progressing satisfactorily. The Board of Studies may make such recommendations and impose such requirements as it deems appropriate in the light of its evaluation of a student's assessment, including those described in 6.5 and 6.6 above.

## **7. Examination Arrangements and Presentation of the Thesis or equivalent**

- 7.1 The examination for MPhil and PhD shall have two stages: firstly, the submission and preliminary assessment of the thesis or equivalent and, secondly, its defence by oral examination. Where a proposal is being made to use 'videoconferencing' techniques to facilitate an oral examination then the specific regulations laid out in Annex 5 must be followed.

---

<sup>10</sup> Note that this option is not available in the case of the PhD by published work or practice, or the professional doctorate.



- 7.2 Examination arrangements and notice of intention to submit the thesis shall be forwarded to the Research Degrees Administrator at least **six weeks** prior to the proposed date of final submission of the thesis or equivalent. The notice of intention to submit should be signed by the student and the Director of Studies and the latter should indicate their general comments on the progress of the thesis or equivalent. It shall be the responsibility of the Director of Studies and the Research Co-ordinator to propose examination arrangements on the appropriate form and to provide all necessary details of both internal and external examiners. The Board of Studies shall approve or require any necessary amendments to proposed examination arrangements and authorise the final examination to take place.
- 7.3 A student whose programme of work includes formally assessed course work in a programme of work leading to the degree of PhD shall not be permitted to proceed to a further stage of examination for the degree until the course work examiners are satisfied with the student's performance. The result of the assessment shall be communicated to the examiners of the thesis or equivalent.
- 7.4 A student shall normally be examined orally on the programme of work and on the field of study in which the programme lies. Where for reasons of sickness, disability or comparable valid cause, the Board of Studies is satisfied that a candidate would be under serious disadvantage if required to undergo an oral examination, this may in exceptional circumstances be waived and/or an alternative form of examination may be approved. Such approval shall not be given on the grounds that the candidate's knowledge of the language in which the thesis or equivalent is presented is inadequate.
- 7.5 Supervisors, advisers, other research students and staff, and the Chair of the Board of Studies (or representative) may, **with the consent of the student**, attend the oral examination. They may participate in the discussion only if and when invited to do so by the chair of examiners. They shall normally withdraw prior to the deliberations of the examiners on the outcome of the examination and, if granted permission to remain by the chair of examiners, shall make no contribution whatsoever to the examiners' deliberations.
- 7.6 **The student shall normally prepare a minimum of three printed copies of the thesis or equivalent for examination purposes and retention by the University**, having given notice of the intention to submit using the appropriate form. This figure assumes two examiners, plus one University copy (to be used by the independent chair of examiners and returned to the Research Degrees Administrator following the oral examination). Therefore, **additional copies will be required for the student and supervisor(s) AND if there are more than two examiners**. Copies should be presented to the Research Degrees Administrator. The format and length of the thesis or equivalent shall conform to the requirements defined in Section 12 of these *Regulations* and, in the case of the PhD by published work or by practice or of professional doctorates, to the requirements laid down in the *Regulations and Procedures Governing the Award of the Degrees of Doctor of Philosophy by Published Work and Doctor of Philosophy by Practice* (Annex 4) or *Professional Doctorates: Principles and Regulations* (Annex 6).

- 7.7 The Research Degrees Administrator shall ensure that all the examiners have returned their completed preliminary report forms to the University before the oral examination takes place.
- 7.8 The Research Degrees Administrator shall notify the student, the examiners, the independent chair and all supervisors of the arrangements for the oral examination.
- 7.9 The Research Degrees Administrator shall ensure that each examiner and the independent chair have the appropriate documents and forms made available to them, as described in the *Guidance Notes for the Oral Examination of Research Degree Candidates*.
- 7.10 The Research Degrees Administrator shall also ensure that the relevant blank report and expenses forms are made available to the examiners and the independent chair as appropriate and shall respond to any queries to help ensure that the examiners are properly briefed as to their duties.

## **8. The student's responsibilities in the examination process**

- 8.1 The student shall ensure that the thesis or equivalent is submitted before the expiry of their registration period.
- 8.2 The submission of the thesis or equivalent for examination may only take place after the Director of Studies and normally all other supervisors have had the opportunity to give their comments on the final draft of the thesis or equivalent to the student<sup>11</sup>. If, for valid reasons, the comments of other supervisors are not made available, those of the Director of Studies should be taken into account. The final decision to submit the thesis or equivalent shall be at the sole discretion of the student and this shall be confirmed on the form submitted with the thesis.
- 8.3 The student shall satisfy any conditions of eligibility for examination required by the Board of Studies, including full payment of fees.
- 8.4 The student shall take no part in the arrangement of the examination and shall have no formal contact with the external examiner(s) between the appointment of the examiners and the oral examination.
- 8.5 The student shall confirm, through the submission of a declaration form, that the thesis or equivalent has not been submitted for a comparable academic award. The student shall not be precluded from incorporating in the thesis or equivalent, covering a wider field, work which has already been submitted for a degree or comparable award, provided that it is indicated on the declaration

---

<sup>11</sup> While a student would be unwise to submit the thesis or equivalent for examination against the advice of the supervisors, it is his/her right to do so. Equally, students should not assume that a supervisor's agreement to the submission of a thesis or equivalent guarantees the award of the degree.

form and also in the thesis or equivalent which work has been so incorporated.

- 8.6 The student shall ensure that the format of the thesis or equivalent is in accordance with the requirements of these *Regulations* (see section 12) and, in the case of the PhD by published work or by practice or of professional doctorates, to the requirements laid down in Regulations and Procedures Governing the Award of the Degrees of Doctor of Philosophy by Published Work and Doctor of Philosophy by Practice (Annex 4) or Professional Doctorates: Principles and Regulations (Annex 6).
- 8.7 Theses may be submitted for examination **either** in a permanently bound form **or** in a temporarily bound form which is sufficiently secure to ensure that pages cannot be added or removed<sup>12</sup>. The thesis or equivalent shall however be presented in a permanent binding of the approved type (see paragraph 12.9 for details), along with a digitised copy, before the award certificate may be issued. A thesis or equivalent submitted in a temporarily bound form shall be in its final form in all respects save the binding. In such cases the student shall confirm on the Candidate's Declaration Form when submitting permanently bound copies of the thesis or equivalent that its contents are identical with the version submitted for examination, except where amendments have been made to meet the requirements of the examiners.

## 9. Examiners

- 9.1 A candidate shall be examined by at least two and normally not more than three examiners, of whom at least one shall be an external examiner. Where there are two external examiners, only one internal examiner may be proposed.
- 9.2 All examiners shall be experienced in research, normally in the general area of the candidate's thesis or equivalent and, where practicable, a specialist in the topic(s) to be examined. However, an examiner shall not be appointed whose work forms the focus of the candidate's research.
- 9.3 A candidate's supervisors shall not be eligible to serve as examiners and no candidate for a research degree shall act as an examiner. Where the candidate is a member of staff of the University or Collaborating Establishment, or in such other circumstances as the Board of Studies shall determine, at least **two external** examiners shall be appointed. A candidate who is on a fixed, short-term employment contract (for instance, a research assistant) shall be exempt from the requirements of this regulation.
- 9.4 An **external** examiner **must** normally:

---

<sup>12</sup> For example, perfect-binding, a method of binding single pages by gluing them together on the spine of the document.

- i. have been an examiner for a postgraduate research degree, whether as an internal or external examiner. External examiners examining for the *first time* should have experience of supervising a research student **and** examining as an internal examiner;
- ii. have recently published, or have equivalent recent professional experience, in their area of research;
- iii. hold a postgraduate research degree at the level he/she is examining, or have equivalent, extensive, professional experience in the research area being examined;
- iv. hold/have held an appointment within the HE sector, although it is permissible to appoint an appropriate person from outside the HE sector; e.g., a senior industrial scientist or professional practitioner who is aware of the standards required.

In an examination for PhD, at least one external examiner shall have experience of PhD examining for a UK HE sector. However, the Board of Studies may appoint external examiners who do not have UK research degree examining experience if the Board is assured that the proposed examiner has experience of examining research degrees in which the process is at least as rigorous as that for a UK research degree.

- 9.5 An external examiner shall be independent both of the University and of the Collaborating Establishment and shall not have acted previously as the candidate's supervisor or adviser. An external examiner shall normally not be either a supervisor of another student or an external examiner on a taught course in the same subject area at the University.

Former members of staff of the University shall normally not be approved as external examiners until three years after the termination of their employment with the University. The Board of Studies shall ensure that the same external examiner is not approved so frequently that his/her familiarity with the University might prejudice objective judgement.

Where there is a requirement for more than one external examiner then the examiners must **not** be from the same institution.

- 9.6 An **internal** examiner **must** normally:

- i. hold an academic award at the level he/she is examining;
- ii. have recently published in their area of research;
- iii. be familiar with University processes and procedures and specifically have knowledge of these Regulations for the degree under examination and of the University guidance on viva voce examinations<sup>13</sup>;
- iv. be a member of staff (defined as someone holding a contract of employment) of the University **or** of the student's Collaborating Establishment.

---

<sup>13</sup> Guidance Notes for the Oral Examination of Research Degree Candidates

In addition, all individuals appointed as internal examiners must have received adequate training and guidance in research degree examining. Internal examiners should have received an appropriate induction in respect of the postgraduate examination standards of the University, and received a copy of these Regulations. They should have attended any relevant internal examiner training session/s and refresher sessions. The internal examiner **must not** have had significant involvement in the project or with the candidate;

Where there is no appropriate internal examiner, two external examiners must be appointed.

- 9.7 The University shall determine and pay the fees and expenses of the external examiners.
- 9.8 A member of University staff with previous research degree examining experience (and no prior relationship with the candidate or their research project) will be selected by the Research Degrees Administrator from a list previously approved by the Board of Studies, to fulfil the **non-examining** role of **independent chair**<sup>14</sup>. The role of the independent chair is to ensure that the examination is conducted fairly and in accordance with these *Regulations* and the separate *Guidance Notes*<sup>15</sup> and to ensure that all examiners are given the opportunity to question the candidate.

## 10. First examination

- 10.1 Each examiner shall read and examine the thesis or equivalent and submit, on the appropriate form, an independent preliminary report on it to the Research Degrees Administrator **before any oral or alternative form of examination is held**. In completing the preliminary report, each examiner shall consider whether the thesis or equivalent provisionally satisfies the requirements of the degree (as set out in paragraphs 1.3 and 1.4) and, where possible, make an appropriate provisional recommendation subject to the outcome of any oral examination. **Whilst these preliminary reports shall not be shown in any form to the candidate prior to the oral examination**, the contents of the reports may be interpreted for the candidate by their Director of Studies but **they must in no way be attributed to any individual examiner**. Preliminary reports may be disclosed to the candidate subsequent to completion of the examination process (including consideration of the examiners' joint recommendation referred to in paragraph 10.2) upon request by the candidate or by the candidate's Director of Studies to the Research Degrees Administrator.
- 10.2 Following the oral examination the examiners shall, where they are in agreement, submit on the appropriate form a joint report and recommendation relating to the award of the degree to the Research Degrees Administrator. The preliminary reports and joint recommendation of the examiners shall

---

<sup>14</sup> To avoid potential conflicts of interest in the event of an appeal, the Chair of the Board of Studies and the Executive Dean – R&GS and other key role-holders as determined by BoSRD from time to time, shall not be permitted to fulfil this role.

<sup>15</sup> Guidance Notes for the Oral Examination of Research Degree Candidates.

together provide sufficiently detailed comments on the scope and quality of the work to enable the Board of Studies to satisfy itself that the recommendation chosen in paragraph 10.3 below is correct. Where the examiners are not in agreement, separate reports and recommendations shall be on the appropriate form.

10.3 Following the completion of the examination the examiners may recommend<sup>16</sup> one of the results from (i) – (v) below.

- (i) **The student be awarded the degree.**
- (ii) **The student be awarded the degree subject to amendments being made to the thesis or equivalent, which may take the form of (a) minor editorial corrections or (b) non-major changes** (see paragraph 10.4).

(The decision to award the degree subject to amendments is normally interpreted as signifying that, although the thesis or equivalent is potentially of a standard to merit the award of the degree concerned, **certain sections and/or aspects of the thesis or equivalent are in need of alteration and improvement and the alterations are such that the candidate will be able to complete them within the prescribed time**).

- (iii) **The student be permitted to re-submit for the degree and be re-examined, with or without an oral examination** (see Section 11).

**Re-examination** shall normally be required when, despite certain defects in the thesis or equivalent itself and/or the candidate's performance in the oral examination (and such other tests as may have been prescribed), there is evidence of the potential of a successful PhD submission from the originality, independence, scope and significance of the candidate's research (for referral for MPhil careful consideration should be similarly be given to the criteria for the award of that degree). If the thesis or equivalent does not possess this potential, the examiners should send forward a recommendation that the degree not be awarded. Re-examination may also be recommended in circumstances where candidates do not completely satisfy the examiners through their performance at the oral examination (and in such other tests as the examiners may have prescribed) that the award of the degree is justified at this stage).

- (iv) **The student not be awarded the degree and not be permitted to be re-examined** (see paragraphs 10.8 and 10.9).

(This decision should be reached solely on academic grounds as it implies that the thesis or equivalent is itself irredeemable or that the candidate does not possess the necessary academic abilities. It should accordingly not take any account of personal circumstances which may have a bearing on the candidate's opportunity to revise the submission).

---

<sup>16</sup> Examiners may indicate informally their recommendation on the result of the examination to the student but they shall make it clear that the decision rests with the Board of Studies.

- (v) **In the case of a PhD examination, the student be awarded the degree of MPhil<sup>17</sup> subject to the presentation of the thesis or equivalent amended to the satisfaction of the examiners.**

10.4 Where the examiners are satisfied that the student has in general reached the standard required for the degree, but consider that the student's thesis or equivalent requires some amendments not so substantial as to call for resubmission and re-examination of the thesis or equivalent, and recommend that the degree be awarded subject to the student amending the thesis or equivalent to the satisfaction of the internal and/or external examiner(s) (see sub-paragraph 10.3ii above), they shall indicate to the student in writing what amendments are required according to the categories given in 10.4(i) and (ii) below. Once the student has completed the required amendments satisfactorily, the Director of Studies shall submit form E3 to the Research Degrees Administrator as confirmation that the degree may be recommended for conferment. The following is offered as guidance for the examiners only as to the classification of minor amendments:

- (i) **Award subject to minor editorial corrections** (*to be submitted within four weeks*)

If the thesis or equivalent is found to require minor editorial corrections (which must be specifically confined to: presentational matters (spelling, punctuation, syntax); minor errors of fact or interpretation; minor re-writing to clarify the context, focus or originality of the thesis or equivalent; insertion of headings or other 'signpost' material for the sake of clarity, integration of graphical or statistical material into the text; bibliography and references; minor reorganisation of material within or between parts of the thesis or equivalent to facilitate comprehension; clarification of particular points or of terminology), the examiners may recommend the award of the degree on condition that the minor editorial corrections are made to the satisfaction of the internal examiner. **A candidate is normally required to submit the corrected thesis within four weeks of the date of the oral examination and this timescale should assist the examiners in judging whether what is required can be classified as minor editorial corrections.**

- (ii) **Award subject to non-major changes** (*to be submitted within six months*)

**If the thesis or equivalent is found to contain errors which, in the examiners' view, go beyond minor editorial corrections alone but which are nevertheless not sufficiently substantial in nature to require resubmission and re-examination of the thesis or equivalent,** the examiners may recommend the award of the degree on the condition that the stated changes are made to the satisfaction of the internal examiner, after consultation with the external examiner, if he/she wishes to be consulted. In addition to any minor editorial corrections (see 10.4 (i) above) of more extensive scale and/or scope, such non-major changes might encompass more significant presentational faults, problems with data analysis, absence of implications for practice, partial literature review, insufficient focus, incomplete

---

<sup>17</sup> Note that this option is not available in the case of the PhD by published work or practice.

reasoning. The examiners' report should explain clearly the nature of the deficiencies and the internal examiner is responsible for ensuring that the candidate is provided with the relevant extract from the report (see paragraph 10.13 below). **A candidate is normally required to submit the corrected thesis within six months (this time limit applies for both full and part time modes of study) of the date of the oral examination and this timescale should assist the examiners in judging whether what is required can be classified as non-major changes.**

(iii) **Award subject to major changes** (*to be submitted within nine months*)

**If the thesis or equivalent is found to contain errors which, in the examiners' view, go beyond the parameters outlined in para. 10.4 (ii) but which nevertheless do not require resubmission and re-examination of the thesis or equivalent, the examiners may recommend the award of the degree on the condition that the stated changes are made to the satisfaction of the external examiner(s). The examiners' report should explain clearly the nature of the major deficiencies and the external examiner is responsible for ensuring that the candidate is provided with the relevant extract from the report (see paragraph 10.13 below). **A candidate is normally required to submit the corrected thesis within nine months (this time limit applies for both full and part time modes of study) of the date of the oral examination and this timescale should assist the examiners in judging whether what is required can be classified as major changes.****

Corrections required under paragraph 10.4 should not involve any of the following:

- (a) a major re-think of the methodology employed, **or**
- (b) a major recasting of entire parts of the thesis or equivalent or of original composition, **or**
- (c) new or repeated experiments, fieldwork or other data collection.

10.5 Where the examiners' recommendations are not unanimous, the Board of Studies may:

- (i) accept a majority recommendation (provided that the majority recommendation includes at least one external examiner), **or**
- (ii) accept the recommendation of the external examiner, **or**
- (iii) require the appointment of an additional external examiner.

10.6 Where an additional external examiner is appointed under sub-paragraph 10.5iii, (s)he shall prepare an independent preliminary report on the basis of the thesis or equivalent and, if considered necessary, may conduct a further oral examination. That examiner should not be informed of the recommendations of the other examiners. On receipt of the report from the



additional examiner the Board of Studies shall complete the examination as set out in paragraph 10.12.

- 10.7 A further examination in addition to the oral examination may be requested by the examiners. In such cases the approval of the Board of Studies shall be sought without delay. Where such an examination is arranged following an oral examination, it shall normally be held within two calendar months of the oral examination unless the Board of Studies permits otherwise. Any such examination shall be deemed to be part of the student's first examination.
- 10.8 Where the examiners are of the opinion that the thesis or equivalent is so unsatisfactory that no useful purpose would be served by conducting an oral examination, they may recommend that the Board of Studies dispense with the oral examination and refer the thesis or equivalent for further work. In such cases the examiners shall provide the Research Degrees Administrator with written guidance for the student concerning the deficiencies of the thesis or equivalent. The examiners shall not recommend that a student fail outright (see sub-paragraph 10.3 iv) without holding an oral examination or other alternative examination (see paragraph 7.4).
- 10.9 Where the Board of Studies decides that the degree be not awarded and that no re-examination be permitted, the examiners shall prepare an agreed statement of the deficiencies of the thesis or equivalent and the reason for their recommendation, which shall be forwarded to the student by the Research Degrees Administrator.
- 10.10 Where cheating or plagiarism is suspected in the student's work or in the preparation or examination of the thesis or equivalent then the University's Code of Policy and Procedures for Investigating and Resolving Allegations of Misconduct in Research shall be applied. Where these or any other irregularities in the conduct of the examination come to light subsequent to the recommendations of the examiners, the Board of Studies shall consider the matter, if necessary in consultation with the examiners, and take appropriate action.
- 10.11 The Board of Studies shall ensure that all examinations are conducted and the recommendations of the examiners are presented wholly in accordance with these *Regulations*. In an instance where the Board of Studies is made aware of a failure to comply with all of the procedures of the examination process, it may declare the examination null and void and appoint new examiners.
- 10.12 The Board of Studies shall make a decision on the reports and recommendation(s) of the examiners in respect of a student. The power to confer the degree shall rest with the University Senate, having received the recommendation of the Board of Studies.

### 10.13 Examiners' Guidance on Corrections, Errors, Referral and Failure

- (i) In addition to preparing the report of the examination, which will state clearly the reasons for the decisions made, the examiners must prepare guidance for the candidate which clearly specifies the sections or aspects of the thesis or equivalent and/or of the candidate's performance in any oral and/or alternative form of examination which are in need of improvement or considered to be irredeemable.
- (ii) The guidance must clearly indicate, where appropriate, the necessary and sufficient conditions which, if complied with by the candidate and provided the thesis or equivalent and performance in any oral and/or alternative form of examination is satisfactory, will lead to a recommendation by the examiners that the degree be awarded. It is essential that the guidance is sufficiently detailed to give the candidate, where appropriate, suitable guidance to achieve the required standards, but without stifling the candidate's initiative.
- (iii) The examiners' report and guidance must together be submitted to the Research Degrees Administrator for consideration by the Board of Studies. If any advice is to be given to the candidate prior to the Board's approval of the report and guidance then it must be stressed to the candidate that the advice given is informal and subject to approval.
- (iv) The internal examiner **does not** take a supervisory or advisory role during the revision of the thesis or equivalent since this would compromise their role as examiner. They may however be required to provide initial clarification of the examiners' guidance.

## 11. Re-examination

- 11.1 One re-examination only may be permitted by the Board of Studies, subject to the following requirements.
  - (i) A student who fails to satisfy the examiners at the first examination, including where appropriate the oral or approved alternative examination (see paragraph 7.4) or any further examination required under paragraph 10.7 may, on the recommendation of the examiners and with the approval of the Board of Studies, be permitted to revise the thesis or equivalent and be re-examined.
  - (ii) The examiners shall provide the student, through the Research Degrees Administrator, with written guidance on the deficiencies of the first submission (see paragraph 10.13 above).
  - (iii) The student shall submit for re-examination within the period of **one calendar year** from the date of the first examinations; where the Board of Studies has dispensed with the oral examination the re-examination shall take place within **one calendar year** of the date of this dispensation (see paragraph 10.8). The Board of Studies may, where there are good reasons, approve an extension of this period.

- 11.2 The Board of Studies may require that an additional external examiner be appointed for the re-examination.
- 11.3 There are five possible forms of re-examination, as follows.
- (i) Where the student's performance in the first oral or approved alternative examination (see paragraph 7.4) or further examination (see paragraph 10.7) was satisfactory but the thesis or equivalent was unsatisfactory and the examiners on re-examination certify that the thesis or equivalent as revised is satisfactory, the Board of Studies may exempt the candidate from further examination, oral or otherwise.
  - (ii) Where the student's performance in the first oral or approved alternative examination (see paragraph 7.4) or further examination (see paragraph 10.7) was unsatisfactory and the thesis or equivalent was also unsatisfactory, any re-examination shall include a re-examination of the thesis or equivalent and an oral or approved alternative examination (see paragraph 7.4).
  - (iii) Where on the first examination the student's thesis or equivalent was so unsatisfactory that the Board of Studies dispensed with the oral examination (see paragraph 10.8), any re-examination shall include a re-examination of the thesis or equivalent and an oral or approved alternative examination (see paragraph 7.4).
  - (iv) Where on the first examination the student's thesis or equivalent was satisfactory but the performance in the oral and/or other examination(s) was not satisfactory the student shall be re-examined in the oral and/or other examination(s), subject to the time limits prescribed in sub-paragraph 11.1, iii, without being requested to revise and re-submit the thesis or equivalent.
  - (v) Where on the first examination the thesis or equivalent was satisfactory but the student's performance in relation to the other requirements for the award of the degree was not satisfactory, the examiners may propose instead a different form of re-examination to test the student's abilities; such examination may take place only with the approval of the Board of Studies.
- 11.4 In the case of a re-examination under sub-paragraphs 11.3(i), (ii), or (iii), each examiner shall read and examine the thesis or equivalent and submit, on the appropriate form, an independent preliminary report on it to the Research Degrees Administrator before any oral or alternative form of examination is held. In completing the preliminary report, each examiner shall consider whether the thesis or equivalent provisionally satisfies the requirements of the degree (as set out in paragraphs 1.3 and 1.4) and where possible make an appropriate provisional recommendation subject to the outcome of any oral examination.
- 11.5 Following the re-examination of the thesis or equivalent under sub-paragraph 11.3(i) or following an oral or other examination under 11.3 (iii), or (iv), the examiners shall, where they are in agreement, submit, on the appropriate

form, a joint report and recommendation relating to the award of the degree to the Research Degrees Administrator. The preliminary reports and joint recommendation of the examiners shall together provide sufficiently detailed comments on the scope and quality of the work to enable the Board of Studies to satisfy itself that the recommendation chosen in paragraph 11.6 is correct. Where the examiners are not in agreement, separate reports and recommendations shall be submitted on the appropriate form.

- 11.6 Following the completion of the re-examination the examiners may recommend<sup>18</sup> one of the results from (i) – (iv) below.
- (i) **The student be awarded the degree.**
  - (ii) **The student be awarded the degree subject to minor amendments being made to the thesis or equivalent** (see paragraph 11.7).
  - (iii) **The student not be awarded the degree and not be permitted to be re-examined** (see paragraphs 11.11 and 11.12).
  - (iv) **In the case of a PhD examination, the student be awarded the degree of MPhil<sup>19</sup> subject to the presentation of the thesis or equivalent amended to the satisfaction of the examiners.**
- 11.7 Where the examiners are satisfied that the student has in general reached the standard required for the degree, but consider that the student's thesis or equivalent requires some minor amendments and corrections not so substantial as to call for the submission of a revised thesis or equivalent, and recommend that the degree be awarded subject to the student amending the thesis or equivalent to the satisfaction of the internal and/or the external examiner(s) (see sub-paragraph 11.6(ii)), they shall indicate to the student in writing what amendments and corrections are required, according to the procedures outlined in paragraphs 10.4 and 10.13 and the guidance given in paragraphs 10.4(i) and 10.4(ii) above.
- 11.8 Where the examiners' recommendations are not unanimous, the Board of Studies may:
- (i) accept a majority recommendation (provided that the majority recommendation includes at least one external examiner), **or**
  - (ii) accept the recommendation of the external examiner, **or**
  - (iii) require the appointment of an additional external examiner.
- 11.9 Where an additional external examiner is appointed under sub-paragraph 11.8(iii), s/he shall prepare an independent preliminary report on the basis of the thesis or equivalent and, if considered necessary, may conduct a further

---

<sup>18</sup> Examiners may indicate informally their recommendation on the result of the examination to the student but they shall make it clear that the decision rests with the Board of Studies.

<sup>19</sup> This option is not available in the case of the PhD by published work or practice.

oral examination. That examiner should not be informed of the recommendations of the other examiners. On receipt of the report from the additional examiner the Board of Studies shall complete the examination as set out in paragraph 10.12.

- 11.10 A further examination in addition to the oral examination may be requested by the examiners. In such cases the approval of the Board of Studies shall be sought without delay. Where such an examination is arranged following an oral examination, it shall normally be held within two calendar months of the oral examination unless the Board of Studies permits otherwise.
- 11.11 In the case of a re-examination under sub-paragraph 11.3ii, where the examiners are of the opinion that the thesis or equivalent is so unsatisfactory that no useful purpose would be served by conducting an oral examination, they may recommend that the Board of Studies dispense with the oral examination and not award the degree (see also paragraph 11.12).
- 11.12 Where the Board of Studies decides that the degree be not awarded, the examiners shall prepare an agreed statement of the deficiencies of the thesis or equivalent and the reason for their recommendation, which shall be forwarded to the student by the Research Degrees Administrator (see paragraph 10.13 above).

## **12. Form of the Thesis or equivalent**

- 12.1 Except with the specific permission of the Board of Studies the thesis or equivalent shall be presented in English.
- 12.2 There shall be an abstract of approximately 300 words bound into the thesis or equivalent which shall provide a synopsis of the thesis or equivalent stating the nature and scope of the work undertaken and of the contribution made to the knowledge of the subject treated.
- 12.3 The thesis or equivalent shall include a statement of the student's objectives and shall acknowledge published or other sources of material consulted (including an appropriate bibliography) and any assistance received.
- 12.4 Where a student's research programme is part of a collaborative group project, the thesis or equivalent shall indicate clearly the student's individual contribution and the extent of the collaboration.
- 12.5 The student shall be free to publish material in advance of the thesis or equivalent but reference shall be made in the thesis or equivalent to any such work. Copies of published material should either be bound in with the thesis or equivalent or placed in an adequately secured pocket at the end of the thesis or equivalent.
- 12.6 The text of the document for a PhD by thesis should normally not exceed the following length (excluding ancillary data);

PhD in Science, Engineering, Art and Design	40,000 words
MPhil in Science, Engineering, Art and Design	20,000 words
PhD in Arts, Social Sciences and Education	80,000 words
MPhil in Arts, Social Sciences and Education	40,000 words

Where such a thesis is accompanied by material in other than written form or the research involves creative writing or the preparation of a scholarly edition, the written thesis or equivalent should normally be within the range:

PhD	30,000 - 40,000 words
MPhil	15,000 - 20,000 words
PhD by Published work or practice - critical commentary	10,000-15,000 words.

For guidance relating to Professional Doctorates reference must be made to the relevant sections of Annex 6.

For further details about the thesis presentation requirements for the PhD by Published Work or Practice refer to Annex 4.

- 12.7 Following the award of the degree the Research Degrees Administrator shall require and lodge one hardbound copy of the thesis or equivalent in the University library, one in the library of any Collaborating Establishment, and one to be passed to the student's Director of Studies. A digitised version shall also be required for submission to the University's institutional repository and to the British Library.
- 12.8 The copies of the thesis or equivalent submitted for examination shall remain the property of the University but the copyright in the thesis or equivalent shall be vested in the student.
- 12.9 The requirements stated in (i) – (vii) below shall be adhered to in the format of the submitted thesis or equivalent.
- (i) The thesis or equivalent shall normally be in A4 format; the Board of Studies may give permission for a thesis or equivalent to be submitted in another format where it is satisfied that the contents of the thesis or equivalent can be better expressed in that format.
  - (ii) Copies of the thesis or equivalent shall be presented in a permanent and legible form either in typescript or print; where copies are produced by photocopying processes, these shall be of a permanent nature; where word processor and printing devices are used, the printer shall be capable of producing text of a satisfactory quality; the size of character used in the main text, including displayed matter and notes, shall not be less than the equivalent of Arial 10 point, which is the preferred font.
  - (iii) The thesis or equivalent may be printed on both sides of the page provided that the paper, which shall be white, is sufficiently opaque to prevent 'show-through'.

- (iv) The margin at the left-hand binding edge of the page shall not be less than 40mm; other margins shall not be less than 15mm.
- (v) Double or one-and-a-half spacing shall be used in the typescript except for indented quotations or footnotes where single spacing may be used.
- (vi) Pages shall be numbered consecutively through the main text including photographs and/or diagrams included as whole pages.
- (vii) The title page (see specimen) shall give all of the following information:
  - (a) the full title of the thesis or equivalent;
  - (b) the full name of the author;
  - (c) that the degree is awarded by the 'University of Bolton';
  - (d) the award for which the degree is submitted in partial fulfilment of its requirements;
  - (e) the Collaborating Establishment(s), if any;
  - (f) the month and year of submission.

12.10 The final hardbound copies shall be produced as follows:

- (i) The binding shall be of a fixed type so that leaves cannot be removed or replaced; the front and rear boards shall have sufficient rigidity to support the weight of the work when standing upright.
- (ii) In at least 24pt type the outside front board shall bear the title of the work, the name and initials of the candidate, the qualification, and the year of submission, the same information (excluding the title of the work) shall be shown on the spine of the work, reading downwards.
- (iii) To permit submission to the University's institutional repository and to the British Library, the hardbound copies submitted to the Research Degrees Administrator shall be accompanied by a digitised copy, along with the Candidate's Declaration Form.

### **Request for the thesis to remain confidential**

12.11 Where a student or the University wishes the thesis or equivalent to remain confidential for a period of time after completion of the work, application for approval shall normally be made to the Board of Studies **at the time of registration**. In cases where the need for confidentiality emerges at a subsequent stage, a special application for the thesis or equivalent to remain confidential after submission shall be made immediately to the Board of Studies.

- 12.12 The Board of Studies shall normally only approve an application for confidentiality in order to enable a patent application to be lodged or to protect commercially or politically sensitive material. A thesis or equivalent shall not be restricted in this way in order to protect research leads.
- 12.13 While the normal maximum period of confidentiality is two years from the date of the oral examination, in exceptional circumstances the Board of Studies may approve a longer period up to a maximum of 5 years. Where a shorter period would be adequate the Board of Studies shall not automatically grant confidentiality for two years.
- 12.14 Where the Board of Studies has agreed that the confidential nature of the student's work is such as to preclude the thesis or equivalent being made freely available, the thesis or equivalent shall, immediately on completion of the programme of work, be retained by the University on restricted access and, for a time not exceeding the approved period, shall only be made available to those who were directly involved in the project.

### **13. Appeals Procedure for Research Degrees**

- 13.1 A student may request a review of a decision reached by the Board of Studies whether prior to or at the first examination or re-examination. An appeal may also be made following the outcome of the implementation of the *Policy and Procedures for Investigating and Resolving Allegations of Misconduct in Research*. The conditions under which an appeal may be made and the process for lodging an appeal is contained in the University's *Appeals Regulations And Procedures*.

### **14. Investigating and Resolving Allegations of Misconduct in Research**

- 14.1 Annex 7 contains the policy and the associated procedures that should be followed in the event of any misconduct in research being alleged. The policy (and associated procedures) applies to all employees, research students and visiting researchers of the University, including persons with honorary positions, conducting research within, or on behalf of, the University.



[Specimen thesis title page]

**INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION AND THE  
RESTRUCTURING OF THE NORTH WEST  
TEXTILES INDUSTRY**

**ANNABEL EAGLE**

**A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the  
requirements of the University of Bolton  
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

**This research programme was carried out  
in collaboration with .....  
(where applicable)**

**[month and year]**

## **Annex 1: The role and responsibilities of the Board of Studies for Research Degrees**

*(The full Terms of Reference and membership of the Board may be obtained from: <http://www.bolton.ac.uk/Everything/PDF/Senate-and-Sub-Committees---Terms-of-Reference-2014-15.pdf>)*

### **1. Authority of the Committee**

The Board is responsible to Senate for ensuring the maintenance of the academic standards of programmes of study leading to the award of degrees by research, including the control of all matters relating to the registration, supervision and examination of research students.

### **2. Duties of the Committee**

- i. To establish and ensure the implementation of the University's regulations, policies and procedures for the admission, registration, supervision and examination of students who wish to follow programmes of study at the University leading to degrees by research.
- ii. To approve the initial qualifications of persons wishing to register as research students with the University and to be responsible for considering and requiring any necessary amendments to proposed programmes of study, supervisory arrangements, research training and related studies, prior to formal registration of the programme.
- iii. To consider and require any necessary amendments to proposals for the transfer of a student's registration from Master of Philosophy to Doctor of Philosophy.
- iv. To consider and require any necessary amendments to the proposed examination arrangements for research students, including the appointment of internal and external examiners and to receive final reports of the decisions of examiners for recommendation to Senate.
- v. To implement and monitor the operation of the University's Code of Practice for Research Supervisors and Students across the University and to consider regular reports on how supervisory responsibilities are being carried out.
- vi. To implement and monitor the University's Research Degree Quality Assurance Procedures, by considering research reports from supervisors and students and taking any necessary actions to safeguard the standard of awards and the quality of the research student experience.
- vii. To report to Education Committee on all matters concerning the management, administration and quality assurance of research degree programmes of study and the operation of the University's research degree procedures.

## **Annex 2: Notes on Programmes of Study leading to Research Degrees**

1. A research student shall follow a programme of related studies and research training where this is necessary for the attainment of competence in research methods and of knowledge related to the subject of the thesis or equivalent. This programme shall be intended:
  - (i) to provide the student with the skills and knowledge necessary for the pursuit of the proposed research;
  - (ii) to provide a body of knowledge normally associated with a degree in the field of study of the proposed research; and
  - (iii) to provide breadth of knowledge in the related subjects.

Where the programme of related studies includes an approved programme of studies leading to another award and a student is registered for that programme and fulfils all its requirements, (s)he may be recommended for that award in addition to the degree of MPhil or PhD (see also Note 6).

2. A student may undertake a programme of research in which the student's own creative work forms, as a point of origin or reference, a significant part of the intellectual enquiry. Such creative work may be in any field (for instance, fine art, design, engineering and technology, architecture, creative writing, musical composition, film, dance and performance), but shall have been undertaken as part of the registered research programme. In such cases, the presentation and submission may be partly in other than written form.

The creative work shall be clearly presented in relation to the argument of a written thesis or equivalent and set in its relevant theoretical, historical, critical or design context. The thesis or equivalent itself shall conform to the usual scholarly requirements and be of an appropriate length (see Section 12 of the *Regulations*).

The final submission shall be accompanied by some permanent record (for instance, video, photographic record, musical score, and diagrammatic representation) of the creative work, where practical, bound with the thesis or equivalent.

The application for registration shall set out the form of the student's intended submission and of the proposed methods of assessment.

3. A student may undertake a programme of research in which the principal focus is the preparation of a scholarly edition of a text or texts, musical or choreographic work, or other original artefacts.

The final submission shall include a copy of the edited text(s) or collection of artefact(s), appropriate textual and explanatory annotations, and a substantial introduction and critical commentary which set the text in the relevant historical, theoretical or critical context. The thesis or equivalent itself shall conform to the usual scholarly requirements and be of an appropriate length (see Section 12 of the *Regulations*).

4. A student for a PhD, whether registered for PhD direct or for MPhil with possibility of transfer to PhD, may undertake an integrated programme of work which, as well as the research element, shall include a programme of postgraduate study on which his/her performance shall be formally assessed. Such a course of study shall not occupy more than one third of the total period of registration and shall complement the research. This regulation shall not apply to the MPhil degree.
5. Except where permission has been given for the thesis or equivalent and the oral examination to be in another language, the Board of Studies shall satisfy itself that the student has sufficient command of the English language to complete satisfactorily the programme of work and to prepare and defend a thesis or equivalent in English. Permission to present a thesis or equivalent in another language shall normally be sought at the time of application for registration. Permission to present a thesis or equivalent in a language other than English shall normally only be given if the subject matter of the thesis or equivalent involves language and related studies.
6. The Board of Studies may permit a student to register for another course of study concurrently with the research degree registration, provided that either the research degree registration or the other course of study is by part-time study and that, in the opinion of the Board of Studies, the dual registration will not detract from the research.

### **Annex 3: Workload allowances for supervisors**

1. Workload allowances will normally only apply for the duration of the completion period as outlined in para. 4.1 of these regulations.
2. The workload hours allocations defined below effectively form a student entitlement to a period of engagement with their supervisory team during a year. It is effectively a minimum entitlement to support.
3. For **full-time** postgraduate research students a Director of Studies would normally be allocated a workload of 24 hours per year out of their normal contact time. A second supervisor would normally be allocated 6 hours per year out of their contact time.
4. For **part-time** postgraduate research students a Director of Studies would normally be allocated a workload of 12 hours per year out of their normal contact time. A second supervisor would normally be allocated 3 hours per year out of their contact time. This recognizes the fact that the completion period is longer and so support is being given over that extended period of time.
5. In all cases a supervisory meeting should normally be held monthly throughout the completion period although it is recognized that the nature of research is different across disciplines and so the timing/spacing of supervisory meetings may vary from the monthly format suggested.
6. External advisors would be allocated a workload of 3 hours per year regardless of mode of study, again for the minimum completion period.

## **Annex 4: Regulations and Procedures Governing the Award of the Degrees of Doctor of Philosophy by Published Work and Doctor of Philosophy by Practice**

### **1. Principles**

- 1.1 The Regulations and Procedures governing the award of the degrees of Doctor of Philosophy by published work and Doctor of Philosophy by practice are supplementary to and should be read in conjunction with the University's Research Degree Regulations.
- 1.2 The University shall award the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) on the basis of published work or professional or creative practice to registered candidates, provided that there is clear evidence to the satisfaction of the examiners that the candidate has carried out a critical investigation and evaluation of an appropriate topic(s) or theme(s) which has led to an independent and original contribution to knowledge and demonstrated an understanding of research methods appropriate to the chosen field.
- 1.3 The University shall ensure that research degrees by published work or practice are consistent and comparable in standard with research degrees awarded following an approved programme of supervised research and with research degrees granted and conferred throughout higher education in the United Kingdom.
- 1.4 Candidates may submit for the degree in any field of study provided that:
  - (a) the submitted works constitute a coherent programme of published research, as opposed to a series of learned but possibly disconnected papers,
  - or
  - (b) the practice can be adequately evidenced as making an original and substantial contribution to knowledge through professional or creative practice
  - and
  - (c) the submitted works or evidence of practice are capable of being presented for assessment by appropriate examiners.
- 1.6 Where any work submitted for the award has been carried out in collaboration with others, a statement clearly indicating the relative contribution of such other persons must be submitted with the candidate's application for registration and with the final submission.
- 1.7 None of the publications or evidence of practice submitted for the award may normally have been submitted for any other degree awarded to the candidate and a declaration to this effect must be submitted by the candidate at the time of application for registration and with the final submission.

- 1.8 Normally candidates must present and defend the submitted work in English. Any application to vary this should be made to the Board of Studies prior to initial registration. The Board will consider such applications on their individual merits.
- 1.9 Academic departments or individual subject areas within them may publish additional guidance on the nature of published work or practice at doctoral level in relevant disciplines.

## 2. Eligibility

The University will consider applications for registration for the degree of PhD on the basis of published work or practice from members of staff of the University and from persons not associated with the University who are appropriately qualified and in a position to undertake doctoral level study. Candidates for Route B (see below) will in addition normally be employed in posts which enable or require them to undertake research or professional or creative practice at an appropriately advanced level and to have held such a post for at least two years. International candidates will be required to demonstrate that their command of English is of an acceptable standard. The Board of Studies will consider each application for registration individually and according to its own merit.

## 3. Routes of Study

For both the PhD by Published Work and the PhD by Practice there will be two possible routes to assessment.

**Route A** is retrospective and is designed for candidates who already have a portfolio of publications or substantial and evidenced involvement in a project or projects which develop(s) innovative professional or creative practice. It is intended to allow candidates, with the support of a suitable supervisory team, to prepare a critical commentary normally of 10,000 – 15,000 words which contextualizes, analyses and discusses the portfolio and sets out the case for it to be considered an original and independent contribution to knowledge.

**Route B** is normally work-based. It enables candidates who do not yet have a suitable portfolio of publications or evidence of professional or creative practice to create that portfolio and also a critical commentary normally of 10,000-15,000 words which contextualizes, analyses and discusses the portfolio and sets out the case for it to be considered an original and independent contribution to knowledge, under supervision and with appropriate support. Candidates for Route B should hold a professional role which enables or requires them to undertake research, professional or creative work at an appropriate level over an extended period.

## 4. Application and Registration

**Route A** applicants will submit an application form in the normal way for admission to the University as a research student. In addition, candidates will

submit a curriculum vitae. Points i – iv below outline the structure and content of the required registration proposal.

Consideration of the application by the relevant academic School will focus on whether the previous and any planned published work or professional or creative practice is likely to lead to a successful application for registration and is in a field of study where there is appropriate supervisory expertise available in the University. Consideration of applications will therefore require scrutiny of the relevant evidence of publication or professional practice, as well as the usual evidence obtained via interview, references, etc.

Once accepted and enrolled as a postgraduate student by research, the candidate, with supervisory assistance, will submit an application for registration to the Board of Studies on form R1 (PW) for the PhD by published work or R1 (Prac) for the PhD by practice, using the **retrospective** form in either case.

The registration proposal shall include the following:

- i. A list of published works on which the application for registration is based or a description of the practice on which the portfolio will be based together with an explanation of the nature of the evidence which the portfolio will contain.
- ii. An abstract, normally not exceeding 1500 words, detailing where and when the research or practice on which the portfolio is based was undertaken and summarising the contribution to the field of study represented by the evidence in the portfolio.
- iii. Where any work has been published or carried out in collaboration with other persons, a statement signed by the candidate and co-authors or collaborators specifying the extent of the relative contributions of each to the work. (Note: the University reserves the right to consult with any of the co-authors or collaborators in respect of this statement).
- iv. A signed declaration confirming whether or not any of the works on which the application is based has formed part of any submission for any other degree awarded to the candidate. (Note: works submitted for any degree awarded to the candidate shall not normally be permissible for inclusion in the candidate's submission for award of the degree of PhD).

The Board of Studies will undertake a rigorous scrutiny of the registration application and will expect to see evidence that the candidate has conducted a critical investigation and evaluation leading to an independent and original contribution to knowledge and demonstrated an understanding of appropriate research methods. Specifically, the Board will wish to be assured that the publications or portfolio of evidence together with the critical appraisal which will constitute the final submission is likely to meet the required standard for



the award of the degree of PhD, further definition of which is provided in the University's Research Degree Regulations.

**Route B** applicants will submit an application form in the normal way for admission to the University as a research student. In addition, candidates will submit a curriculum vitae. Points i – iv below outline the structure and content of the required registration proposal.

Consideration of the application by the relevant academic School will focus on whether any previous and the planned published work or professional or creative practice is likely to lead to a successful application for registration and is in a field of study where there is appropriate supervisory expertise available in the University.

Once accepted and enrolled as a postgraduate student by research, the candidate, with supervisory assistance, will submit an application for registration to the Board of Studies on form R1 (PW) for the PhD by published work or R1 (Prac) for the PhD by practice, using the **prospective** form in either case.

The registration proposal shall include the following:

- i. A list of any already published works or already completed professional or creative practice relevant to the proposal.
- ii. A list of the proposed publications on which the application for registration is based, or a description of proposed professional or creative practice on which the application is based together with an explanation of the nature of the evidence which the portfolio will contain.
- iii. An abstract, normally not exceeding 1500 words, describing the research or practice on which the published works or portfolio will be based and summarising the contribution to the field of study represented by the published works or the practice represented by the evidence in the portfolio.
- iv. Where any work has been published or carried out in collaboration with other persons, a statement signed by the candidate and co-authors or collaborators specifying the extent of the relative contributions of each to the work. (Note: the University reserves the right to consult with any of the co-authors or collaborators in respect of this statement).
- v. A signed declaration confirming whether or not any of the works on which the application is based has formed part of any submission for any other degree awarded to the candidate. (Note: works submitted for any degree awarded to the candidate shall not normally be permissible for inclusion in the candidate's submission for award of the degree of PhD).

The Board of Studies will undertake a rigorous scrutiny of the registration application and will expect to see evidence that the candidate is capable of conducting a critical investigation and evaluation leading to an independent and original contribution to knowledge and has or is in a position to acquire an understanding of appropriate research methods. The Board will also wish to be convinced that the academic School and/or off-campus partner has in place suitable support and a programme of appropriate training for the candidate. Specifically, the Board will wish to be assured that the publications or portfolio of evidence together with the critical appraisal which will constitute the final submission is likely to meet the required standard for the award of the degree of PhD, further definition of which is provided in the University's Research Degree Regulations.

## **5. Supervision**

For candidates for Route B, at least one member of the supervisory team should normally be a practitioner engaged in the same profession or creative activity as the candidate. Where this is not possible, there should be mentor/advisor who is able to fill this role. The role of the supervisors will be to oversee the compilation or creation and/or compilation of the items comprising the submission and to advise and assist in the preparation of a critical appraisal of 10,000-15,000 words which, together with the published work or portfolio of evidence of practice, shall form the final submission.

## **6. Presentation of the Submission**

After the minimum and before the end of the maximum period of registration the candidate shall present three copies of the published works or portfolio of evidence of practice and accompanying critical appraisal to the Research Degrees Administrator, having given notice of the intention to submit using the appropriate form. The final submission must include the following:

### **6.1 A title page which shall give the following information:**

- i. an appropriate title relating to the candidate's area of research
- ii. the full name of the candidate
- iii. one of the following statements:

*Published works submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the University of Bolton for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy on the basis of published work*

OR

*Portfolio of evidence submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the University of Bolton for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy on the basis of practice*

- iv. the month and year of submission.

- 6.2 A contents page listing all of the published works or the items of evidence included in the portfolio on which the application is based.
- 6.3 An abstract of approximately 300 words.
- 6.4 A high quality reprint or photocopy (at least A5 and preferably A4 size) of all the publications or items of evidence cited in the application for registration, if necessary giving proof of authenticity. The items shall be numbered and correspond exactly with the list cited in the application for registration. For the PhD by published work, unpublished works in support of the application may be appended, although normally only published work will be admissible for submission.
- 6.5 A rigorous critical appraisal, normally between 10,000 and 15,000<sup>20</sup> words, comprising:
- i. details of specific dates and locations in relation to the conduct of the research on which the submission is based;
  - ii. an analysis of the general and specific aims of the research programme, including an analysis of its component parts and a synthesis of the works as a coherent study;
  - iii. a discussion of the contribution made by the submitted works or evidenced by the items within the portfolio to the general advancement of the field of study and research area or professional or creative practice, which demonstrates a common theme;
  - iv. a demonstration that the work or the practice constitutes an independent and original contribution to knowledge in the chosen field;
  - v. a review of the current literature, unless already incorporated within any of the other items submitted.
- 6.6 A signed declaration confirming whether or not any of the works or the practice on which the application is based has formed part of any submission for any other degree awarded to the candidate.
- 6.7 Where any work has been published or carried out in collaboration with other persons, a statement signed by the candidate and co-authors or collaborators specifying the extent of the relative contributions of each to the work. The published works or portfolio of evidence and accompanying documentation shall be presented in a box file of sufficient rigidity to support the weight of the enclosed material when standing upright. Once all revisions to the submission and report have been completed satisfactorily after the examination, the submission must be permanently bound in its final form

---

<sup>20</sup> Where it is felt to be appropriate to the subject matter or nature of the submission, the Board of Studies may grant permission for the critical commentary to be longer than this

according to the format detailed in the Research Degree Regulations and three copies lodged with the University.

## **8. Assessment**

In examining the candidate, the examiners must determine whether:

- i. the works or evidence of practice submitted demonstrate that the candidate has undertaken a programme of study and research commensurate with the requirements for the preparation of a PhD thesis in the chosen field;
- ii. the submission demonstrates that the candidate has personally made a systematic and coherent study within a single or closely related field(s);
- iii. the candidate has demonstrated an appropriate level of critical analysis and reflection on the research previously undertaken;
- iv. the candidate has demonstrated an understanding of research methods appropriate to the chosen field;
- v. the candidate has shown originality by the exercise of independent critical powers and has made a distinctive contribution to knowledge.

## **9. Guidelines on Portfolios of Evidence for the PhD by Practice**

It is expected that a candidate for this award, whilst not submitting a conventional written thesis, will nonetheless be able to demonstrate by engagement in the high level and innovatory professional or creative practice evidenced in the submitted portfolio, the competences outlined in paragraph 1.4 the main *Regulations*.

In the case of professional or creative practice, the practice in itself, however successful or highly regarded by others, is not evidence that it is the result of ongoing engagement in research and advanced academic enquiry, nor does it demonstrate how that research contributes to the advancement of knowledge within that practice. It follows, therefore, that, in choosing items of evidence for inclusion within the submitted portfolio, candidates should be seeking to show not only that the practice has taken place and what its nature and significance is, but also how it is the result of engagement with established practice within the field and how it develops, challenges or significantly revises that practice.

In most cases, though not necessarily in all, a significant item of evidence may well be some kind of reflective diary, log or commonplace book which records the progress of the research project. Where appropriate, audio or video recordings may supplement or replace the diary, especially where this serves to validate the authenticity of the research process. Where performance forms a significant part of the practice in question, such recordings will be highly desirable if not essential.

Other evidence might include:

- research papers,
- reports,
- case studies with commentaries,
- business plans,
- schemes of work,
- diagnostic tools and instruments,
- (records of) performances or artifacts (photographs, catalogues, audio or video recordings etc.)
- action plans,
- corporate strategies,
- curriculum designs and schemes of work,
- patents, registered designs or software
- portfolios of creative text based work (poetry, short stories, etc.).

This list is meant to be suggestive rather than exhaustive, and in considering the nature of the evidence to be included, the extent to which it might clearly demonstrate one or more of the competencies listed above is obviously important. A statement of the kind of evidence it is intended the portfolio will include should form part of the R1 (Prac) so that its appropriateness can be assessed by the Board of Studies as part of the registration procedure.

## **10. Guidelines on the Published Work acceptable for submission in a PhD by Published Work**

The PhD by Published Work (Prospective) allows you to write your PhD thesis in a format suitable for publication in a peer-reviewed journal (for the Prospective Route) whether solely or partly authored by you. These 'papers' do not have to be already published or even submitted.

The number of papers included in the PhD by Published Work thesis may vary and is not prescribed, but should reflect the quantity, quality and originality of research and analysis expected of a candidate submitting a standard thesis. There is no upper limit, but typically 3-5 'papers' that are published in a journal that is recognized by SCOPUS (<https://www.scopus.com/search/form.uri?display=basic>) would be required; ultimately the examiners will judge whether the quantity and quality of the work, the critical analysis and originality of the research and the defence of your thesis in the viva, justifies the award of a PhD.

For the PhD by Published Work (Prospective) you can draft papers (3-5 papers typically) that are ready to submit in a journal that is recognized by SCOPUS (<https://www.scopus.com/search/form.uri?display=basic>) so long as they will form a coherent body of work. Clearly, for the PhD by Published Work (Retrospective) the 'papers' included within the thesis must have already been published in peer-reviewed journals.

## Copyright

Most publishers request that you sign over your copyright of any of your published material when the material is published. If this is the case, you will need to request the publisher's permission to include the published papers in your alternative format thesis. If the paper is not yet published then you will need to request permission from the collaborators/co-authors who collectively own the copyright for that paper.

## Examination

The most important thing is that the examiners can follow and understand your thesis as a coherent body of work;

- Avoid presenting a thesis that lacks a full explanation of technical detail and consideration of controls because it is in publication style format. The examiners will expect your thesis to demonstrate rigour in all aspects of your research training.
- Include supplementary information and background information where appropriate. For example, inclusion of a general appendix at the end of the thesis to cover general experimental methods and results would help to cover minor details which were missed out due to the 'paper format' of the thesis.
- Make sure that your thesis is not weakened by lack of continuity and reasoning between chapters or by the separation of figures and legends from the text they refer to.

## 11. Guidelines on Supervision and Co-authorship in the PhD by Published Work

It is expected that you will have taken the major role in all aspects of production of the papers including: data acquisition, analysis and writing the paper. Where you have collaborated or co-authored any papers, the level of your contribution must be made explicitly clear through the processes outlined in paragraph 4 of this Annex. It is advisable to discuss your stated contribution to each paper with your supervisor and co-authors. Even if you are the first author, there may be issues about the way that your supervisor or others have contributed to the paper. Examiners will expect you to understand all of the work in any paper that forms part of your thesis, even if the work has been done (and acknowledged as such) by someone else.

Co-authorship has particular relevance for PhD by published work because of the requirements for the candidate to prove ownership of the work and ideas contained within. Recognition of the possibility of co-authorship is provided by the University's R1 form for PhD by published work:

*'... please provide an indication of whether the applicant is or is intended to be the sole, joint, senior or junior author next to each publication. If it is more convenient, the applicant may state their own (intended) depth of contribution with an indication of the percentage of work which is (or will be) theirs within each publication. [...]The abstract of the thesis shall also retain statements (as standard) pertaining to shared and sole ownership of the work.'*

Co-author contribution can range from lead or significant provision of ideas and writing to copy-editing and proof reading. However, the role of, for example,

supervisor and/or copy-editor does not necessarily lead to co-authorship. The University's policy is based upon the *Vancouver Group Guidelines*. The main points are:

- Authorship credit should be based on 1) substantial contributions to conception and design, acquisition of data or analysis and interpretation of data; 2) drafting the article or revising it critically for important intellectual content; and 3) final approval of the version to be published. Authors should meet conditions 1, 2 & 3.
- Acquisition of funding, collection of data, or general supervision of the research group alone does not constitute authorship.
- All persons designated as authors should qualify for authorship, and all those who qualify should be listed.
- Each author should have participated sufficiently in the work to take public responsibility for appropriate portions of the content.
- All other contributors (including supervisors) should be listed in acknowledgements.

## **Annex 5: Guidance on the use of ‘videoconferencing’ in viva voce examinations**

The Board of Studies may exceptionally approve that an oral *viva voce* examination is undertaken by video conference (henceforth referred to here as a ‘remote viva’). Applications must be made to the Secretary to the Board of Studies following the procedures described in the following sections. **Note:** for students registered and studying at University approved doctoral centres, whilst the following procedures must be followed, the Board of Studies will not consider this mode of *viva voce* examination to be exceptional since the potential use of this mode will have been established through the approval of the doctoral centre.

Since the Board first agreed a methodology for remote vivas, the worldwide use of video-conferencing has expanded substantially due to the advent of more effective and widely available conferencing software and technology (notably the use of Skype software). In the University, for research degree matters, the use of video-conferencing has also grown, e.g. in supervisory meetings, standing panels and examinations, in line with the expansion in the numbers of research degree students located outside the UK.

There remains a strong preference for in-person vivas, which will continue to be the norm. This is because an in-person examination offers a candidate the best opportunity to convince the examiners of his/her worthiness, whilst also presenting fewer problems than remote vivas.

### **1. Remote vivas for UK residents**

Remote vivas where **all** the participants are UK-based will only be approved by the Board of Studies when there are special circumstances which mean that travel to a single viva location is not practicable. Normally, if one or more of the required viva participants is outside the UK, those who are in the UK will meet in person and only the non-UK participant(s) may engage in the viva remotely.

### **2. Authorisation of remote viva arrangements**

The arrangements for a remote viva must be approved in advance by the Board of Studies. This is done through Form R5 ‘Application for Approval of Examination Arrangements’, which includes a check box stating if a remote viva is planned. If it is checked, then the relevant section of the examination arrangements form must be completed, describing the remote viva arrangements in full.

### **3. Alerting the examiners to remote participation**

When formal invitations are extended to examiners it should clearly state if it is planned that one or more of the required participants in the examination will be contributing remotely. This information should also be referred to when a date for a remote viva is being arranged.

### **4. Time differences**

Any time differences between the locations involved must be taken into account to ensure that the candidate is not disadvantaged by an examination taking place at an inappropriate



time of day or night. The anticipated **local time** of the viva for each participant is to be stated on Form R5.

## 5. Independent person

A person who is independent of the remote candidate should be located with them, if otherwise a candidate participating remotely would be alone. This person, to be nominated by the candidate, must be approved by Board of Studies as part of the approval of the overall examination arrangements. They will assist in confirming some practical matters (e.g. candidate identity), in helping to ensure that the arrangements work as they should, and in providing appropriate and permissible in-person support to the candidate during the examination. The independent person must not be a personal friend or acquaintance, relation, or professional associate of the candidate's and it should be possible to contact them and verify their standing through a reputable organization. The British Council, an educational institution, or some other public sector establishment would be the preferred source of such an independent person.

## 6. Confirmation of identity

Confirmation of the candidate's identity is of course more problematic when the candidate is remote (especially if they are alone) than when they are present in person. To ensure that this issue can be dealt with satisfactorily, all students must request and be issued with a University of Bolton student identity card at the time of enrolment and confirmation that a student has been issued with such will be obtained as part of the R1 procedure. **It will be mandatory at the time of a viva where the candidate is remote that they are able to show a current, valid, student identity card along with another form of photographic identity acceptable to the University (e.g. passport).** The Independent Chair should verify that the live video image of the candidate at the remote viva matches the photograph on the identity card, the photograph held on the student record, and the photographic identity document.

An identity card would normally be issued upon initial enrolment with the University but may be secured subsequently if required, in which case the photographs provided for identity card purposes for use at a remote viva should be of print quality, and of a higher resolution than that required for the creation of the identity card itself. This will more readily enable the photograph to be used to confirm identity at the viva (and at any other supervision or examination event). It is the candidate's obligation to supply an up-to-date photograph for a replacement identity card if his/her appearance has changed significantly since initial enrolment. All photographs submitted for identity card purposes, at whatever point in the student's enrolment history, must be accompanied by an official photographic identity document (passport or similar) acceptable to the University.

Although confirmation of a remote candidate's identity will initially be undertaken via comparisons of the live image with photographic evidence, **a remote candidate's identity must also be confirmed directly by one or more of:**

- (a) a member of University of Bolton staff (e.g. one of the candidate's supervisors or the Internal Examiner);
- (b) (if applicable) the approved independent person;

(c) (if applicable) a member of staff at the partner institution where the candidate has been studying.

In the case of (b) and (c) the person confirming the remote candidate's identity must be known and recognized by a member of University of Bolton staff present at the viva. If the identity is clearly wrong, the viva will be suspended. If there is an element of doubt, the Independent Chair will report this and carry out an identity confirmation process after the viva. Confirmation of identity of any External Examiner(s) participating remotely should be undertaken by one of the candidate's supervisors and confirmed to the Independent Chair. The method and outcomes of all confirmations of identity must be noted by the Independent Chair in his/her report.

## 7. Quality of video-conferencing

The essence of the viva is that it is a live event, and therefore **recorded presentations followed by live questions are not acceptable. Video, not just audio, is essential, partly to confirm identity and partly to remain true to the nature of the viva.** If the video fails completely then the viva should be re-scheduled. If the video is intermittent, then it is up to the examiners to decide if the viva provides sufficient evidence on which to base their decision. (Note that it may be easier to rearrange a remote viva than a face-to-face event). Those participating remotely from outside the University have responsibility for ensuring that the video connection at their location is of sufficient bandwidth and reliability. This may require that they travel to a location where a good internet connection is available.

## 8. Other points of note

The Guidance Notes for the Examination of Research Degree Candidates should be followed in remote vivas. Particular attention should be given to:

- ensuring that any examiner(s) at 'remote' locations are brought into the discussion and given adequate opportunity to question the candidate and to comment on his/her thesis;
- ensuring that all examiners and the Director of Studies (where present) have copies of the examiners' preliminary reports.

## 9. Responsibilities

The University's Research Degrees Administrator will oversee the practical arrangements for the remote viva examination, communicate them to relevant parties, and alert the University's IT service to the date, time and location of the event so that they can ensure that appropriate support is available if required. The arrangements will be those approved by the Board of Studies on the basis of what was proposed on Form R5 by the candidate's Director of Studies, who will be responsible for liaising with the Research Degrees Administrator to ensure that the viva proceeds as smoothly as possible.

Any candidate participating remotely at a location other than the University of Bolton will be responsible for any costs incurred in enabling remote participation at his/her selected location.

## **10. Comment by Independent Chair and Examiners**

A comment on each examination conducted by video-conferencing should be made by the Independent Chair as part of his/her report to the Board of Studies. The Examiners should also pass comment, should they so wish, in their final report and recommendation.

## **Annex 6: Professional Doctorates Framework: Principles and Regulations**

### **1. Introduction**

#### **1.1 Scope and Nature of this Document**

This document constitutes the University of Bolton's Framework for Professional Doctorates Programmes and defines the concept and the principles of the University's Professional Doctorate (PD) awards. It outlines the parameters for and basic nature of all programmes of study and research within the University which are designed to lead to the award of a Professional Doctorate.

Academic departments wishing to offer a PD must use this framework as the basis for the design of the programme(s) they are putting forward.

This framework has been developed by a working group of staff representing a range of interests across the University's academic departments and relevant central functions.

#### **1.2 Background**

The Professional Doctorate began in the early nineties with the DEng and the EdD which were designed as higher research degrees for specific groups of professionals. The advantage of the DEng over a more conventional PhD was felt by the professional bodies to be its greater emphasis on professional/management skills and the stress on applied skills and knowledge. The EdD was also designed from the outset as a professionally focussed qualification, but it had the additional characteristic of being largely part time and in-service with the research/project element tightly based on real-time issues in work. Some PDs, like the DEng, have been designed as primarily pre-experience qualifications – the DClinPsy (Clinical Psychology) is, for example, a mandatory qualifying award for those who wish to practice. Most, however, are intended for those with substantial experience in their sphere who wish for the opportunity to reflect on that experience and develop their skills and contribute to the development of their profession.

#### **1.3 Need for the Framework**

A University-wide PD framework is desirable partly because the taught element of the Professional Doctorate requires a cohort entry. As much shared teaching as is appropriate is desirable in order to make the programmes academically attractive and economically feasible. A single framework will also simplify quality assurance procedures and enable the provision to extend across all academic areas within the University and not just those with a well-developed postgraduate and research culture.

Secondly, PD programmes need to be tailored to the needs and expectations of different professions and sectors since this is one of the main appeals to the market for the PD as opposed to a conventional PhD. But it is important

that Bolton's PDs not only are but are seen to be of the same quality and rigour as its PhDs while they also achieve professional relevance through an applied and work-related focus. The Framework is designed to ensure that this is so.

## **1.4 The PD Framework**

### **1.4.1 Preamble**

Professional Doctorates are often called "taught" Doctorates, but Roberts' stress on skills and professional training for PGR students<sup>21</sup> means that this is no longer a real differentiator between the PD and the PhD. "Taught" in the context of the University of Bolton PD will not normally mean standard tutor-led seminars and lectures. It would more typically include scheduled sessions such as working in action learning sets, conducting and taking part in workshops, role playing and case study analysis. However, no more than approximately 40 percent of the total learning time devoted to achieving the PD's learning outcomes will be devoted to the "taught" element.

The University of Bolton PD is a research degree at doctoral level. However, the research it involves will not be research done simply for its own sake. It will be applied and professionally focussed, allowing those who follow a PD programme at Bolton the space and resources to develop their professionalism and their profession, their creativity and their critical and evaluative capacity.

### **1.4.2 Aims**

All programmes will aim to develop students' skills and understanding to the point where they have:

- developed a critical understanding and contextualised knowledge of their profession and its academic base;
- gained high level skills in analysis and research and become proficient in using these;
- become competent researchers in professional practice settings;
- developed sophisticated communication skills appropriate to a wide range of contexts;
- interacted with other professionals in the field to provide support and to exchange and disseminate knowledge, good practice and research;
- undertaken original research which adds to the existing knowledge base and the development and enhancement of professional practice.

---

<sup>21</sup> **SET for success** - The supply of people with science, technology, engineering and mathematics skills. The report of Sir Gareth Roberts' Review, April 2002

### 1.4.3 Titles

Entry to the professional doctorate will be to a specific, validated programme of study leading to a defined award title which links the award to a particular subject area, for example, “Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) (Logistics)” or “Doctor of Education (EdD)”. In appropriate circumstances, the award may be the generic one of “Doctor of Professional Studies (DProf)”. (“Titles used for doctoral qualifications awarded after programmes that include a substantial taught element should normally include the name of the discipline in the title”<sup>22</sup>).

### 1.4.4 Structure

The full programme will include two stages, an “M” stage which incorporates a Masters degree and a “D” stage which incorporates the Doctoral programme:

*i. The “M” stage*

This will include at least 180 credits at level HE7 (Masters), equivalent to twelve months of full time study, and may include up to 30 credits at level HE6 (Honours); it is intended for applicants who lack an appropriate Masters qualification. The default exit award for those who do not progress to the doctoral stage, but who have passed all the “M” stage elements will be MRes, but departments may wish to propose alternative titles. At least 60 credits of the 180 should be allocated to an independent, supervised research project; the balance to include subject specific learning and research, study and transferable skills. Progression to the doctoral stage will be subject to the decision of the relevant examination board, but will normally require an average pass mark of 50 percent for the Masters award, together with a 50 percent pass in the research project.

*ii. The “D” stage*

The “D” stage of the programme comprises learning equivalent to at least 360 credits at level HE8 (Doctoral) or twenty-four months of full time work. This may be divided into two elements. At least 40 credits may comprise taught and supervised project work (the “taught element”), but at least 320 credits will involve independent research in a single coherent area (the “Doctoral research element”) which will constitute an original and substantial contribution to knowledge within the student’s area of professional practice and policy development. The Doctoral research element will normally be assessed by means of a coherent body of work which could include research papers,

---

<sup>22</sup> Annex 2 of the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) of the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA).

reports, case studies, business plans, schemes of work, diagnostic tools and instruments, (records of) performances or artefacts.

#### **1.4.5 The “D” Stage**

It is normal for the Doctoral stage to include some taught element(s). This would typically include at least what more conventional PGR students are currently taught. There should also be elements which build on the taught components of the Masters stage, but the biggest part of the work at this level will be a substantial research project or projects.

This stage of the Bolton Professional Doctorate programme will be work-related and professionally focussed, usually involving experiential and action research. Only exceptionally would it be assessed by dissertation. Normally, candidates will submit a body of assessable work whose nature will be prescribed by the validated programme specification, but may include some or all of the following: written reports; case studies; action plans; corporate plans; peer-reviewed journal articles; creative or performance based work; curriculum designs and schemes of work; patents; registered designs or software. In all cases, however, the work should demonstrate substantial engagement with professional practice and development over a period of time. It will constitute a coherent body of doctoral level work which will normally be summarised by a 10,000-15,000 word critical commentary and will include both publishable elements and a dissemination strategy.

#### **1.4.6 The Programme**

The programme of study will consist of validated modules which will include both taught classes and independent research projects. The mix of classes and supervised independent research will depend on the nature of the intended final “D” level research project and the needs of the individual student and will be the subject of a doctoral learning agreement (subject to the approval of the Board of Studies, following the recommendations of the relevant academic department) which will define the precise learning, outputs and assessment criteria from the options validated for the programme of study.

#### **1.4.7 Entry**

Students will be admitted to an appropriate programme subject to the criteria outlined in 4 (below).

#### **1.4.8 Exemptions and Advanced Standing**

Students may receive general or specific credit which would exempt them from elements of the overall PD programme up to a maximum of 220 credits at level HE7/8 on the basis of appropriate and relevant qualifications (for example, an MBA for entry to a DBA), or recent and relevant experience (including experience of research). Exemption from the Doctoral research stage is not permitted (see section 5.2.1

below). Exemptions and advanced standing will be granted in compliance with the University's credit accumulation and transfer regulations and procedures.

#### **1.4.9 Management**

Each academic department participating in the Professional Doctorates Framework will appoint a coordinator of professional doctorate students who will be responsible to the Head of department for the coordination of admission, support and supervision of professional doctoral students.

Assessment of the taught elements of PD programmes will be subject to the confirmation of the relevant departmental Assessment Board. The final determination of the award of the professional doctorate, taking into consideration the decisions of the relevant departmental Assessment Board, will be made by the Board of Studies.

#### **1.4.10 Programme Design and Validation:**

Each PD will be defined by a Programme Specification and will be validated in the normal way. The "M" stage will be subject to validation in the same way as any other taught masters degree and the results of its component parts will be determined by the relevant departmental Assessment Board. The "D" stage of each PD may be defined according to two different models:

- Model A: The taught elements will consist of a predetermined programme of study defined by a list of modules designed or approved by the programme team (albeit that this programme may involve some optional choice from a prescribed list). The Doctoral research elements will be determined by negotiation between student and tutor.
- Model B: the entire programme will be the result of a negotiated learning contract between tutor and student (and, if appropriate, employer) which will determine the content and nature of both the taught and the research stage. Thus, under a model B programme, two students on the same PD award might be undertaking an entirely different set of modules and research activities.
- For Model A and Model B awards, the activities and outcomes comprising the Doctoral research stages will be subject to the approval of the Board of Studies.

Validation of the PD will consider, amongst other things:

- The programme specification;
- The curriculum design;
- Entry requirements and APL/APEL possibilities at both levels;
- Methods of delivery;
- Programme management;



- Role and nature of work based learning;
- Use of work based mentors;
- Assessment strategy.

## **2. Programme Design and Assessment**

Professional doctorate programmes, including any interim awards, shall be designed and candidates assessed at appropriate levels in the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ), promulgated by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (the QAA). Conformance with the framework by individual programmes will be verified at initial validation and confirmed at any subsequent review. Departmental Assessment Boards and the Board of Studies are respectively responsible for verifying that candidates' performance in the formal assessment of taught and research elements of professional doctorates is at the appropriate level within the framework. Conformance with the framework and of appropriate levels of candidate performance will be confirmed at programme review.

## **3. Intended Learning Outcomes**

**3.1** The intended learning outcomes of professional doctorates shall include or reflect the requirements of the FHEQ that successful candidates, on completion of their programme of study, will be able to:

**3.1.1** make informed judgements on complex issues in specialist fields, often in the absence of complete data, and be able to communicate their ideas and conclusions clearly and effectively to specialist and non-specialist audiences;

**3.1.2** continue to undertake pure and/or applied research and development at an advanced level, contributing substantially to the development of new techniques, ideas, or approaches;

**3.1.3** demonstrate the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and largely autonomous initiative in complex and unpredictable situations, in professional or equivalent environments.

**3.2** Departmental Assessment Boards and the Board of Studies are responsible as described elsewhere in this document for verifying that candidates have demonstrated through their formal assessments that they have satisfied the programme and module intended learning outcomes and that, on completion of their doctoral programme of study, they have demonstrated:

**3.2.1** the creation and interpretation of new knowledge, through original research or other advanced scholarship, of a quality to satisfy peer review, extend the forefront of the discipline, and merit publication;

**3.2.2** a systematic acquisition and understanding of a substantial body of knowledge which is at the forefront of an academic discipline or area of professional practice;

**3.2.3** the ability to conceptualise, design and implement a project for the generation of new knowledge, applications or understanding at the forefront of the discipline, and to adjust the project design in the light of unforeseen problems;

**3.2.4** a detailed understanding of applicable techniques for research and advanced academic enquiry.

**3.3** Periodic subject review panels are responsible for confirming that programme and module intended learning outcomes and candidates' performance in assessment conforms to the above.

#### **4. Admission Requirements**

**4.1** Applicants for professional doctorate programmes shall normally hold one or more of the following qualifications:

**4.1.1** an honours degree of a UK university;

**4.1.2** a professional qualification recognised as being equivalent to an honours degree;

**4.1.3** other qualifications and/or experience which demonstrate that an applicant possesses appropriate knowledge and skills equivalent to an honours degree.

**4.2** Applicants whose first language is not English must demonstrate a satisfactory level of competence in the English language, for example through an IELTS score of at least 6.5 or equivalent evidence.

**4.3** All applicants will have relevant work-related experience related to and as required by their chosen professional doctorate programme.

**4.4** Additional and/or more specific entry criteria, based on the requirements of individual professional doctorate programmes and/or of relevant subject and/or professional bodies, may be proposed and agreed during validation.

**4.5** Subject to the limitations specified in section 5.2.1, opportunities for advanced standing under RP(E)L shall be available to candidates in accordance with the University's agreed procedures.

#### **5. Structure of Professional Doctorate Programmes**

##### **5.1 Module Sizes**

The taught module sizes in professional doctorate awards may be constructed in multiples of five credit points, with one credit point equating to ten notional learning hours. The modules will be at levels HE7 (Masters), HE8 (Doctoral), and possibly HE6 (Honours level) in the FHEQ, according to 5.2 below.

## 5.2 Structure of Awards

5.2.1 The credit structure of professional doctorate awards is summarised as follows.

<b>Award - Tariff (level)</b>	<b>Maximum RP(E)L Credit Points</b>	<b>Notional Learning Hours</b>
<b>Postgraduate Certificate - 60 (HE7)</b>	30	600
<b>Postgraduate Diploma - 120 (HE7)</b>	60	1200
<b>Masters (including MRes) - 180 (HE7)</b>	120	1800
<b>Professional Doctorate - 540 (HE7/8)</b>	220 <sup>23</sup>	5400

5.2.2 A PD programme shall comprise taught elements of between 180 and 220 credit points, of which at least 150 credits will be at level HE7 (Masters) in the FHEQ and up to 30 credits may be at a level no lower than HE6 (Honours). No more than 120 of the minimum 180 credits making up the Masters stage shall be obtainable through formal taught modules. Thus, at least 60 credits of the Masters stage shall be achieved via the planning and execution of a piece of supervised independent research leading to the submission of a dissertation, project, or equivalent in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the Masters degree.

5.2.3 Where a PD programme comprises more than 180 credits of taught provision, any such taught provision in excess of 180 credits (i.e. a maximum of 40 credits) must be at Doctoral level (level HE8).

5.2.4 In addition, a PD programme shall comprise a 'Doctoral research' stage valued at between 320 and 360 credits points at level HE8 (Doctorate) in the FHEQ. The Doctoral research stage will involve the planning and execution of a programme of supervised independent research and the submission of a coherent body of assessable work in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the PD. This body of assessable work shall not normally exceed 60,000 words, will normally include a 10,000 – 15,000 word critical commentary and will include both publishable elements and a dissemination strategy. At validation, the panel shall confirm the possible form(s) and length(s) of the body of assessable work in light of the credit size of the taught element of the programme and the requirement that candidates must attain Doctoral level.

---

<sup>23</sup>This RP(E)L is not to include any research methods module or any credit against the Doctoral research elements.

**5.2.5** At validation, individual programmes shall prescribe in the programme specification those elements of the programme that are to be defined as ‘taught’ versus ‘research’.

**5.2.6** The possible distribution of credits between ‘taught’ and ‘research’ stages and across levels of the FHEQ is summarised as follows.

	Taught		Research	
	Minimum	Maximum	Minimum	Maximum
<b>Overall</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>360</b>
<b>Level HE8</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>360</b>
<b>Level HE7</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>n/a</b>
<b>Level HE6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>n/a</b>

### **5.3 Duration of Study**

The following minimum periods of registration will apply.

Award	Minimum Duration (Months)	
	Full-Time	Part-Time
<b>Postgraduate Certificate</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Postgraduate Diploma</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Masters</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Professional Doctorate</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>60</b>

The normal maximum period of registration will be twice the minimum period.

### **5.4 Research Methods Requirements**

Prior to undertaking the Doctoral research stage, all candidates must have passed the relevant research methods module(s) as stipulated at validation and set out in the programme specification.

## **6. Assessment Framework**

**6.1** Assessment of professional doctorates shall be conducted in accordance with the academic regulations and procedures of the University as agreed by the Academic Board.

**6.2** In particular, the Assessment Regulations for Postgraduate Modular Programmes shall apply to the taught elements of professional doctorates

(including the taught modules and research elements at level HE7 and the taught elements at level HE8) and the Research Degree Regulations shall apply to the Doctoral research stage. Candidates shall have the right of appeal as specified in those University regulations pertaining to the programme elements concerned (taught or research).

**6.3** At validation the panel may approve named intermediate awards consistent with section 4.3 of these regulations.

**6.4** Where necessary a validation panel may approve specific arrangements to ensure that the requirements of external bodies are met in relation to a programme of study leading to a professional doctorate.

## **7. Assessment Procedures**

### **7.1 Assessment Boards**

**7.1.1** The relevant Departmental Assessment Board shall have responsibility for assessment and progression in respect of the taught elements of the PD programme. The taught elements of the programme shall be externally examined.

**7.1.2** The Board of Studies, where appropriate acting on the advice of the relevant academic department, shall have responsibility for the approval, examination arrangements and confirmation of attainment in respect of the Doctoral research stage.

**7.1.3** Conferment of the final professional doctorate award shall be the responsibility of the Board of Studies, following the recommendation of the examiners on a candidate's attainment in the Doctoral research and confirmation by the Chair of the relevant departmental Assessment Board that the candidate has fulfilled all the requirements specified for the award. The Doctoral research shall be examined according to procedures set out in the University's Research Degree Regulations.

### **7.2 Taught Elements**

*(The Assessment Regulations for Postgraduate Programmes, key elements of which are summarised here, will apply to this stage)*

#### **7.2.1 Assessment and Reassessment**

- (i) The pass mark for all taught modules shall be fifty percent. Other than as provided for under the procedures for condonement and compensation (see 6.2.3 and 6.2.4 below), every component of assessment must be passed. At validation it may be agreed that a candidate's attainment in taught modules shall be measured and recorded, as an alternative to the awarding of a percentage mark, on the basis of a pass or a fail.
- (ii) Every candidate shall have the right to retrieve an initial unsatisfactory performance in taught modules by **one**

**reassessment.** At validation, a programme team shall propose the means by which and the programme regulations under which reassessment is undertaken.

- (iii) Only exceptionally and with strong justification may a departmental Assessment Board permit a second reassessment in a taught module where performance is unsatisfactory on the first reassessment.
- (iv) Where a candidate is reassessed in and passes one or more components of assessment of a taught module as a result of unsatisfactory performance at a previous attempt, he or she shall be awarded a mark of forty percent for any such component(s). University Regulations specify where, as a result of a departmental Assessment Board accepting that mitigating circumstances have adversely affected a candidate's performance, unsatisfactory module performance may be retrieved via assessment as if for the first time and a mark higher than forty percent obtained.
- (v) Reassessment shall normally take place at the earliest possible opportunity and always within twelve months of the initial assessment, taking account of the desirability of making good as soon as is practicable, the normal cycle of module assessment occurrences, a candidate's ongoing workload and the need for candidates to be adequately prepared. The timing of reassessment shall be determined by the relevant departmental Assessment Board.

### **7.2.2 Condonement**

In the case of candidates whose performance has been affected by mitigating circumstances, marginal unsatisfactory module performance (normally no less than 35 percent overall, or in any component of assessment) may exceptionally be condoned up to a maximum value of one sixth of the total taught credit requirement of the programme and the mark adjusted upwards to 40 percent. These total limitations will apply to condonement and/or compensation (as defined below), whether one or both of these processes is employed. Condonement will be influenced by evidence of good performance elsewhere and the record of conduct and attendance of the candidate. Condonement will not be applied to the doctoral element of a programme.

### **7.2.3 Compensation**

At the discretion of an Assessment Board, satisfactory overall performance (including, where appropriate, attendance and conduct) may compensate for unsatisfactory performance in taught modules in a candidate's programme (normally no less than 35 percent overall, or in any component of assessment). An Assessment Board may

compensate for unsatisfactory performance in modules up to a maximum value of one sixth of the total taught credit requirement of the programme. These total limitations will apply to compensation and/or condonement (as defined above) whether one or both of these processes are employed. Compensation will not be applied to any taught elements at Level HE8, nor where the failed module is deemed to be essential to the fulfillment of the objectives of the programme, nor where there is evidence that no serious attempt has been made to fulfill the assessment requirements of the failed module. **Where compensation is applied the candidate will be awarded the credits for the module but the module will be recorded with the original grade and with an indication that compensation has been applied.**

#### **7.2.4 Progression**

In order to progress from the Masters stage to the Doctoral stage candidates shall normally have achieved an average mark of at least fifty percent in the taught modules and research element of the Masters stage and a mark of at least fifty percent in the Masters research dissertation, project or equivalent. Specific regulations relating to progression from Postgraduate Certificate to Postgraduate Diploma, from Postgraduate Diploma to Masters and from Masters to Doctorate shall be specified at the time of validation and set out in the programme specification.

### **7.3 Doctoral Research Stage**

*(Specific parts of the Research Degree Regulations will apply to this stage as referred to below)*

#### **7.3.1 Eligibility**

- (i) In order to progress to the Doctoral research stage of a professional doctorate, candidates must meet the requirements of section 7.2.4 above. Confirmation of a candidate's performance in the taught elements of their programme shall be provided by the relevant academic department to the Board of Studies as part of the latter's formal approval of the candidate's research proposal.
- (ii) The Board of Studies shall receive the recommendation of the assessment board in the relevant academic department in formally approving the candidate's Doctoral research proposal. The proposal shall be submitted on the required form and shall conform to the general requirements laid down and further guidance referred to in section 3 of the Research Degree Regulations.

### **7.3.2 Supervision**

The Board of Studies shall receive the recommendation of the relevant academic department in formally approving the supervisory arrangements for the Doctoral research stage according to section 5 of the Research Degree Regulations.

### **7.3.3 Form of the Body of Assessable Research Work**

- (i) Taking account of the possible form(s) and length(s) of the body of assessable research work as approved at validation of individual PD programmes, this work shall otherwise comply with the requirements laid down in section 12 of the Research degree regulations.
- (ii) Where a candidate proposes that the form of their assessable research work should vary from the validated arrangements for an individual PD programme, then approval of the proposed arrangements shall be sought from the assessment board authorities in the relevant academic department and ratified by the Board of Studies.

### **7.3.4 Examiners, Examination and Re-examination**

The appointment of examiners and the conduct of the examination and any re-examination shall conform to the requirements and guidance of Sections 9, 10 and 11 of the Research Degree Regulations.



## **Annex 7: Policy and Procedures for Investigating and Resolving Allegations of Misconduct in Research**

### **1. Scope**

This policy applies to all employees, research students and visiting researchers of the University, including persons with honorary positions, conducting research within, or on behalf of, the University.

### **2. Standards of Professional Behaviour in Research**

- 2.1 All researchers within the University have a duty to society, to their profession, to the University and to those funding their research, to conduct their research in the most conscientious and responsible manner possible. The Nolan Committee on Standards in Public Life (1995) identified seven principles which have relevance to best practice in the conduct of research: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership. Together, these principles provide a foundation for the personal integrity that should be reflected in the professional conduct of research.
- 2.2 Although these principles do of course still apply to good practice in research, this *Code* has been updated to reflect more recent publications, in particular: *The Concordat to Support Research Integrity* (Universities UK, 2012).
- 2.3 The core elements which apply to research integrity are: honesty; rigour; transparency and open communication; care and respect. The fundamental premise on which this *Code* is based is the absolute necessity of ensuring and demonstrating that all research carried out in the name of the University is conducted in good faith, is of high quality, is socially and ethically responsible and is wholly free from the taint of fraud or malpractice. Where research involves live subjects, it must also be able to show proper concern for the welfare of those subjects, including, where appropriate, full and informed consent and respect for confidentiality.
- 2.4 Responsibility for adherence to the principles is collective and devolves not only to individual researchers but also to teams and especially to professors, team leaders, supervisors, coordinators and managers. It applies not just to the design of individual research projects but also to the training, supervision and management of researchers and to those with responsibility for supporting, promoting and disseminating research. University staff members in research leadership or research supervisory positions have an obligation to foster personal integrity in the conduct of staff and students under their direction. Research misconduct is least likely to arise in an environment where good research practice (e.g. documentation of results, peer review of research, regular discussion and seminars) is in force and where there is adequate supervision at all relevant levels.

- 2.4 Similar responsibilities apply to the ethical basis of research and to the safety of all involved in the research process. Many professional associations have ethical codes and guidelines for the conduct of research and University personnel are expected to comply with such standards. The University has published elsewhere a *Code of Practice for Ethical Standards in Research involving Human Participants* and a broader *Research Ethics Framework*, and procedures exist to ensure that all research proposals are adequately scrutinised from this perspective. The former *Code* helps to ensure that the practice of research will be consistent with the principles outlined in the current *Code*, and vice-versa. A related University document, *Guide to Good Practice in Research* more fully describes the principles and protocols applying to all research conducted in the name of the University of Bolton.
- 2.5 Researchers whose work is funded, in whole or in part, by external bodies will be expected to comply with any policies and procedures originating from those bodies to the extent that they are consistent with this *Code*.
- 2.6 All staff and students should know about and be expected to comply with this *Code* and the University's *Guide to Good Practice in Research*.

### 3. Definition of Misconduct in Research

- 3.1 All researchers within the University are expected to observe high standards of professional behaviour both in the practice of research and in the publication of research. Any practice or conduct by a member of the University community that seriously deviates from those ethical standards for proposing, conducting and publishing research constitutes research misconduct and violation of University policy and renders the member liable to the University's disciplinary procedures.
- 3.2 Research misconduct includes, but is not limited to:
- i. **Plagiarism** may be defined as the **representation of another person's work**, without acknowledgement of the source, as the student's own for the purposes of satisfying assessment requirements. This includes information taken from the internet as well as published works. Examples of plagiarism are:
    - copying the work of another person (including a fellow student) without acknowledging the source through the appropriate form of citation;
    - the summarising of another person's work by simply changing a few words or altering the order of presentation, without acknowledgement;
    - the use of ideas or intellectual data of another person without acknowledgement of the source, or the submission or presentation of work as if it were the student's own, which are substantially the ideas or intellectual data of another person;

- ii. **Collusion** is where **two or more students collaborate** to produce a piece of work which is then submitted as though it were an individual student's own work;
- iii. **Fabrication of data** refers to the **falsification of data** (either qualitative or quantitative), through invention or amendment, which is then presented by the student as if it had been legitimately gathered in line with the norms of the discipline concerned;
- iv. **Duplication** – refers to the inclusion in work of any material which is identical or similar to material which has **already been submitted** by the student for any other assessment within the University or elsewhere;
- v. **Commissioning** – involves **requesting another person to complete** an assessment which is then submitted as the student's own work;
- vi. **Theft of work** – submitting another's work as the suspected student's own, either in whole or in part, **without that student's permission**;
- vii. **Bribery and blackmail** - paying or **offering inducements or coercing** another person to obtain an advantage;
- viii. **False declarations** – **Misreporting facts and/or falsification of documents** to gain an advantage. This may relate to (but is not limited to) obtaining an extension, claims for mitigating circumstances and/or appeals;
- ix. **Failure to meet ethical, legal and professional obligations** - for example falsification of credentials; failure to declare competing interests; misrepresentation of involvement or authorship; misrepresentation of interests; breach of confidentiality; lack of informed consent; misuse of personal data; and abuse of research subjects or materials or other conduct which seriously deviates from accepted ethical standards in research;
- x. **Improper dealing with allegations of misconduct** - failing to address possible infringements such as attempts to cover up misconduct and reprisals against whistle-blowers.

This list is not intended to be exhaustive. Honest errors and differences in, for example, research methodology and interpretations are not examples of research misconduct.

## 4. Procedures

The University is committed to ensuring that all allegations of research misconduct are investigated thoroughly, fairly and expeditiously, and with care and sensitivity. To this end, the procedure for handling allegations of research misconduct is separated into two stages. Firstly, an initial assessment to determine whether there is a prima-facie case for an investigation and, secondly, a formal investigation to examine and evaluate all the relevant facts, and to determine whether research misconduct has been committed. Reasonable adjustments will be made to all procedures to ensure that no individual against whom an allegation is made is placed at a disadvantage by virtue of a disability or specific learning disability.

### 4.1 Initial Allegation of Research Misconduct

- 4.1.1 Any member of the University who believes that an act of research misconduct has occurred or is occurring should notify the Head of School or manager of the academic department to which the individual suspected to have perpetrated the research misconduct is attached. If, for any reason, this is not possible or appropriate, the individual should contact the senior University manager with responsibility for research (the '**Head of School or other responsible senior manager**').
- 4.1.2 Any person or organization external to the University wishing to report suspected research misconduct should contact the Head of School or other responsible senior manager.
- 4.1.3 All possible steps will be taken to protect the anonymity of any individual reporting suspected misconduct until such time as it is decided that a formal investigation is warranted.

### 4.2 Initial Assessment to determine whether a Formal Investigation is warranted

- 4.2.1 Unless the report of an allegation of research misconduct is clearly frivolous or mistaken, or where the alleged misconduct is of a minor nature suitable for informal, local resolution, the local manager shall immediately inform the Head of School or other responsible senior manager, identifying any external funding sources for the research which is the subject of the inquiry, and any external collaborators. The local manager, or Head of School or other responsible senior manager, shall if necessary also ask the person making the allegation to submit in writing a detailed statement in support of the allegation. The Head of School or other responsible senior manager may also, at his or her discretion, choose to evaluate anonymous allegations, depending on the seriousness of the issues and the feasibility of confirming the allegation with credible sources. The Head of School or other responsible senior manager will normally notify the Vice Chancellor and the Director of Human Resources (or, if a research student is the subject of the allegation, s/he may choose to notify the appropriate University postgraduate research student manager, at his/her discretion).

- 4.2.2 If the allegation is subject to criminal or civil law, or would be subject to instant dismissal or suspension under other procedures, it should be dealt with through the appropriate mechanism. Unless such action is obviated by the former, the Head of School or other responsible senior manager shall, within a maximum of 30 calendar days of the allegation being reported, appoint an Assessment Team and its Chair consisting of a minimum of two individuals who have no conflicts of interest in the case, are unbiased and have expertise to evaluate the appropriate research issues. The Assessment Team should specifically limit its scope to that of evaluating the facts only to determine whether there is sufficient evidence of research misconduct to warrant a formal investigation. The Assessment Team should keep proper records of their proceedings.
- 4.2.3 The individual against whom the allegation is made (the respondent) shall be informed in writing by the Head of School or other responsible senior manager of the allegations and the membership of the Assessment Team and be invited to respond orally and in writing and to produce evidence in his or her defence. The respondent should be given a copy of this *Code of Policy and Procedures for Investigating and Resolving Allegations of Misconduct in Research*.
- 4.2.4 The assessment will normally involve the Assessment Team interviewing the initiator, the respondent and key witnesses, and examining relevant research records and materials.
- 4.2.5 The Assessment Team shall complete the assessment and submit its report in writing to the Head of School or other responsible senior manager within a maximum of 30 calendar days from the date the team is appointed. The report should state what evidence was reviewed, summarise relevant interviews and draw conclusions as to whether a Formal Investigation is warranted.
- 4.2.6 The respondent shall be given a copy of the report and evidence considered by the Assessment Team. Care must be taken to maintain the anonymity of the initiator and key witnesses. Any comments that the respondent submits within 10 days will be attached as an addendum to the report.
- 4.2.7 The Head of School or other responsible senior manager shall determine from the report and any addendum whether to conduct a Formal Investigation, drop the matter, or take some other appropriate action. They may determine that a minor infraction only has occurred because there was no evident intention to deceive, and recommend informal action through mentoring, education and guidance.
- 4.2.8 The initiator and respondent will be informed in writing of the Head of School or other responsible senior manager's decision within a maximum of 20 calendar days of the Head of School or other responsible senior manager receiving the report.

### 4.3 Formal Investigation

The purpose of the Formal Investigation is to examine and evaluate all relevant facts to determine whether research misconduct has been committed, and if so, the responsible person(s) and the seriousness of the misconduct.

- 4.3.1 If the Head of School or other responsible senior manager decides that a Formal Investigation shall be conducted, s/he shall arrange that other appropriate persons be notified, including the Vice Chancellor, Academic Vice Chancellor (Academic Operations), Director of Human Resources (or, if a research student is the subject of the allegation, s/he may choose to notify the appropriate University postgraduate research student manager, at his/her discretion), and any relevant external funding bodies and other collaborators. (Several Research Councils and research charities have clauses stating that they should be notified of any cases of suspected misconduct and kept informed of developments. At the initial stages of the investigation the funding body would not normally suspend the grant or contract if adequate steps are taken to proceed with the investigation.) However, it is also essential to limit circulation of details of the allegation strictly to those who have a real interest and to protect the identity of the potentially innocent respondent.
- 4.3.2 The Head of School or other responsible senior manager shall appoint an Investigation Panel and its Chair within a maximum of 20 calendar days after the decision to proceed to this stage. The Investigation Panel will consist of at least three individuals who have no conflicts of interest in the case, are unbiased and have expertise to evaluate the appropriate research issues. At least one member of the Panel will be a peer professional external to the University. No member of the Assessment Team may serve on the Investigation Panel. The Panel must keep meticulous records of the proceedings and will be provided with a clerk selected by the Head of School or other responsible senior manager.
- 4.3.3 As soon as the Panel is appointed, its clerk shall notify the respondent in writing of the allegation, the membership of the Panel and of the Panel's intended procedure and invite him or her to respond to the allegation, normally within 21 calendar days. The Panel should interview the respondent to allow them to present information and respond to the subject matter of the investigation.
- 4.3.4 The Panel shall determine its own detailed procedure. Specifically, it may:
- (a) interview the respondent and any other parties it chooses, including the initiator;
  - (b) widen the scope of its investigation if it considers that necessary;
  - (c) require the respondent – and, if it judges it necessary, other members of the University or external personnel – to produce files, notebooks and other records;

(d) seek evidence from other parties.

Any person that is interviewed by the Panel may choose to bring an accompanying person to the interview.

4.3.5 The Investigation Panel shall submit a report to the Head of School or other responsible senior manager in writing within a maximum of 90 calendar days of the panel being appointed. The report shall generally describe the investigative process, indicating whether or not it finds the allegations proven in whole or in part and giving reasons for its conclusions. It shall uphold the allegation only if it finds the allegation proven beyond reasonable doubt.

4.3.6 The Head of School or other responsible senior manager will convey the Panel's findings to the respondent, the initiator, the Vice Chancellor and Academic Vice Chancellor (Academic Operations), the relevant local manager and any other persons or bodies as he or she deems appropriate, including the Director of Human Resources (or, if a research student is the subject of the allegation, s/he may choose to notify the relevant University postgraduate research student manager, at his/her discretion), and any external funding bodies or collaborators.

#### 4.4 Appeal

Any appeal by the respondent or the initiator against the findings of the Investigation Panel must be addressed to the Vice Chancellor and normally lodged within thirty calendar days of the findings being made available to the person making the appeal. The Vice Chancellor or nominee will refer the appeal to a senior officer of his or her choosing who has not previously had a role in the case and that person may take such action as he or she deems necessary including, in exceptional circumstances, the instigation of a new investigation. The Vice Chancellor will notify the respondent in writing of the outcome of the appeal. The decision of the Vice Chancellor is final.

#### 4.5 Subsequent Action

4.5.1 If the Panel has found the allegation proven in whole or in part and any appeal has not been upheld, the Vice Chancellor will determine what action needs to be taken. Such action may include one or more of:

- (a) where necessary, correcting the research record;
- (b) informal action through mentoring, education and guidance, where it is determined that a minor infraction only has occurred because there was no evident intention to deceive;
- (c) conveying the Panel's findings to any relevant professional bodies, grant-awarding or sponsoring bodies, research participants, or any other parties with an interest (including the respondent's employer if not the University)

and (where relevant) the editors of any journals which have published articles by the person against whom the allegation has been upheld;

- (d) for University employees, recommending the initiation of formal disciplinary proceedings, under the University's published disciplinary procedures or other relevant bodies' procedures where they prevail, against the individual against whom the allegation has been upheld. If the University's disciplinary procedures are initiated, the Vice Chancellor, Academic Vice Chancellor (Academic Operations), University Registrar and Director of human resources, will determine whether or not the misconduct constitutes good cause for dismissal and hence which route through the formal disciplinary procedures is appropriate.
- (e) for University research students, taking such action as is deemed appropriate to the offence, selected from the choices listed in the University's Academic Regulations (Conferment) or Examination Regulations (Regulations Regarding Candidates' Use of Unfair Means in Assessment), including recommending to Senate the rescinding of any degree or other qualification which has been obtained, in whole or in part, through proven misconduct in research;
- (f) for visiting researchers, the termination of their appointment with the University.

4.5.2 If the allegation has not been upheld, the Vice Chancellor will take all appropriate steps to preserve the good reputation of the respondent and to protect the complainant from victimization. If the case has received any publicity, the respondent shall be offered the possibility of having an official statement released by the University to the press or other relevant parties, or both. If the Panel has found that the initiator's allegation was malicious, the Vice Chancellor or nominee may recommend that action be initiated under the University's disciplinary procedures.

## 5. Maximum Time Scale of Investigation into Allegation of Research Misconduct

DAY	STAGE OF INVESTIGATION
1	Allegation Reported to Senior Manager.
30	Appointment of Assessment Team.
60	Report of Assessment Team.
70	Respondent's comments attached to Report.
90	Decision by Senior Manager whether to proceed to Formal Investigation. Respondent notified of this decision.
110	Appointment of Investigation Panel.
200	Report of Investigation Panel.
230	Appeal to Vice Chancellor by respondent or initiator. The decision of the Vice Chancellor is final.



Note that the timescale for any stage noted above is the maximum that would be expected and that, under normal circumstances, good practice will dictate that the various stages should be expedited well within these maxima.

## 6. Useful Resources

Active Risk Management in Education, Research Misconduct, February 2006.  
<http://www.jisclegal.ac.uk/Projects/ActiveRiskManagementinHigherEducation/ARMEDResearchmisconduct.aspx>

Association of Medical Research Charities, AMRC Guidelines on Good Research Practice, 2002.

[http://www.amrc.org.uk/research-resources\\_guidance](http://www.amrc.org.uk/research-resources_guidance)

Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council, Safeguarding Good Scientific Practice, June 2006.

<http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/nmsruntime/saveasdialog.aspx?IID=1579&sID=8354>

European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity, March 2011.

[http://www.esf.org/index.php?eID=tx\\_ccdamdl\\_file&p\[file\]=33299&p\[dl\]=1&p\[pid\]=4053&p\[site\]=European%20Science%20Foundation&p\[t\]=1366789054&hash=43470b63202e08a36f60254afc9237d0&l=en](http://www.esf.org/index.php?eID=tx_ccdamdl_file&p[file]=33299&p[dl]=1&p[pid]=4053&p[site]=European%20Science%20Foundation&p[t]=1366789054&hash=43470b63202e08a36f60254afc9237d0&l=en)

Government Office for Science: Rigour, Respect, Responsibility: a Universal Ethical Code for Scientists, September 2007.

<http://www.bis.gov.uk/assets/goscience/docs/u/universal-ethical-code-scientists.pdf>

Improving Dispute Resolution Advisory Service for Further and Higher Education: Advice for individuals, October 2010.

<http://www.idras.ac.uk/individuals/>

Improving Dispute Resolution Advisory Service for Further and Higher Education: Advice for institutions, October 2012.

<http://www.idras.ac.uk/institutions/>

Medical Research Council, MRC Good Research Practice, August 2012.

<http://www.mrc.ac.uk/research/research-policy-ethics/good-research-practice/>

Medical Research Council, MRC Scientific Misconduct Policy and Procedure, December 2008.

<http://www.mrc.ac.uk/research/research-policy-ethics/allegations-of-research-misconduct/>

Office of the Independent Adjudicator, <http://www.oiahe.org.uk/>

Research Councils UK: Policy and Guidelines on the Governance of Good Research Conduct, February 2013.

<http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/documents/reviews/grc/goodresearchconductcode.pdf>

Singapore Statement on Research Integrity, September 2010.

<http://www.singaporestatement.org/>

The Seven Principles in Public Life – Summary of the Nolan Committee’s First Report on Standards in Public Life, 1995.

<http://www.archive.official-documents.co.uk/document/parlment/nolan/nolan.htm>

UK Research Integrity Office: Code of Practice for Research: Promoting good practice and preventing misconduct, 2009.

<http://www.ukrio.org/what-we-do/code-of-practice-for-research>

UK Research Integrity Office: Procedure for the Investigation of Misconduct in Research, 2008.

<http://www.ukrio.org/what-we-do/procedure-for-the-investigation-of-misconduct-in-research/>

Universities UK: The concordat to support research integrity, July 2012.

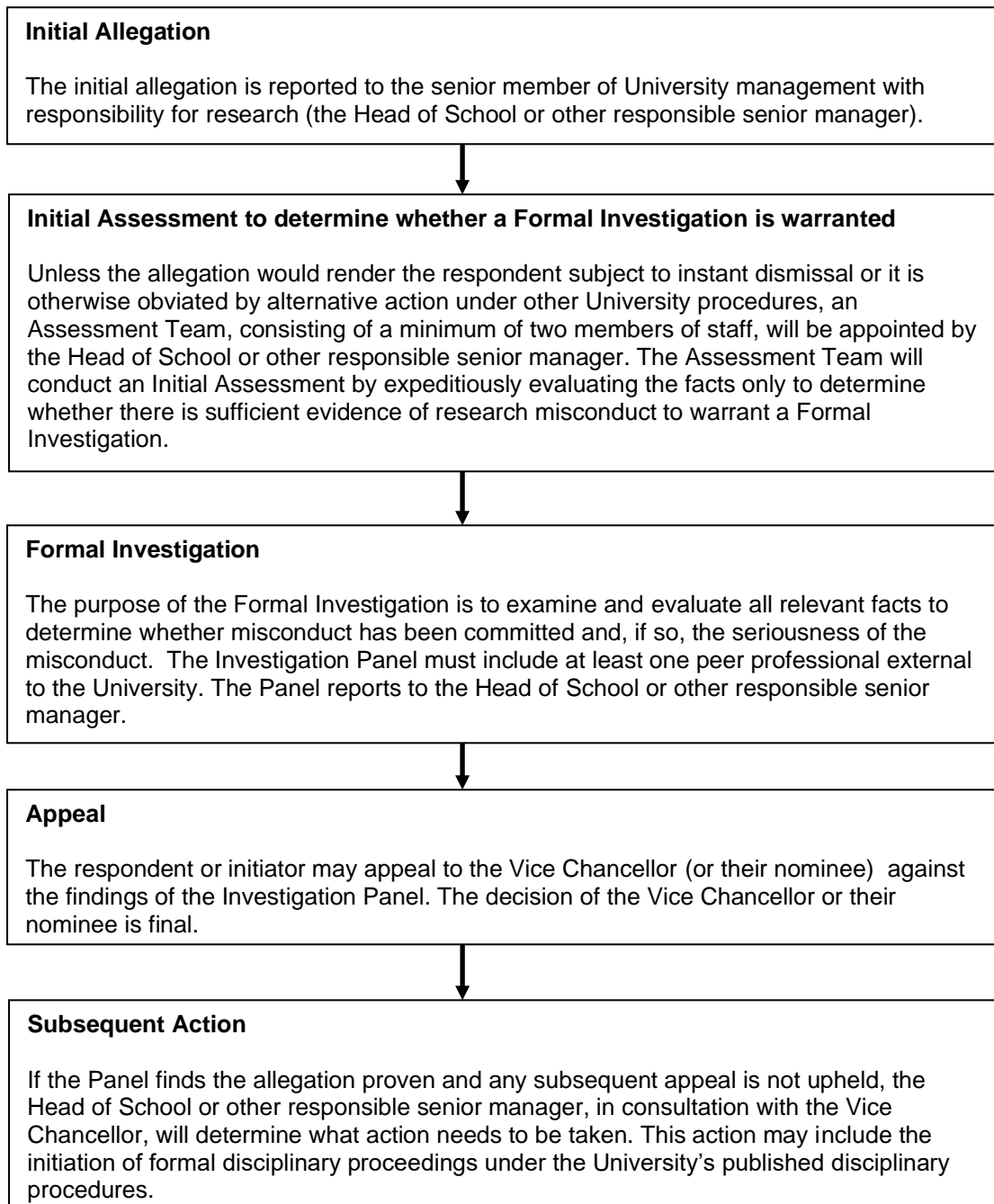
<http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/highereducation/Documents/2012/TheConcordatToSupportResearchIntegrity.pdf>

Welcome Trust, Guidelines on Good Research Practice, including Statement on the Handling of Allegations of Research Misconduct, November 2005.

<http://www.welcome.ac.uk/About-us/Policy/Policy-and-position-statements/WTD002756.htm>

## **Flowchart: Investigating and Resolving Allegations of Misconduct in Research** (each stage is described in more detail in the main annex)

The University is committed to ensuring that all allegations of research misconduct are investigated thoroughly, fairly and expeditiously, and with care and sensitivity. To this end, the procedure for handling allegations of research misconduct is separated into two stages. Firstly, an initial assessment to determine whether there is a prima-facie case for an investigation and, secondly, a formal investigation to examine and evaluate all the relevant facts to determine whether misconduct has been committed.



## Annex 8: Framework for Research Degrees by Distance Learning

This annex relates to the specific requirements applicable to those students seeking admission to postgraduate research degrees by distance learning. **Note:** This annex does not apply to students who are registered and studying at University approved doctoral centres as they are not classified as 'distance learning' students.

### 1. Principles

1. Studying for a research degree by distance learning presents both unique opportunities and challenges. At admission, Schools should carefully consider, and discuss with the applicant, whether it would be appropriate for the student to register on a PhD by distance learning as opposed to a standard, campus-based full-time or part-time PhD.

1.1 Research degrees by distance learning are most likely to be suitable where:

- a. the student has particular research interests which lend themselves to study conducted primarily at a distance (for instance, a work-based project or one requiring extensive field work);
- b. resources and facilities needed for the student's research project are guaranteed to be available locally to the student and/or electronically;
- c. there is continuing access to a research environment comparable to that experienced when studying on campus or at a doctoral centre;
- d. the student can dedicate the necessary time both for their PhD study and to meet the attendance requirements (see section 3).
- e. the student has the necessary self-motivation to succeed in independent study with minimal informal face-to-face support;
- f. the student has personal or professional circumstances which prevent study in standard mode but allow study in distance-learning mode.

1.2 Schools should make clear to all applicants, both in published information and in conversation, the limits imposed by distance-learning study for a research degree: for instance, that supervision will primarily be via video-conferencing and email; the limited access to central / School on-site resources and training; additional costs of visas (if appropriate), and travel and accommodation for visits to Bolton.

### 2. Requirements

2.1 The admissions requirements (for instance, English language requirements and prior qualifications) and admissions procedure for research degrees by distance-learning are the same as for other research degrees, with the following exception. All decisions for admission to research degrees by distance learning should be taken through evaluation of the factors listed on the following checklist, to be assessed through discussion with the applicant:

- That the applicant is fully aware of the demands of distance-learning as opposed to standard mode of study
- That the applicant has sufficient time available to engage in formal and informal supervision, and that time-differences between them and the supervisor will not inhibit this

- That the proposed supervisor is willing and able to undertake supervision remotely
- That the applicant has appropriate study space available to them
- That the applicant can provide evidenced proof of learning resources and facilities which are available to the applicant locally and/or online, necessary for the completion of the proposed research study
- That the applicant has appropriate internet connectivity, software and hardware to support research and video-conferencing, or that such will be provided by the School
- That it is feasible for the applicant to engage in the University's research community (taking into account infrastructure, logistics, time-differences) through the VLE
- That the applicant will be able to engage in required training via the VLE
- That, taking into account the factors in the checklist and any local opportunities available to the applicant, that the School and applicant are confident that it will be possible to meet the applicant's individual training and development needs.

The following factors must also be taken into consideration by applicants:

- That there needs to be sufficient time available to conduct their research throughout the duration of their programme
- That there are on-campus visit requirements which the applicant must organise and fund themselves (see section 3)
- That supervision may be primarily by video conferencing
- That there will be limited availability of / access to central training / on-campus training

2.2 Transfers from distance-learning research degrees to on-campus research degrees are possible, subject to consideration by the Board of Studies. Transfers from on-campus research degrees to distance-learning research degrees are likewise possible, subject to consideration by the Board of Studies, which should evaluate the factors above as per a new applicant.

### 3. Attendance requirements

3.1 Students registered on Research degrees by distance learning will be required to visit the University. Visits will be used to support the students' research and academic development, familiarisation with their School's research community, and their professional development. Expectations as to what students will do and achieve whilst visiting the University will be agreed between the student and Director of Studies in each instance, in sufficient time to allow the student to appropriately prepare for the visit.

3.2 The following visit requirements will apply for all such students (with no distinction between full- and part-time students):

- a. visit to coincide with the student's R1 panel;
- b. visit to coincide with the student's R2 panel and;
- c. visit to coincide with the final viva voce examination (see below and notwithstanding paragraph 7.1 in the *Research Degree Regulations*.)

3.3 The pattern (but not necessarily precise timings) of visits will be agreed prior to admission and at the start of each academic year. For international students, this will be conducted in sufficient time as necessary to meet applications for visas. The

timing of visits will take account of constraints imposed by visa regulations (see below).

3.4 Students whose circumstances leave them unable to meet the visit requirements will be required to seek an exemption from the Board of Studies.

3.5 Students' on-campus visits must be detailed in the Student/Supervisor agreement (detailed in section 7 of the *Code of Practice for Research Students and Supervisors*).

3.6 The University will not provide funding for the cost of visas, travel and accommodation for visits: these additional costs do not form part of the student's tuition fees, and will need to be met by the student or their funder. The University will not be responsible for organising or providing travel or accommodation arrangements for visits.

#### 4. Facilities and resources

4.1 Students registered on distance-learning Research degrees will have access to the University's / School's on-site facilities and resources during formal visits to Bolton. Outside of these visits, access will necessarily be limited to electronic and online resources (such as e-books and e-journals). Distance-learning research degree study is most likely to be appropriate for students who have particular interests where resources / facilities are available locally to support their research, or where their research can be conducted primarily via online resources. Schools should ensure that students have access to the resources necessary to their study (taking into constraints on access to on-site resources and any local resources) at admission, and monitor this throughout the student's programme.

4.2 Where applicable, formal letter(s) detailing access to a library and/or specialist research facilities in order to support their research must be provided.

#### 5. Research Community

5.1 The University is committed to ensuring that all research students benefit from a supportive research community. This presents a challenge for students studying at a distance: Applicants should demonstrate how they will overcome that challenge. In support of such students, the University will:

- Encourage students on Research degrees by distance learning to attend relevant research events during their visits to Bolton, and consider timing visits / events to coincide with one another to support this;
- Encourage communication between distance-learning research degree students and other research degree students via participation in postgraduate research VLE sites

#### 6. Training and Development

6.1 Students will have access to the University's postgraduate research Moodle sites and will be actively encouraged to be actively involved

6.2 Students will be welcome to attend the University's on-campus postgraduate research workshops and training sessions.

## 7. Student Representation and Engagement

7.1 Students registered on Research degrees by distance learning should be included in University mechanisms for student representation and engagement, as per on-campus research degree students.

<b>RESEARCH DEGREE REGULATIONS</b>	
Policy ref:	
Version number	2.3
Version date	November 2020
Name of Developer/Reviewer	Andrew T Graham/Greg Allen
Policy Owner (Group/Centre/Unit)	Research & Graduate School
Person responsible for implementation (postholder)	Designated officer in the R&GS
Approving committee/board	Senate/Board of Studies for Research Degrees/Education Committee
Date approved	
Effective from	9 December 2020
Dissemination method e.g. website	Website
Review frequency	Annual
Reviewing committee	Board of Studies for Research Degrees
Consultation history (individuals/group consulted and dates)	As above
Document history (e.g. rationale for and dates of previous amendments)	<p>Reviewed and updated September 2012;            Technical update September 2014;            Amendments to regulations (sect. 5 &amp; Annex3) March 2015. Sect 13.2 amended to reflect para 11.17            Approved by Senate on 20 Feb. 2017            Typographical error in table in 4.1 corrected on 13 March 2017            Mandatory Submission 4 altered to account for new Annual Progress Review (Approved by BoSRD 13 Jun 2018)            Section 9 amended to align with the sector and allow for a wider field to be used for examining whilst maintaining rigour. (Approved by BoSRD email circulation Jun 2018)            Additional para 10.4 (iii) to meet Board requirements for major changes in July 2019            Revised para 12.7 along with R10 Nov. 2020 (approved BoSRD 9/12/2020)</p>