

**DUBLIN CITY UNIVERSITY**

**ACADEMIC REGULATIONS FOR POSTGRADUATE DEGREES  
BY RESEARCH AND THESIS**

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## 1. PRINCIPLES

*Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis* relate to the University's research degree offerings. They are designed to safeguard both the academic standards of the University and the interests of individual students.

These regulations are guided by the University's Marks and Standards; the Irish Universities Quality Board's 'Good Practice in the Organisation of PhD Programmes in Irish Higher Education', 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (2009); the 'Irish Universities' PhD Graduates Skills' statement (2009); and the Irish Universities' definition of a structured PhD as approved by the Irish Universities Association (2009).

These regulations are subject to change. In any given academic session, a student is subject to *the regulations that are* in place at the beginning of that academic session.

**In addition to making doctoral awards, the University makes awards at Master's level (Level 9 on the National Framework of Qualifications) on the basis of research.**

### 1.1 Dublin City University (DCU) Doctoral Awards

The doctoral degree is the highest academic qualification awarded by the University and is at Level 10 on the National Framework of Qualifications. It is awarded to successful candidates on the strength of a body of original work of scholarship prepared and presented in accordance with internationally accepted academic standards.

All candidates who wish to pursue a research degree in DCU will:

- 1 have a primary supervisor (or supervisors), as well as a supervisory panel which will be involved in the annual progression assessment.<sup>1</sup> The panel will comprise the supervisor plus at least one additional independent member of academic staff. In cases where students also have an external supervisor, that supervisor will automatically be a member of the panel. The panel should be established within three months of the student's registration.
- 2 undertake a training needs analysis and maintain a Personal Development Plan (PDP).

Supervision remains the sole prerogative of the supervisor(s) who has/have full responsibility for the overall management and supervision of the student's work and progress. While a supervisor will be an expert in the field of study, there is no requirement that all members of the supervisory panel be experts in the field of study but they should have some experience of research degree supervision in a similar or related discipline. The principal aim of the supervisory panel is to provide a supportive independent view on progression.

The University offers four types of doctoral programme, as outlined below.

#### 1.1.1 Doctor of Philosophy – Traditional Model

The degree of PhD is awarded, without classification, on the basis of a thesis submitted for examination. It has a nominal value of 270 ECTS credits.

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<sup>1</sup> This requirement for a supervisory panel applies to candidates first registered in 2011/2012 or later

The University is committed to providing its research students with the best possible research experience. In that context it is very supportive of research students engaged in the traditional mode of PhD research who wish to take additional courses to enhance their generic and disciplinary research skills. Students registered under this model can take a maximum of 30 additional ECTS credits by means of discipline-specific modules, generic research and transferable skills, and active contribution to the University. Students who opt to take such modules must have the support of their supervisors. The successful completion of such modules will be recorded on a student's transcript. All module descriptors must be approved by the Graduate Studies Board. Results of modules will be considered by Faculty Awards Boards for Research Degrees.

Registration is normally for four years for a full-time student and six years for a part-time student.

### **1.1.2 Doctor of Philosophy – Structured PhD**

The core component of a structured PhD programme is the advancement of knowledge through original research. At the same time, the structured PhD is designed to meet the needs of an employment market that is wider than academia. In that context, the structured PhD involves a high-quality research experience, training and output consistent with international norms and best practice.

To support the original research activity, the following elements are included:

- a formalised integrated programme of education, training, and personal and professional development activities
- the development of discipline-specific knowledge, research skills and generic/transferable skills
- declared outcomes and graduate attributes in line with national and international best practice.

The following also apply:

- Supervision is by a principal supervisor or principal supervisors, with a supporting panel approved by the institution
- Progress to completion is formally monitored against published criteria and supported by formal institutional arrangements in line with national and international best practice
- Successful completion and examination of the research thesis is the basis for the award of the PhD degree
- Registration is normally for four years for a full-time student.

Candidates who wish to pursue a Structured PhD programme will:

undertake discipline-specific modules, research skills courses, and generic and transferable skills courses, as agreed in their PDP, to the value of at least 30 ECTS credits.

The total ECTS credits from a combination of the taught and research elements of a Structured PhD will not be fewer than 300 and not be more than 360. Within these overall limits, the credits for the Structured PhD are made up as follows:

- a research thesis equivalent to 270 ECTS credits
- discipline-specific courses of a minimum of 20 and up to a maximum of 80 ECTS credits

- research skills, transferable and generic skills courses of a minimum of 10 and up to a maximum of 50 ECTS credits.

All module descriptors must be approved by the Graduate Studies Board. Results of modules will be considered by Faculty Awards Boards for Research Degrees.

### **1.1.3 Professional Doctorate**

The University offers the opportunity for a Professional Doctoral Programme in a number of disciplines. The Professional Doctoral Programme is usually a part-time research-based programme. The core aim of the Professional Doctorate is to make significant contributions to knowledge of professional practice through research. In that context the Professional Doctorate aims to foster professional development through research as well as meeting the requirements of rigour and originality expected of a doctorate.

A Professional Doctorate normally involves the production of a number of significant pieces of written work followed by a thesis. The total ECTS credits will be 270. The written assignment should constitute no more than half the total credits. The Professional Doctorate is aimed at enabling students, by means of their research, to develop new knowledge so as to advance professional practice in their professional fields.

The University currently awards the following Professional Doctorates:

EdD	Doctor of Education
DBA	Doctor of Business Administration
DPsych	Doctor of Psychotherapy
DMusPerf	Doctor of Music in Performance.

### **1.1.4 Doctorate by Publication and Doctorate by Portfolio/Composition**

The University offers the opportunity for candidates to pursue a Doctorate by Publication or Doctorate by Portfolio/Composition. The degree of PhD by published work or Portfolio/Composition is awarded in recognition of research which has made a significant and coherent contribution to knowledge and is of scholarly and academic content. The submission of a thesis which must satisfy the appointed examiners is also required.

All candidates for doctoral degrees will be examined in the same manner through external and internal examination of the submitted thesis followed by a *viva voce* examination.

## **1.2 Master's Degree by Research**

The Master's degree by Research is awarded without classification on the basis of a thesis. It has a nominal value of 180 ECTS credits. Examination will take place through external and internal examination of the submitted thesis. A *viva voce* examination is not mandatory but can be requested by the examiners.

The following awards may be made:

MA	Master of Arts
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MBS Master of Business Studies

MSc Master of Science

MEng Master of Engineering.

## 2. GENERAL REGULATIONS

- 2.1 Academic Council has overall responsibility in all matters related to graduate research degrees. The University's Graduate Studies Board is responsible for all policies and procedures relating to graduate research and reports to Academic Council on these.
- 2.2 The University is prepared to consider proposals for programmes of graduate research work concerned with fundamental research or other areas of scholarship or with any aspects of industrial, commercial, artistic or professional activity.
- 2.3 The University encourages collaboration in programmes of research between the University and other educational, industrial, commercial, professional or research institutions and is happy to receive joint applications in conjunction with such institutions. Such collaborations are given the name *cotutelle* or joint doctoral degrees if between Universities or institutions of similar standing. The award is to be by both institutions and each award will include relevant certification stating that the award was made as a consequence of a conjoint arrangement between both institutions. In such instances the student will undertake one *viva voce* examination which is recognised by both institutions (unless, in the case of a Master's student, it is agreed that a *viva voce* examination is not necessary). Proposals to establish *cotutelle* programmes must be submitted for the consideration of the Graduate Studies Board.
- 2.4 Students registered for graduate research degree programmes are entitled to the same rights and privileges as all other registered students and are subject to the same Code of Discipline. Students must comply with the University's regulations governing graduate research degrees and are obliged to adhere to the University's Guidelines on Best Practice in Research Ethics ([http://www.dcu.ie/internal/research/rec/guidelines\\_research\\_ethics.pdf](http://www.dcu.ie/internal/research/rec/guidelines_research_ethics.pdf))
- 2.5 A student may normally be registered at any time for one degree only, and work to be submitted for an award cannot be submitted elsewhere for a degree or other similar award. Any exceptional application for dual registration must be made to Graduate Studies Board.
- 2.6 Each student must register with a single School, notwithstanding the fact that he/she may conduct the research across a number of Schools or in one or more University Research Centres.
- 2.7 In the case of interdisciplinary research projects, the School assuming responsibility for the project must be the School with which the student is registered.
- 2.8. All official communications and administrative procedures relating to graduate research applications, offers of places, registration, continued registration, annual reports, examination procedures and results shall be conducted through and by the Registry.

### **3. QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS**

- 3.1 Prior to submitting an application, a candidate must consult with the appropriate School on the proposed programme of study and must ascertain whether or not the School would be prepared to recommend his/her application to the University.
- 3.2 To register for a graduate research programme, a candidate must normally have obtained a primary degree classification (Level 8) equivalent to second-class honours degree, grade two, from an approved university or an approved equivalent degree-awarding body, or have an approved equivalent professional qualification in an area cognate to the proposed research topic.
  - 3.2.1 Candidates with a taught Master's degree (Level 9) in an appropriate discipline with first - or second-class honours, and candidates with a primary degree in an appropriate discipline with first- or second-class honours, grade one, may apply and be considered for entry to the PhD-track register with a view to proceeding towards a PhD. Such candidates will have to undergo a confirmation procedure after, at most, twenty- one months research for full-time students (and at an appropriate corresponding time for part-time students). Applications from such candidates for confirmation on the PhD register must be supported by the supervisor and will be subject to satisfactory performance in an oral examination conducted by the supervisory panel.
  - 3.2.2 The form requesting the confirmation on the PhD register should be signed by the Head of School or appropriate nominee (such as the Director of Research or Research Convenor within the School). It should include both a report on the oral examination and a general progress report on the student's research performance (as evidenced by a substantial body of work such as a significant written report). In determining whether or not such confirmation should take place, the Graduate Studies Board will require evidence that the student's progress to date has been satisfactory and that the programme of research envisaged provides a satisfactory basis for work at PhD standard. If the outcome of the confirmation procedure is unsuccessful the student may, if appropriate, be invited to complete such research as will allow him/her to graduate with a Master's degree. In exceptional circumstances, students may also be advised to reapply for confirmation on the PhD register within a period of six months; this may be the case if the examiners believe there is real potential but that it is not possible to make a positive recommendation at the original confirmation stage.
  - 3.2.3 Students on the Master's register may apply for transfer to the PhD register under the same conditions, and using the same form, as PhD-track candidates requesting confirmation on the PhD register.
  - 3.2.4 Students may appeal an unsuccessful confirmation or transfer result. The appeal should be referred to the Graduate Studies Board who will establish a sub-committee chaired by the relevant Faculty Associate Dean for Research to hear the appeal. The appeal should be made within fourteen days of the written notification of the result.
- 3.3 Candidates holding an appropriate Master's degree obtained by research may apply for entry to the PhD register to conduct research in a cognate area.
- 3.4 In exceptional circumstances only, candidates for a Master's degree who do not meet the stipulated entry requirements but who can demonstrate exceptional ability or aptitude for academic research may apply to pursue studies for a research degree. Such candidates may be accepted by the Graduate Studies Board without a stipulation that qualifying taught modules first be undertaken; alternatively, one or more

qualifying modules may be stipulated. The admission of candidates not holding a prior degree qualification cognate to the area of research being undertaken, shall be strictly limited and applicable in exceptional cases only. Such applications must be fully supported and endorsed by the School in which the research will be carried out and supervised. The onus will be on the School and the supervisor to give clear reasons for their recommendation in such a case, and the Graduate Studies Board will make the final decision on admission.

#### **4. APPLICATION AND REGISTRATION PROCEDURES**

- 4.1 Candidates must apply through the PAC (Postgraduate Applications Centre) system ([www.pac.ie](http://www.pac.ie)). Only candidates who have contacted the School with which they wish to be registered, and have got an indication that it would be advisable for them to apply, will be able to proceed to the completion of the PAC application. All such candidates need to have the support of a potential supervisor.
- 4.2 Successful candidates will be required to register with the University and pay the appropriate fees.
- 4.3 All students are required to re-register on an annual basis. Such registration is subject to payment of the appropriate fees and satisfactory progress certified by the supervisor and countersigned by the Head of School or nominee.
- 4.4 In normal circumstances, research students registered at DCU will reside within Ireland.
- 4.5 Registered students, or new applicants, wishing to reside and undertake research outside Ireland for a period of six months or more must obtain permission from the Graduate Studies Board.
- 4.6 If a student's research is to be undertaken as part of employment with an industrial partner abroad, there must be a signed standard DCU approved collaboration agreement between the employer and the University, together with the appointment of a suitable external supervisor in the industrial partner organisation who will undertake the day-to-day academic supervision of the student. This external supervisor will report on a regular basis to the nominated DCU academic supervisor.

#### **5. PERIOD OF TIME FOR COMPLETION OF RESEARCH PROGRAMMES**

- 5.1 Students register on either a full-time or a part-time basis. The period normally required by a full-time candidate is two years for a Master's degree and three years for a doctoral degree. In exceptional cases only, the Graduate Studies Board may approve a shorter period. If a student does not complete a doctoral thesis within five years or a Master's thesis within three years he/she must seek express permission from the Graduate Studies Board to be allowed continue his/her studies. Such extensions will be granted only in exceptional cases.
- 5.2 The period required by a part-time candidate will normally be three years for a Master's degree and five years for a doctoral degree. If a part-time student does not complete a doctoral thesis within seven years or a Master's thesis within five years he/she must seek permission from the Graduate Studies Board to be allowed to continue his/her studies. Such extensions will be granted only in exceptional cases.

- 5.3 The normal completion time for a structured PhD will be four years.
- 5.4 The normal completion time for a Professional Doctorate will be four years.
- 5.5 The registration date for Autumn registration is published in the Academic Calendar. The Spring registration date is 1 April for Year 1 students only. Students who register after this date re-register for Year 1 in the following September. (Students should check these dates regularly in case of changes.)

## **6. SUPERVISION OF PROGRAMMES OF RESEARCH GENERAL REGULATIONS PERTAINING TO SUPERVISION**

- 6.1 Each graduate research student will have a suitably qualified supervisor whose responsibility will be to supervise the student on a regular and frequent basis.
- 6.2 In certain cases, where there is a requirement that more than one area of expertise be covered, there may be more than one supervisor. The supervisors in this instance are referred to as co-supervisors, and have equal rights and responsibilities.
- 6.3 In certain cases, there may be a principal supervisor and a secondary supervisor:
  - 6.3.1 Where a second or subsequent supervisor is not a member of University staff, such a person or persons will be deemed to be secondary supervisors and the University staff member will be the principal supervisor. The question of remuneration to this person is a matter for local decision and implementation. All relevant forms must incorporate the names of all supervisors. The University will, however, accept the signature of one supervisor as signalling assent on the part of both or all supervisors.
  - 6.3.2 Where a student is being supervised by a member of staff who is due to retire, or resigns from the University during the student's programme of study, then it is expected that the supervisor continue supervising the student in their new capacity and an additional supervisor should be appointed and approved by the relevant School when the decision to retire or resign is known. The additional supervisor should become the principal supervisor from the date that the retirement or resignation takes effect. The Registry must be informed of the new arrangements using the appropriate form.
- 6.4 Academic staff who undertake the supervision of PhD students or Professional Doctorate Students are themselves required to hold a doctoral qualification and/or a professorship or associate professorship and have relevant experience in an area cognate to the proposed area of research.
- 6.5 A person who does not hold a doctoral qualification and/or a professorship or associate professorship may, however, act as co-supervisor provided the other supervisor holds such an award or title.
- 6.6 Academic staff undertaking the supervision of research Master's students are themselves required to hold at least a Master's qualification in an area cognate to the proposed area of research.
- 6.7 Where a supervisor is not employed on a permanent contract with the university, a co-supervisor who is on a permanent contract must be appointed.

- 6.8 Where a supervisor is absent (e.g. on sabbatical leave) for part of the duration of the student's research, it will be the School's responsibility to determine whether or not a replacement supervisor is needed for this period.
- 6.9 A member of academic staff must decline appointment as a supervisor if they expect not to be able to discharge the responsibilities of supervision in full.
- 6.10 Members of academic staff should normally act as either supervisor or co-supervisor to a maximum of ten research students at any one time. All cases in which the figure exceeds ten should be referred to the Head of School (or the Executive Dean of Faculty where the Head of School is the supervisor) for a decision as to whether or not it is appropriate that the proposed supervisor accept an applicant. Where more than one School is involved in the process, the relevant Head of School is the Head of School of which the proposed supervisor is a member.
- 6.11 Where research is conducted by distance mode, or collaboration has been arranged between the University and another establishment, an external /local Supervisor from the co-operating establishment or host institution may be appointed. Regulations as specified above apply to the external/local supervisor. The following guidelines for remote supervision should be referred to:
- 6.11.1 An agreement which incorporates the relevant DCU regulations is negotiated, written and signed by the relevant Executive Dean of Faculty in DCU and his/her equivalent in the overseas institution.
  - 6.11.2 The University identifies a suitable 'local supervisor' in the student's home country.
  - 6.11.3 The DCU supervisor and the external/local supervisor need to maintain regular contact to ensure the successful supervision of the candidate. An annual meeting between the DCU supervisor and external/local supervisor is highly recommended. A mechanism for communication needs to be established and monitored carefully at local level.
  - 6.11.4 Where remote supervision occurs, either the DCU supervisor or the student may request a face-to-face meeting if deemed necessary.
  - 6.11.5 It should be ensured that all appropriate technological means are employed to facilitate the supervision process.
- 6.12 The responsibilities of the supervisor are:
- 6.12.1 to advise the student on the selection of the research topic and the nature and quality of the programme of research to be undertaken
  - 6.12.2 to ensure that the student acquires training in the methodology of research and scholarship and in the skills necessary for sustained independent effort
  - 6.12.3 to provide contact and guidance through regular and systematic meetings; to request regular written submissions as appropriate and to provide constructive evaluation and criticism in reasonable time
  - 6.12.4 to ensure that the student is made aware of any inadequacies of progress or standards relative to the standard expected and, where necessary, to advise on withdrawal from the programme
  - 6.12.5 to liaise with the external supervisor of the co-operating establishment, where relevant
  - 6.12.6 to advise on the methodology and form of presentation of the thesis and its subsequent examination
  - 6.12.7 to complete an annual progress report with the candidate and advise the Registry if the candidate is eligible to progress. These reports should include details of the frequency of contact maintained with the candidate and an appraisal of the progress of the work to date

6.12.8 to acknowledge a student's contribution in any presentation, publication or meeting which involves the student's research work.

The responsibilities of the student are:

To conduct the research within the ethical standards of the discipline(s) and in accord with the standards detailed by the University and any other appropriate external agencies.

To acknowledge the supervisor's role in their research.

- 6.13 Changes in supervisory arrangements must normally be made on the basis of agreement between the supervisor(s), the student, the proposed supervisor(s) and the Head of School or nominee and must be submitted to the Faculty Research Committee for approval.
- 6.14 Where difficulties arise within a supervisor/student relationship, every effort should be made at School level to resume a reasonable working relationship. If a resolution is not possible at this level, either party, or the Head of School, can refer the matter to the Associate Dean for Research in the Faculty. Where no resolution is reached at Faculty level, then the matter may be referred to the Dean of Graduate Studies for arbitration. Explanatory submissions should be made in writing.
- 6.15 It is the responsibility of the supervisor(s) to ensure a smooth and timely transition where a change of supervisor takes place.

## **7. ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES**

### **ANNUAL PROGRESSION**

- 7.1 Continued registration for a higher degree is dependent on the submission of a satisfactory annual progress report. A student's progress is formally evaluated on an annual basis through the completion of an Annual Progress Report form (PGR2 Form).
- 7.2 Evaluation of each Annual Progress Report form (PGR2) will be carried out at School level, completed by the supervisor, approved by the supervisory panel and signed off by the Head of School or nominee. A copy of this report should be made available to the Registry each year on or before the date published in the Academic Calendar and a copy should also be given to the student.
- 7.3 In the case of a negative recommendation, the University will take the view that the student is unlikely to achieve the degree for which he/she are registered and the student will not be permitted to continue as a registered graduate research student.
- 7.4 A student has the right to appeal any recommendation made by the supervisor to the Graduate Studies Board. Students should make known to the Graduate Studies Board, the grounds on which they are appealing; namely error of judgement on behalf of the supervisor, or failure to adhere to the regulations of the University in relation to research degrees. The appeal should be made within 10 days of the completion of the annual progress process with the supervisor. The Appeals Board will be a sub-

committee of Graduate Studies Board, and the Chair will be the Dean of Graduate Studies. All decisions of the Appeals Board, including those decisions which may involve obtaining a recommendation from an additional examiner (or examiners), are final and binding.

#### **NOTICE OF INTENTION TO SUBMIT FOR EXAMINATION**

- 7.5 Through the supervisor, a student must provide three months' notice to the Registry of his/her intention to submit for examination. The Supervisor and Head of School must recommend the name of appropriate External and Internal Examiners for appointment by the Graduate Studies Board on the appropriate form. In cases of disagreement between a student and a supervisor as to the appropriateness of submitting the thesis for examination, the matter is to be referred to the Head of School for resolution. The completed thesis must be submitted to the Registry, which will send it to the approved examiners. In no circumstances should it be sent to the examiners by either the supervisor or the student.

#### **ASSESSMENT PROCESS FOR CANDIDATES FOR A HIGHER DEGREE**

- 7.6 Candidates for a doctorate will be assessed on the basis of a written thesis and a *viva voce* examination. In the case of Master's candidates, the usual expectation is that there will be no *viva voce* examination. However, the examiners may recommend that a *viva voce* examination be held.
- 7.7 Each candidate for a higher degree by research will be examined by at least one internal examiner and at least one external examiner. If the candidate is a member of staff of the University, two external examiners are appointed to add an additional layer of independent assurance to the process.
- 7.8 Where the candidate holds, or has within a period of five years prior to the notification of intention to submit held, a part-time or short-term contract with the University, the Head of School (or Executive Dean of Faculty where the Head of School is the supervisor) will be requested to determine whether or not he/she falls into the category of candidate for whom two external examiners are required.

#### **VIVA VOCE EXAMINATION**

- 7.9 The *viva voce* examination shall be held at Dublin City University unless prior approval has been obtained from the Graduate Studies Board to hold it elsewhere. Where necessary, consideration may be given to using the University's videoconferencing facilities for the *viva voce* examination. The standard procedures for the conduct of videoconference examinations must be followed.
- 7.10 The proceedings of the *viva voce* examination shall be supervised by an Independent Chairperson nominated by supervisor and approved by the Head of School or nominee.
- 7.11 A candidate for a doctoral degree will be required to show ability to engage in original investigation or scholarship, to test ideas whether his/her own or those of others, and to understand the background and fundamental basis of the work undertaken.
- 7.12 A candidate for a Master's degree will be required to demonstrate competence in the investigation or critical study of the chosen topic and lucidity in the presentation of the results.

- 7.13 Both external and internal examiners should send preliminary written reports to the Independent Chairperson of the examination committee prior to the *viva voce* examination. The Chair shall arrange for copies of preliminary reports from each examiner, which should include a judgment as to whether or not the thesis is suitable for examination, to be exchanged among members of the committee in advance of the *viva voce* examination.
- 7.14 Following the *viva voce* the internal and external examiners shall furnish the Registry with an individual written report, on the appropriate form, on the outcome of the candidate's examination for the higher degree for which he/she is registered. This form should be completed on the day of the *viva voce* and be submitted to Registry by the Independent Chair. The Chair should also make a formal report to the Head of School on the quality of the examination process and the recommendations made by the examiners in order to allow the School to get appropriate feedback on the process that should be used to good effect in improving the overall quality of future activities.

#### **FACULTY AWARDS BOARD FOR RESEARCH DEGREES**

- 7.15 The Registry will make the necessary arrangements to convene a meeting of the relevant Faculty Awards Board for Research degrees to consider the examination reports of students who have been examined.
- 7.16 Following the meetings of Faculty Awards Boards, the Registry will submit to Academic Council, for its approval, a composite listing of candidates recommended for awards.

#### **APPROVAL OF AWARDS BY ACADEMIC COUNCIL**

- 7.17 All examination results and recommendations are subject to final approval and confirmation by Academic Council.
- 7.18 All candidates for higher degrees shall be informed in writing by the Registry of their official position following the meeting of Academic Council.
- 7.19 Re-submission by an unsuccessful candidate may take place only with the approval of Academic Council on the recommendation of the Examiners and with the concurrence of, and under the conditions proposed by, the Faculty Awards Board for Research Degrees. In such cases, the period for revision of the thesis and/or presentation for re-examination shall normally be not more than one year.
- 7.20 Regulations governing the format of the thesis to be submitted for the award of a higher degree are detailed in Section 8. All theses submitted must conform strictly to these regulations and requirements.

## 8. THESIS FORMAT

The thesis must normally follow the format outlined below:

- 8.1 A thesis must:
  - 8.1.1 Consist of the candidate's own account of his/her research.
  - 8.1.2 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the field of study.
  - 8.1.3 Include critical analysis of related work.
  - 8.1.4 In the case of a PhD thesis, constitute a significant contribution to existing academic knowledge.
  - 8.1.5 In the case of a professional doctoral thesis, constitute a significant contribution to existing professional knowledge and practice.
  - 8.1.6 Contain work which has been conducted while the candidate has been registered as a research student at DCU.

### **Traditional PhD Thesis:**

The traditional PhD thesis presents the research undertaken by the candidate as an integrated whole. It should include:

- a. An introduction.
- b. Critical analysis of existing research.
- c. In-depth discussions of the methodological approach taken by the candidate
- d. presentation, and critical analysis, of the findings of the research undertaken by the candidate.
- e. A substantive conclusion which indicates scope for further research arising out of the candidate's research.
- f. The maximum word length, including bibliography and notes, is 90,000. Any appendices included in the thesis remain outside the word limit.
- g. A variety of media may be used to support/inform research work - e.g. CDs, websites, photographs, and emerging technologies.

The order in which components b. to d. are presented, and the nature of any additional written work, will vary from discipline to discipline.

Candidates who are taking a structured Ph.D. format follow this exact same procedure in relation to their thesis.

### **PhD by Publication:**

The PhD thesis by publication should consist of:

- a. A set of papers.
- b. An accompanying document no less than 10,000 words in length which gives a detailed overview of the theme(s) common to all papers included in the thesis.
- c. All papers, including the introduction and conclusion, should normally be contained within one document.
- d. Only peer-reviewed papers should be considered for inclusion, though the number of papers may vary across disciplines.

Novel contribution should be apparent in at least three of the papers. All papers and the accompanying overview should be presented and bound (together) in accordance with University regulations.

**Professional Doctoral Thesis:**

The professional doctoral thesis may follow either of the structures described above. Alternatively, the Professional Doctoral thesis may take the following format:

- a. A research project.
- b. A clinical portfolio or a reflective practice portfolio.

In this case, the research project should constitute no less than 50% of the final thesis.

**PhD by Portfolio/Composition:**

A candidate may submit:

- a. A portfolio of compositions.
- b. An accompanying commentary of no less than 20,000 words in length detailing the research questions addressed through the medium of composition.

The thesis as a whole should demonstrate artistic skill and originality.

All doctoral theses are examined under the same conditions and through the same processes of independent examiners and a *viva voce* examination.

- 8.2 The student should provide the Registry with one soft-bound copy of the thesis for each examiner as well as a soft-bound copy for the supervisor. The binding is deemed to be temporary pending completion of the examination process.

On completion of the examination process, one additional copy of the thesis shall be submitted in electronic format. It shall be subject to the regulations as to format, except where those apply specifically to physical properties of the print copies, for example regulations under 8.4 covering binding. In all other respects the electronic copy shall contain exactly the same content as, and be an exact surrogate of, the print copy. The electronic copy shall be uploaded to a secure web space by the supervisor or the internal examiner. All accompanying material, e.g. appendices, files contained on CD-ROM or DVD, that is submitted with the bound copy of the thesis must also be uploaded to the secure web space. The candidate will be required to sign a declaration form confirming that an e-version of the approved thesis has been submitted to the Library. The completed form must be submitted to Registry with the two hard-bound print copies of the thesis.

- 8.3 The language of the thesis shall normally be either English or Irish. Other languages shall require the approval of the Graduate Studies Board. This approval should be sought at initial registration.

- 8.4 The thesis shall:
- Be bound within boards of sufficient rigidity to support the work when it is standing upon a shelf. The colour of the boards shall be University blue (Pantone Ref: 289).
  - Have the following information on the front (board) cover:
    - the title of the thesis in at least 24pt (8 mm) type
    - the initials and name of the candidate
    - the award for which the thesis is submitted e.g. MA, MBS, LLM, MSc, MEng, Professional Doctorate, PhD
    - the year of submission, i.e. the calendar year in which the Faculty Awards Board approves the award.

- The subject area must not be stated; the reference should be to, for example, 'PhD', not 'PhD in xxxx'.
- The same information (excluding the title of the thesis) shall be printed in the same order in at least 24 pt (8 mm) type along the spine of the cover in such a way as to be easily legible when the thesis is lying flat with its front cover uppermost. All lettering on the cover and the spine shall be gold in colour and clear of any graphic design.
- Be printed, typewritten or otherwise reproduced on one side only of good-quality white A4-sized paper (210mm x 297mm), with a minimum font size of 11, doubly or one-and-a-half spaced, with a left hand margin at the binding edge of not less than 40mm and all other margins not less than 20mm:
- Pages must be numbered consecutively throughout the text, including those pages incorporating photographs or diagrams which are included as whole pages.
- Where the thesis consists of more than one volume, the pagination should indicate the Arabic number of the volume as well as the page number referring to the volume.
- Page numbers should be located centrally at the bottom of the page and about 10 mm above the edge of the page.
- Appendices should be named alphabetically, and each appendix paginated consecutively but separately from the main text and from the others.
- Contain a title page with the following information:
  - the full title of thesis, and subtitle, if any, and qualifications, if any, of the candidate
  - the award for which the work is submitted
  - the name of the University, the supervisor and of the School with which the candidate is registered
  - the month and year of submission
  - the total number of volumes and the number of the particular volume, if there is more than one volume.
- Have a page, bound into the thesis immediately following the title page, containing the following declaration, signed by the candidate:

I hereby certify that this material, which I now submit for assessment on the programme of study leading to the award of ..... (insert title of degree for which registered) is entirely my own work, and that I have exercised reasonable care to ensure that the work is original, and does not to the best of my knowledge breach any law of copyright, and has not been taken from the work of others save and to the extent that such work has been cited and acknowledged within the text of my work.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (Candidate) ID No.: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

- Be accompanied by an abstract of not more than 300 words. This should follow the table of contents in the thesis. In addition, two loose copies of the abstract should be submitted at the same time as the thesis. The abstract should be printed or typed in single spacing and should indicate the author and the title of the thesis in the form of a heading.
- Have photographs and/or diagrams firmly fixed in place and appropriately indexed, each accompanied by an explanatory legend.
- Where footnotes and indented quotations are used, these may be in single spacing.
- Have any abbreviations, other than those in normal use, accompanied by an explanatory guide.

- 8.5 A thesis should not be excessively long. The maximum limit for a doctoral thesis is 90,000 words of text, including bibliography and notes, and for a Master's thesis is 45,000 words of text, including bibliography and notes. In the case of scientific and technological theses, the amount of text may be less. Because of this variation from subject to subject, the advice of the Supervisor should be sought at an early stage in the preparation of the thesis. The word length must be stated on the notification of intention to submit for examination (PGR4) form in the space provided. For taught doctorates the acceptable word length should fall within the parameters of a Master's thesis and doctoral thesis and is a matter for discussion between the supervisor and the student.
- 8.6 Copies of the thesis submitted for examination will remain the property of the University. The University will place one print copy and one electronic copy of the thesis in the Library for free consultation. The Library retains the right, subject to paragraph 8.7 below, to include the summary or abstract in any list of theses published by the University or any publication to which the University may decide to contribute a list of theses.
- 8.7 Candidates are required to sign a declaration form (Thesis Access Consent Form), at the time of submission of the thesis for examination, permitting access to their thesis; where questions of the confidentiality of the contents arise, candidates may request and obtain temporary restriction of access up to a maximum of four years for sufficient cogent reasons, using the appropriate form. An application for the restriction of access must be approved and countersigned by a research student's supervisor.
- 8.8 The candidate may publish material in advance of presentation of the thesis, but reference should be made to any such publication in the thesis.
- 8.9 Copyright in the thesis, ownership of the intellectual property arising in the course of its preparation, and patent rights in respect of any relevant product or process are matters for agreement between the candidate and the University made in this regard..
- 8.10 Every candidate irrevocably grants to DCU and its respective successors and assigns, a non exclusive, worldwide, royalty free, perpetual licence to re-produce, distribute, modify, store, copy, publicly perform and publicly display, with the right to sub-licence through multiple tiers of sub-licencees, and the right to assign such rights in and to the thesis including, without limitation the right to use in any way whatsoever the thesis. DCU may copy, publish, make available, distribute, license, or otherwise use the thesis in any manner worldwide via any medium including without limitation intranets, extranets, mobile phones, GSM/3G phones, WAP phones, databases, print, interactive television, digital media services, electronic media services, platforms, or any networks (including without limitation telecommunications, wireless, radio, television, cable, satellite, terrestrial networks) currently in existence or which may be developed in the future and the Internet.
- 8.11 The use of external professional individuals or organisations for proof-reading or copy-editing of theses on a paid basis is not permitted.

## **9. APPOINTMENT OF EXAMINERS FOR RESEARCH DEGREES**

- 9.1 The purpose of this section is not only to enunciate procedures for the appointment of examiners but to set out what students can reasonably expect from the University

regarding the examination of their work. The Graduate Studies Board is responsible for approving the appointment of both internal and external examiners.

#### **SELECTION AND NOMINATION OF INTERNAL EXAMINERS**

The regulations and guidelines informing the appointment of Internal Examiners shall be to all intents and purposes, and in as far as is possible, the same as the regulations and guidelines for appointment of External Examiners as set out below. However, the Internal Examiner, unlike the External Examiner, will need a broad rather than specific familiarity with the research. The Internal Examiner should normally be a permanent member of academic staff of the University and hold a doctoral qualification or be of the grade of Associate Professor or Professor if they do not hold a doctorate. Nominations of staff who are not permanent members of the University must be accompanied by a relevant supporting statement from the supervisor as to the reasons for the nomination.

#### **SELECTION AND NOMINATION OF EXTERNAL EXAMINERS**

For research awards, external examiners are appointed for specific candidates. External examiners for research students should not be appointed more than twice in a four-year period. Appointments may be made irrespective of external examiners' duties with regard to taught programmes. No distinction should be made, for the purposes of appointing external examiners, between Master's and doctoral students.

In no circumstances should the student be involved in any aspect of the selection of the external examiner.

No individual external to the university who has acted as supervisor to a student may act as external examiner for the student following the submission of the thesis.

The External Examiner(s) should be contacted informally to ascertain availability and willingness to undertake the role in the timescale envisaged.

All nominations of external examiners are submitted for approval to the Graduate Studies Board by means of the notification of intention to submit thesis for examination (PGR4) form, which includes an outline *curriculum vitae* for completion.

#### ***Qualities***

External examiners should normally have the following qualities and competencies:

- Recognised expertise in the area which is the subject matter of the thesis being examined.
- Experience in supervising research students and in the examination process of such students.
- Formal academic qualification and/or professional qualification and experience at the level of the area being examined.
- Ability to command the respect of colleagues.

#### ***Independence***

It is imperative, for quality assurance purposes, that the external examiner is independent of the University, of the supervisor, of its internal examiners and of the candidates presenting themselves for examination. Thereby the DCU *Conflict of Interest Policy and Guidelines* [http://www.dcu.ie/staff/conflict\\_guidelines.pdf](http://www.dcu.ie/staff/conflict_guidelines.pdf) should be adhered to in relation to any appointment. In particular, it must be ensured that all external examiners should:

- not have been in the employ of the University (in any capacity) in the five years prior to appointment.
- not have been a student of the University in the five years prior to appointment.

- not be a beneficiary of any bursary or remuneration from the University other than from the post of external examiner or membership of an Accreditation Board or recruitment/promotions panel.
- not have advised the student on the work underpinning the preparation of his/her thesis.
- not have published with the supervisor in the previous five years.

### *Equality*

In line with the University's policy and stated commitment to best practice in equality issues, Heads of School must ensure, in so far as possible, a balanced gender representation in the appointment of External Examiners to the examining team for research awards. Where necessary, representation of the other gender on the examining team should be by means of the Independent Chair.

### **APPOINTMENT PROCEDURES**

- 9.2 Candidates for research degrees are required to notify their supervisor initially of their intention to submit a thesis for examination, using the appropriate form. They must give at least three months' notice and provide a typed 200-word abstract of their work.

On receipt of this notice of intention to submit a thesis, the supervisor is required to consult with the relevant Head(s) of School on the selection and nomination of appropriate Internal and External Examiners. The supervisor is responsible for making initial contact with the proposed External Examiner.

- 9.3 Following completion of the process of consultation referred to above, the supervisor is required to submit the completed form to the Registry within two weeks of initial receipt from the candidate. Completed forms will be submitted to the next scheduled meeting of the Graduate Studies Board.
- 9.4 Following approval by the Graduate Studies Board of the appointment of the Examiners nominated, the Registry will issue a formal written invitation to the person(s) nominated to act as External Examiner(s) and, in addition, will provide a copy of the abstract of the work to be examined.
- 9.5 Candidates are required to submit soft copies of thesis to the Registry as outlined at 8.2 above. The agreement of their supervisor, or Head of School to submit the thesis should be obtained prior to such submission (see 7.5 above).
- 9.6 Following receipt of these copies, the Registry will immediately forward a copy to each Examiner together with the relevant Examiners' Report Form and the Examination Regulations for Examiners. Examiners are normally expected to carry out their duties within two months of receipt of the thesis to avoid hardship to the candidate. The Registry and the candidate's supervisor should be notified immediately if there is any difficulty in adhering to this time requirement.
- 9.7 In the case of a thesis submitted for the award of a PhD, or Professional Doctorate, it will be the duty of the supervisor to liaise with the Examiners regarding arrangements for the *viva voce* examination. Such arrangements should be finalised as soon as possible after receipt of the thesis by the Examiners and notified in writing to the candidate and to the Registry. The candidate will be advised of the composition of the Board for the *viva voce* examination. However, the candidate is precluded from making any contact with the External Examiner once the appointment has been confirmed. The *viva voce* examination will be supervised by an Independent Chairperson nominated by the Head of School.

- 9.8 Examiners' Reports and Recommendations will be referred to the next meeting of the relevant Faculty Awards Board for Research degrees (see Section 10 for details).

## **10. REGULATIONS FOR EXAMINERS FOR MASTER'S, PhD DEGREES BY RESEARCH AND PROFESSIONAL DOCTORATES**

### **INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL EXAMINERS**

- 10.1 Each candidate for a higher degree by research will be examined by at least one Internal Examiner and at least one External Examiner (see Section 9 regarding appointment procedures). The Internal and External Examiners must not have been involved with the progress of the candidate's research and in particular the internal examiner may not be a member of the supervisory panel.
- 10.2 External and Internal Examiners may meet in advance of *viva voce* examination, if required, without a candidate's academic supervisor and/or the Independent Chair of the examination being present

### **PROCEDURE FOR EXAMINATION**

- 10.3 The thesis will be referred by the Registry to the Examiners, who cannot accept it directly from the candidate or the supervisor.
- 10.4 Examiners are normally expected to carry out their duties within two months of receipt of the thesis. Examiners' draft written reports on the thesis should be made available to the independent chair of the viva at least one week prior to the *viva voce* examination. Such draft reports can be modified by the examiners on the day of the examination in light of the experience afforded the examiners by the *viva voce* examination.
- 10.5 The *viva voce* examination should be held at Dublin City University unless prior approval has been obtained from the Graduate Studies Board to hold it elsewhere.
- 10.6 The *viva voce* examination shall be carried out jointly by the External and Internal Examiners; the proceedings shall be supervised by an Independent Chairperson nominated by the relevant Head of School in consultation with the candidate's supervisor. The candidate's supervisor may be present at the *viva voce* examination. However, the candidate must be given the option of stating, not later than ten days prior to the examination, that he/she would prefer the supervisor not to be present. If this is indicated, then the supervisor should not be present. The supervisor, where present, is not permitted to participate in the examination. He/she should provide clarification of any matters only if and when requested by the examiners or the Independent Chair. The supervisor does not participate in the final decision and should leave the meeting while the deliberations leading to this decision are taking place, unless asked by the Chair to remain.

### **EXAMINATION OF THE THESIS**

- 10.7 Examiners should assess a Master's thesis in the light of the following criteria:
- The thesis should show evidence of independent thought and work by the candidate
  - The investigation or critical study should be scholarly
  - The candidate should understand the significance of the work.
- 10.8 Examiners should assess a doctoral thesis in the light of the following criteria:
- The thesis should contain original, independent work that is weighty and significant.
  - The thesis should represent a significant contribution to knowledge of the subject through the discovery of new facts and/or the exercise of independent critical powers.

- The thesis should demonstrate the candidate's ability to undertake further research.
- The thesis and abstract should be presented in grammatically correct English or Irish or, exceptionally, in another language, and should be readable and succinct.
- If the candidate's research is part of a collaborative group project, the thesis should indicate clearly the candidate's contribution and the extent of the collaboration.
- In the *viva voce* examination, the candidate should demonstrate that the thesis presented is his/her own work, and that he/she has an adequate understanding of the research topic and of the broader field of knowledge to which the research belongs.

### **EXAMINERS' REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

10.9 Following the *viva voce* examination the examiners should complete the PGR6 form relating to the examination of the thesis. If an examiner wishes to change the written report on the thesis after the *viva voce* then this should be done at the end of the examination or, at the latest, within one week of the examination (in the latter case, the report should be sent to the Independent Chair). The Chair is responsible for sending the report to the Registry. In the case of a Master's candidate, where no *viva voce* examination is required, the Internal Examiner is responsible for sending the completed report to the Registry. Reports should incorporate a commentary on the work presented for examination as well as detailing any corrections to be made. Examiners should give clear grounds for their recommendation, particularly if it is not clear-cut and favourable.

- Where the Examiners recommend a revision and re-submission of the thesis, they should provide the candidate with a clear and written statement of the changes required, and should also include this with their reports.

The final outcome of the examination process should be reported as one of the following recommendations:

- that the degree sought be awarded
- that the degree sought be awarded subject to clearly specified textual emendations
- that the degree sought be awarded subject to clearly specified revisions to content
- that no degree be awarded, but that the candidate be allowed to submit a revised thesis, normally within a year
- that, where a doctoral award is sought, a Master's degree be awarded instead
- that no degree be awarded
- that, where a Master's degree was sought, the candidate be advised and permitted to withdraw the thesis for revision and re-submission at a later date for the award of a doctorate, subject to the following conditions
  - the candidate, prior to such re-submission for the doctoral award, must have been a registered full-time graduate research student for at least twenty-four months (or pro-rata for a part-time registered postgraduate student).
  - the re-submitted thesis shall be examined in accordance with the regulations for examination of theses presented for a doctoral and by a different External Examiner, to be appointed by Graduate Studies Board.

- Where a thesis has to be revised, the revisions shall be carried out to the satisfaction of the internal examiner and/or the external examiner(s), as may be determined by the examiners. As the supervisor does not participate in the examination process, he/she should not sign off on revised theses. Such signing off is the sole responsibility of the examiners.
- Following incorporation of revisions, the thesis should be reviewed only to establish the extent to which the examiners' recommendations have been met. There should be no further review of the thesis on other grounds.

#### **REMIT OF INDEPENDENT CHAIR**

- 10.10 The Chair's role is to manage the *viva voce* examination, ensuring that the candidate is treated fairly, to provide guidance on the University's academic regulations and practices and to communicate the outcome of the examination to the student following the *viva voce* examination. The Chair will make sure that all the required documentation is completed and communicate the outcome to the appropriate parties.
- 10.11 The Chair should be drawn from a pool of experienced academic staff with experience of doctoral supervision. He/she shall be unconnected with the programme of research carried out by the candidate under examination.
- 10.12 The Chair shall not have any input into, or participate in any way in, the assessment of the candidate; the assessment of the candidate remains the sole responsibility of the Examiners.
- 10.13 It is the responsibility of the supervisor to propose the examiners and Chair, subject to the agreement of the Head of School, to obtain the appropriate approval from the Graduate Studies Board, and to arrange the date of the *viva voce* examination and the location.
- 10.14 The Chair is responsible for ensuring that the examination form, which includes the examiners' reports on the thesis and on the *viva voce* examination, is correctly filled out and is returned to the Registry once the final thesis has been signed off by the internal and/or external examiner(s).
- 10.15 The Chair, prior to the *viva voce* examination and in consultation with the examiners, will determine the order of questions and the overall format of the examination.
- 10.16 A candidate may be asked by the Chair to introduce his/her research briefly and summarise the main findings.
- 10.17 The length of the *viva voce* examination may vary in accordance with different disciplinary practices, and it will also depend on the examiners' requirements. As a guideline, it should normally be in the range one-and-a-half hours to three hours.
- 10.18 At the end of the *viva voce* examination, the candidate and the supervisor will be asked to leave the room while the board deliberates on the outcome (unless the supervisor is asked by the Chair to remain). They will normally be requested to return after the decision has been made in order to be informed of it by the board.
- 10.19 Candidates must not contact their examiners prior to the *viva voce* examination; any communication should be through the supervisor(s).

#### **PROCEDURE AFTER EXAMINATION**

- 10.20 The Registry will refer the Examiners' Reports to the appropriate Faculty Awards Board for Research Degrees for consideration at its next meeting. Thereafter, a

consolidated report listing the names of candidates recommended for a higher degree is presented to Academic Council for approval.

- 10.21 The Registry advises candidates of the official outcome of the Examination process where a thesis has been referred for revision or where no award, or an award lower than the one sought, has been recommended by the Examiners.

## **APPEALS**

- 10.22 A candidate cannot appeal the outcome of the examination on the basis of the examiners' judgement. A candidate does, however, have the right to appeal the outcome on the grounds of process and procedure.
- 10.22.1 Appeals must be submitted by the candidate, in writing, to the Dean of Graduate Studies within ten days of the notification of the decision, and must be supported by acceptable documentary evidence outlining the circumstances which have given rise to the appeal.
- 10.22.2 An Appeals Board for Research Degrees shall be constituted. The membership of the Appeals Board shall consist of the Dean of Graduate Studies (as Chair) and the Faculty Associate Deans for Research. If one of the Deans has been involved in the examination process, he/she will not take part in the appeals process and an appropriate substitute from the Faculty will be nominated to the Appeals Board. If the Dean of Graduate Studies has been involved in the examination process, he/she will not take part in the appeals process and the Board will be chaired by one of the Associate Deans.
- 10.22.3 The Appeals Board shall consider each appeal on its merits and determine a course of action on the basis of the evaluation of all relevant circumstances, documentary evidence, and reports relating to the student's prior academic progress and his/her performance in the examination process. If deemed appropriate, a recommendation from an additional examiner, or examiners, may be sought. Such examiners must be approved by the Graduate Studies Board.
- 10.22.4 All decisions of the Appeals Board are final and binding.

## **11. FACULTY AWARDS BOARDS FOR RESEARCH DEGREES**

Procedures for processing Examiners' Reports and their recommendations in respect of Candidates presenting for Research Master's and Doctoral Degrees.

### **11.1 Establishment of Faculty Awards Boards for Research degrees**

In each Faculty, there shall be constituted a Board for Research degrees chaired by the Dean of the Faculty or his/her nominee (who will normally be the Associate Dean for Research).

The membership of each Board shall be drawn from the academic staff of the Faculty together with relevant academic staff of other Faculties who have been involved in cross-disciplinary research projects. Supervisors of candidates who have been examined and internal examiners of same must attend.

### **11.2 Scheduling of Faculty Awards Boards for Research degrees**

- 11.2.1 There will be two officially scheduled meetings per calendar year of each of the Faculty Awards Boards for Research degrees, one in Spring and one in Autumn. The exact dates will be indicated in the Academic Calendar.
- 11.2.2 The convening of a meeting of the Faculty Awards Board for Research degrees shall be notified to academic staff by the Registry following consultation with the relevant Dean/Associate Dean.

### **11.3 Remit of Faculty Awards Board for Research Degrees**

- 11.3.1 Considering and approving (or otherwise where necessary) the award of research degrees  
Noting that Progression and Award Boards within faculties in relation to taught elements taken by students have taken place as necessary to approve grades for graduate training elements
- 11.3.2 Processing of examiners' reports and their recommendations
- 11.3.3 The Board will be required to ensure that the examination process for each candidate has been carried out in accordance with academic regulations.
- 11.3.4 The Board will be required to draw the attention of the Graduate Studies Board to individual comments by examiners if such comments are deemed to provide useful feedback to the University.
- 11.3.5 The Board will be required to consider specifically issues arising from a negative report by an examiner, and recommend an appropriate course of action to the Graduate Studies Board and Academic Council for their consideration. The subsequent decision of Academic Council in respect of a recommendation submitted by the relevant Faculty Awards Board for Research Degrees will be communicated in writing to the research student concerned.

### **11.4 Documentation for Meetings**

- 11.4.1 Examiners' reports on candidates for research degrees will be provided by the Registry and will be available for consultation before the meeting. A copy of each thesis examined will be available at the Board to clarify issues raised by the Examiners.
- 11.4.2 Details relating to graduate education modules that a student has taken, and the student's active contribution record, will also be available at the meeting.

## **12. DEFERRAL/WITHDRAWAL –**

### **12.1 Deferral**

It is preferable for students to conduct their research without interruption in so far as possible. However, in some circumstances, for example in the case of illness, financial or family difficulties, it is possible to apply for a formal temporary cessation of registration until the difficulties have been resolved. Deferrals should normally be granted only in such exceptional circumstances. Requests for deferral will be granted automatically where requested as an equivalent to maternity leave. Deferrals must be approved by the supervisor and the relevant Head of School and will usually be for one semester or one academic year.

Students wishing to defer must notify the Registry, in advance of the deferral, in writing by completing an Application for Deferral form.

During any temporary cessation of registration, the student's participation on the research programme is suspended and any minimum period of registration is extended by a corresponding period. No tuition fees are payable during this period. During this time the student will not be entitled to supervision or to use the University facilities including the Library. Regular fee payments will be applicable when students are absent from the University for a period of less than three months.

When a student is externally funded, he/she should discuss the situation with the supervisor(s) in the first instance, and the sponsoring agency should be consulted if a temporary cessation of study is necessary. Students and supervisors should be aware

of any possible implications this temporary cessation may have on the funding and of any additional requirements stipulated by the funding body. Students who defer do not receive a stipend during this period, as stipends are paid only during active registration. The Graduate Research Office should be notified prior to the student seeking a deferral from the University.

#### 12.2 **Withdrawal**

Research students withdrawing from the University must notify the Registry in writing by completing and submitting a Withdrawal Form.

## **APPENDICES**