

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

This document contains the University's academic regulations for postgraduate degrees by research and submission of a thesis as approved by Academic Council on 14 October 1992. These regulations have been approved for implementation in the academic year 1992/93 and subsequently. This eleventh edition includes all changes and amendments approved by Academic Council up to and including 12th December 2007.

Dublin City University reserves the right to revise, amend or alter academic regulations at any time by giving such notice as may be determined by Academic Council in relation to any such change.

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1. GENERAL REGULATIONS

1. Academic Council has overall responsibility in all matters related to postgraduate research degrees.
2. Decisions on admission to postgraduate research degree programmes are taken by Academic Council.
3. Candidates registered for postgraduate programmes are entitled to the same rights and privileges as undergraduate students and are subject to the same Code of Discipline.
4. A candidate may be registered at any time for one degree only, and work to be submitted for a postgraduate degree cannot be submitted elsewhere for a degree or other similar award.
5. Candidates must comply with the University's current regulations governing particular postgraduate degrees.
6. Postgraduate research work must be undertaken with the appropriate School(s) or Centre(s) as Academic Council may direct.
7. In the case of inter-disciplinary research projects, the School assuming responsibility for the project must be clearly identified on all relevant documentation.
8. Academic Council is prepared to consider proposals for programmes of postgraduate work concerned with fundamental research or other areas of scholarship or with any aspects of industrial, commercial, or professional activity including those in the arts.
9. Academic Council encourages collaboration in programmes of research between the University and other educational, industrial, commercial, professional or research establishments.
10. All official communications and administrative procedures relating to postgraduate applications, offers of places, registration, continued registration, annual reports, examination procedures, results and appeals shall be conducted through and by the Registry.

2. QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

1. To register for a Postgraduate degree programme, a candidate must normally have obtained a primary degree classification equivalent to Lower Second Class Honours or above, 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. Initially, all such candidates will be registered for a Master's degree.
2. In exceptional circumstances only, candidates who do not meet the stipulated entry qualifications but who can demonstrate exceptional ability or aptitude for academic research may apply to pursue studies for a higher degree. Such candidates, if accepted by Academic Council, will be required initially to complete successfully an appropriate Master's Qualifying Examination. The nature and extent of the Master's Qualifying Examination shall be determined by Academic Council following consultation with the relevant Head of School and the External Examiner(s) in the subject area of the proposed research. Candidates wishing to apply for admission under this category must provide the names of two suitable persons who will attest to the candidate's academic aptitude and fitness for postgraduate research. All official communications relating to such applications shall be conducted through the Registry.
3. Candidates holding an appropriate Master's degree obtained by research may apply directly for a PhD degree in a cognate area.
4. Candidates with a taught Masters degree 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 direct entry to the PhD-track register and proceed towards a PhD degree, subject to satisfactory performance as certified by the Internal Supervisor and another Internal Examiner. Such candidates will have to undergo a confirmation procedure not later than the second year of research for full-time students (and at an appropriate corresponding time for part-time students). This confirmation procedure should be similar to the current transfer procedure from Master's to PhD register (see 2.6 below). 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.
5. All other candidates should normally be registered initially on the Master's register, with those who wish to complete a PhD undergoing the transfer procedure.
6. Application for transfer from the Master's Register to the PhD Register may not normally be made less than one year after the effective Master's registration date. Such applications must be supported by the candidate's Supervisor and will be subject to satisfactory performance in an oral examination conducted jointly by the Supervisor and another Internal Examiner. In determining whether or not such transfer shall take place, Academic Council will require evidence that the candidate's progress to date has been satisfactory and that the programme of research envisaged provides a satisfactory basis for work at PhD standard. Candidates transferred to the PhD Register will be granted appropriate retrospection normally to the date of original registration.

7. In exceptional circumstances only, a candidate pursuing a course of study leading to a Master's degree may, on the recommendations of his/her supervisor, another Internal Examiner and the relevant Head of School/Director of Centre after at least nine months of full-time study, apply to Academic Council to seek transfer to the PhD Register and thus present for examination for this higher degree.
8. A candidate who would normally expect to be registered initially on the Master's register and who wishes to be considered for direct entry to the PhD-track register may make an application to the relevant committee for consideration for direct entry using the appropriate *pro forma* . Such an application will be considered on a case by case basis and an applicant will be assessed on his/her demonstrated capacity to undertake research at a higher level. The Supervisor and the Head of School/Director of Research will make a recommendation to the relevant committee. If successful, such a candidate will later have to undergo a confirmation procedure as outlined in 2.4 above. 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.

3. APPLICATION AND REGISTRATION PROCEDURES

1. Prior to submitting an application, the 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 Academic Council. In the case of candidates not meeting the normal entry requirements or holding overseas qualifications, the relevant School must articulate specific and cogent reasons in support of such candidates (on Form PGR1).
2. All applications to undertake postgraduate studies must be submitted on the University's official Postgraduate Studies Application Form. The completed application form together with the necessary supporting documentation must be submitted to the Registry.
3. The Registry will acknowledge receipt of properly completed forms, once verification of the supporting documentation has been carried out. Application forms which are incomplete or lacking the relevant documentation will be returned to the candidate.
4. Using an appropriately designed pro forma, the Registry will refer a summary of all completed applications to Academic Council for its consideration and recommendation. Academic Council will ensure:
 - that the candidate possesses, or will possess, the required entry qualifications;
 - that the relevant expertise and facilities are available within the University to support the research programme indicated;
 - that there are adequate arrangements for supervision;
 - that the research programme is appropriate for the award of a higher degree.
5. Where questions arise regarding a candidate's application (e.g. possession of the required entry qualifications), Standing Committee will refer the documentation to the Research Committee for its consideration and advice.
6. Successful candidates will then be notified by the Registry and will be required to register formally with that office. The Registry will also notify the relevant School and will be responsible for ensuring registration of all postgraduate applicants approved by Academic Council.
7. Successful candidates will be admitted as registered postgraduate students subject to the payment of the appropriate fees.
8. All postgraduate 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.

4. PERIOD OF TIME FOR COMPLETION OF RESEARCH PROGRAMMES

1. The period required by a candidate able to devote a large proportion of his/her time to the programme will normally be two years for a Master's degree and three years for a PhD. In exceptional cases only, Academic Council may approve a shorter period.
2. Where a candidate has not presented for examination within three years in the case of a Master's degree and five years in the case of a PhD, application must be made to Academic Council, through the Registry, for the period of registration to be extended. Extensions granted by Academic Council will be subject to such limits and conditions as Academic Council may determine.
3. Where a candidate carried out his/her programme of research on a part-time basis, the time devoted should normally not exceed four years for a Master's degree and six years for a PhD.

5. SUPERVISION OF PROGRAMMES OF RESEARCH

1. Each Postgraduate student will have a suitably qualified Supervisor(s), appointed by Academic Council, whose responsibility will be to supervise the student on a regular and frequent basis. Academic staff who undertake the supervision of postgraduate research PhD students are themselves required to hold a PhD, Professorship or Associate Professorship in an area cognate to the proposed area of research. Academic staff undertaking the supervision of postgraduate research Masters students are themselves required to hold at least a Masters qualification in an area cognate to the proposed area of research. The person named as the supervisor is required to take responsibility for ensuring that the supervisory work is carried out appropriately and in accordance with these regulations. (see 5.3. below).

Members of academic staff should normally act as either supervisor or co-supervisor to a maximum of ten postgraduate 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 where the Head of School is the supervisor) for a decision as to whether or not it is appropriate that the proposed supervisor accept the 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.

Supervisors of postgraduate research students should not act as the Internal Examiner in the examination of research theses for students registered under their supervision. Postgraduate Research Supervisors can attend viva voce examinations, but should not participate in the examination unless an issue arose which demanded their input. An internal colleague with, normally, as a minimum, a broad knowledge of the area of research should be invited to act as Internal Examiner.

2. 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, with the approval of Academic Council. The following guidelines for remote supervision should be referred to:
 - 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. The proposed agreement must be discussed in advance with the DCU President's Office, and a copy of the signed agreement must be lodged with the International Office.
 - The University identifies a suitable 'local supervisor' in the student's home country. Assistance may be sought via the student or, if the student is a staff member in an overseas institution, the Faculty to which this student is affiliated.
 - 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 supervisors is

highly recommended. A mechanism for communication needs to be established and monitored carefully.

3. The responsibilities of the supervisor(s) shall be:
 - to advise the student on the selection of the research topic and the nature and quality of the programme of research to be undertaken;
 - to ensure that the student acquires training in the methodology of research and scholarship and in the skills necessary for sustained independent effort;
 - 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;
 - to ensure that the student is made aware of any inadequacies of progress or standards below that expected for the degree registered and where necessary, to advise on withdrawal from the programme;
 - to liaise with the external supervisor of the co-operating establishment;
 - to advise on the methodology and form of presentation of the thesis and its subsequent examination;
 - to advise the Registry, through the submission of annual written reports, of the candidate's 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.

4. **Change of Supervisor(s)**

Changes in supervisory arrangements must normally be made where there is agreement between the internal supervisor(s), the student, the proposed internal supervisor(s) and Head of School (or his/her nominee), and on approval by Academic Council Standing Committee. All requests for a change of supervisor must be made on the appropriate form (R-103). In the event that such agreement cannot be reached, the student, internal supervisor(s), proposed internal supervisor(s) or Head of School may refer the matter to the Registrar for arbitration.

Where a postgraduate research student is being supervised by a member of staff who is due to retire or resign from the University during the student's programme of study, and where it is deemed appropriate that the supervisor continue to supervise the student, an *additional* Internal Supervisor should be appointed and approved by Academic Council Standing Committee when the decision to retire or resign is known. The *additional* supervisor should become the principal supervisor and should not be the Internal Examiner.

5. **Supervisor/Student Relationship**

Where difficulties arise within a supervisor/student relationship every effort should be made at Faculty and School level to resume a reasonable working relationship. However, if a resolution is not possible at this level, either party can refer the matter to the Registrar for arbitration. Explanatory submissions should be made in writing.

6. ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES

1. Annual Progress Reports (PGR2)
 - Evaluation of each Annual Progress Report form (PGR2) will be carried out at School level.
 - It is the responsibility of each supervisor to ensure that a PGR2 is completed and reviewed for each postgraduate research student. A copy of this report should be submitted to the Registry by 31st July each year.
 - Each Supervisor and/or Head of School will be required to recommend approval for continued progression/registration for a higher degree of each student and will submit a summarised report to the Registry on the findings of each PGR2 by 31st July each year.
 - Where, after due warnings, progress is deemed to be unsatisfactory or inadequate to the extent that the student is unlikely to achieve the degree for which he/she is registered, the Supervisor will be required to advise the Registry that such students will not be permitted to continue as registered postgraduate students.
 - A student has the right to appeal any recommendations made by his/her supervisor to Academic Council if the issue is not resolved at this level. If deemed appropriate, an Appeals Board for Research Degrees shall be constituted. The membership of the Appeals Board shall consist of the Registrar and the Deans of Faculties. 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.
 - A copy of the completed PGR2 should be given to each postgraduate research student.
2. All requests for an extension of the period of registration must be recommended by the supervisor and endorsed by the Head of School.
3. Continued registration for a higher degree is dependent on the submission of satisfactory annual progress reports. For transfer from the Master's register to the PhD register, see paragraph 2.6. Applications for such transfer are to be submitted on the appropriate form (Form PGR3).
4. Through their Supervisor, candidates must provide three months' notice to the Registry of their intention to submit for examination. The Supervisor and Head of School must recommend the name of an appropriate External Examiner for appointment by Academic Council. A special form (Form PGR4) is provided for this notification of intent to submit and for the nomination of the Examiners.
5. Candidates for a higher degree by research will be assessed on the basis of a written thesis and an oral examination conducted by examiners appointed by Academic Council. In the case of Master's candidates, the requirement for an oral examination may be waived on the advice of the External Examiner.
6. 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, at any time during the period of completion of the research, the Examination will normally be conducted by two External Examiners. Two examiners are appointed in this case to add an additional layer of independent assurance to the process. 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.
7. The oral examination shall be held at Dublin City University unless prior approval has been obtained from the Registry to hold it elsewhere. Where necessary, consideration may be given to using the University's videoconferencing facilities for the oral examination. If this is the case, the **Guidelines on the use of videoconferencing at viva voce examinations for research students** should be followed. The proceedings of the oral examination shall be supervised by an Independent Chairperson nominated jointly by the Supervisor and the Head of School.
 8. A candidate for the degree of PhD will be required to show ability to engage in original investigation or scholarship, to test ideas whether his/her own or of others, and to understand the background and fundamental basis of the work undertaken.
 9. 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.
 10. Each Internal and External Examiner shall furnish the Registry with an individual written report, on the appropriate form (Form PGR6) on the outcome of the candidate's examination for the higher degree for which he/she is registered.
 11. 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 postgraduate students who have been duly examined.
 12. Each Faculty Awards Board for Research degrees will subsequently submit to Academic Council, for its approval, a composite listing of candidates recommended for awards together with comments and observations, if any, arising from issues relevant to the examination process as a whole and proposals, where appropriate, in respect of negative reports from an Examiner.
 13. All examinations results and recommendations are subject to final approval and confirmation by Academic Council.
 14. All candidates for higher degrees shall be informed in writing by the Registry of their official position following the meeting of Academic Council; however, the University does not accept responsibility for the receipt of the communication of results through the post.
 15. Re-submission by an unsuccessful or by a referred candidate may only take place with the approval of Academic Council on the recommendation of the Examiners concerned and with the concurrence of and under the condition 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 be normally not more than one year.
 16. Regulations governing the format of the thesis to be submitted for the award of a higher degree are detailed in Section 7. All theses submitted must conform strictly with these regulations and requirements.

7. THESIS FORMAT

The thesis must normally follow the prescribed format as outlined below. Any deviation from this format must be agreed in advance by Academic Council.

1. The thesis must:

- be based on a candidate's own work;
- have not previously formed a part or a whole of a submission for a degree at any academic institution or equivalent thereof;
- in the case of a PhD thesis, contain the results of research which constitute a significant addition to knowledge.

2. Two copies of the thesis must be lodged with the Registry. These copies should be in temporary binding pending completion of the examination process when regulation 7.4 will apply.

On completion of the examination process one additional copy shall be submitted in electronic format. It shall be subject to the standing regulations as to format, except where those apply specifically to physical properties of the print copies, for example regulations under 7.4 covering binding. In all other respects the electronic copy shall contain exactly the same content, and be an exact surrogate of the print copy. The electronic copy shall be uploaded to a secure web space by the supervisor/internal examiner. All accompanying material e.g. appendices, files contained on CD-ROM, DVD, etc. 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 (Form PGR12) confirming that an e-version of the approved thesis has been submitted to the library. The completed PGR12 form must be submitted to Registry with the two hard-bound print copies of the thesis.

3. The language of the thesis shall normally be either English or Irish. Other languages shall require the special approval of Academic Council. The language of the thesis shall be agreed upon at initial registration.

4. The thesis shall:

- Be bound within boards of sufficient rigidity to support the work when 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, PhD, and the year of submission;

where the thesis consists of more than one volume, the volume number and the total number of volumes.

- 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 lying flat with its front cover uppermost. All lettering on the cover and the spine shall be 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 particular 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 each other.

- 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 qualification for which the work is presented;
 - the name of the University, the Supervisor and of the School to which the candidate was attached;
 - 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, 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 title of the thesis in the form of a heading.
- Have photographs and/or diagrams firmly fixed in place and appropriately indexed, each to be 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.

5. A thesis should not be excessively long. The maximum limit for a PhD thesis is 90,000 words of text and for a Master's thesis 45,000 words of text. In the case of scientific and technological theses, the amount of text will normally be much less than these limits. 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.

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 7.7 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.

7. Candidates are required to sign a declaration form (Form PGR7), 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 Form PGR8. An application for the restriction of access must be approved and countersigned by a research student's supervisor.

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.

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. It shall be the responsibility of the University, prior to submission of the thesis, to ensure that adequate provisions have been made in this regard.

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-licences, 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 of which may be developed in the future and the Internet.

8. APPOINTMENT OF EXTERNAL EXAMINERS FOR RESEARCH DEGREES

The purpose of these regulations is not only to enunciate procedures for the appointment of External Examiners, but to set out what research students can reasonably expect from the University regarding the examination of their work. The regulations are designed to safeguard both the academic standards of the university and the interests of individual students.

1. Selection and Nomination of External Examiners

In line with the University's policy and stated commitment to best practice in equality issues, Heads must ensure, insofar as possible, a balanced gender representation in the appointment of External Examiners to the examining team for research awards.

Most particularly for research awards, Heads must ensure that an examining panel of one gender only is avoided when the presenting candidate is of the opposite gender.

For research awards, external examiners are appointed for specific candidates. External examiners for research students should not normally be appointed more than twice in a four-year period. Such appointments should 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 PhD.

Qualities

External examiners should normally have the following qualities and competencies:

- Recognised expertise in the area which is the subject matter of the thesis which is being examined.
- Experience in supervising postgraduate 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.
- A willingness to respond to requests to read dissertations within specified time deadlines and to be available to attend such oral examinations and/or examiners meetings as are appropriate.

Independence

It is imperative, for quality assurance, that the external examiner is independent of the University, of its internal examiners and of the candidates presenting themselves for examination. Thus, all external examiners should:

- Have no close personal relationship with examiners or candidates
- 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, member of accreditation panel, or recruitment/promotions panel.
- Not have advised the postgraduate student on the work underpinning the preparation of his/her thesis.

2. Appointment Procedures

Candidates for Research degrees are required to notify their supervisor initially of their intention to submit a thesis for examination, using the special PGR4 form provided for this purpose. 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.

Two External Examiners are required where the candidate is a member of staff of the University. Two examiners are appointed in this case to add an additional layer of independent assurance to the process. The External Examiner(s) should be informally contacted to ascertain availability and willingness to undertake this role in the time scale envisaged.

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.

3. Following completion of the process of consultation referred to above, the supervisor is required to submit the completed PGR4 form to the Registry within two weeks of initial receipt from the candidate. Completed forms will be submitted to the next scheduled meeting of Standing Committee of Academic Council.

4. Following approval by Standing Committee 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, provide a copy of the abstract of the work to be examined.

5. Candidates are required to submit two copies of the thesis to the Registry. The agreement of their supervisor should be obtained prior to such submission.

6. Following receipt of these copies, the Registry will immediately forward a copy to each Examiner together with the relevant Examiners Report Form (PGR6) and the Examination Regulations for Examiners. Examiners are normally expected to carry out their duties within six weeks 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.

7. In the case of a thesis submitted for the award of a PhD, it will be the duty of the supervisor to liaise with the Examiners regarding arrangements for the oral 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 oral examination will be supervised by an Independent Chairperson nominated jointly by the Supervisor and the Head of School.

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).

9. REGULATIONS FOR EXAMINERS FOR MASTER’S AND PhD DEGREES BY RESEARCH

1. Internal & External Examiners

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 8 regarding appointment procedures). The Internal and External Examiners must not have been involved with the progress of the candidate's research.

External and Internal Examiners may meet in advance of, and/or after, a viva voce examination, if required, without a candidate's academic supervisor and/or the Independent Chairman of the examination being present

2. Procedure for Examination

- The thesis will be referred by the Registry to the Examiners, who cannot accept it directly from the candidate. It may be presented for examination in soft binding to facilitate any subsequent revisions which may be required.
- An oral examination is mandatory for PhD candidates but may be waived by the External Examiner(s) in the case of a Master's candidate.
- Examiners are normally expected to carry out their duties within six weeks of receipt of the thesis. This is to avoid hardship to the candidate
- The oral examination should be held at Dublin City University unless prior approval has been obtained from the Registry to hold it elsewhere.
- The oral 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 oral examination, but should not participate in the examination unless an issue arose which demanded their input.

3. Examination of the Thesis

- 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
- Examiners should assess a PhD 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 such research.
- The thesis and abstract should be presented in grammatically correct English or Irish, 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 PhD oral examination a 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 belong.
- 4. Examiners' Reports and Recommendations
 - Examiners should submit separate written reports to the Registry within one week of the completion of the examination process, using the pro forma provided. Such reports should incorporate a commentary on the work presented for examination as well as detailing any corrections to be made.
 - 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 minor revisions;
 - that no degree be awarded, but that the candidate be allowed to submit a revised thesis, normally within a year;
 - that, where a PhD is sought, a Master's degree be awarded;
 - 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 PhD, subject to the following conditions:
 - the candidate, prior to such re-submission for the award of PhD, must have been a registered full-time postgraduate student for a 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 the award of PhD and by a different External Examiner appointed by Academic Council.
 - The inclusion of specified minor revisions to the thesis shall be carried out to the satisfaction of the Internal Examiner and/or the candidate's supervisor.
 - Major alterations to the thesis shall be carried out to the satisfaction of both the Internal and External Examiners.
 - 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.
- 5. Remit of Independent Chairperson
 - The role of the Independent Chairperson is to ensure adherence to the oral examination regulations and procedures and to ensure that the oral examination is conducted in a reasonable and equitable manner.
 - The Independent Chairperson shall be selected from the academic staff of the University and shall be unconnected with the programme of research carried out by the candidate under examination.
 - The Independent Chairperson shall not have any input into nor participate in any way in the assessment of the candidate; the assessment of

the candidate remains the sole responsibility of the Examiners appointed by Academic Council.

6. Procedure after Examination

- 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 shall be presented to Academic Council for approval.
- The Registry shall advise 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.

7. Appeals

- Candidates for Research degrees have, in common with candidates of Taught degrees, the right to appeal the official outcome of the examination process. Such appeals must be submitted in writing to the Assistant Registrar within fourteen days of the notification of the decision appealed against and must be supported by acceptable documentary evidence outlining the circumstances which have given rise to the appeal.
- An Appeals Board for Research Degrees shall be constituted. The membership of the Appeals Board shall consist of the Registrar and the Deans of Faculties.
- The Appeals Board shall consider each appeal in its merits and determine a course of action pursuant to the evaluation of all relevant circumstances, documentary evidence, and reports pertaining to the student's prior academic progress and performance in the examination process. 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.

8. External Examiners' Fees and Expenses

- Fees and approved expenses are payable to External Examiners in accordance with the rates approved by the University. Examiners will be notified of the relevant rates at the time of appointment.

10. 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.

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.
 - The membership of each Board shall consist of the academic staff of the Faculty together with relevant academic staff of other Faculties who have been involved in cross-disciplinary research projects.
 - The Vice-President for Research and the Assistant Registrar will be ex-officio members of each Board
 - Academic supervisors of presenting candidates are expected to attend the meeting of the Board.
2. Schedule of Meetings
 - 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 to process Examiners' Reports and their recommendations in respect of candidates presenting for Research Master's and Doctoral Degrees. The precise dates will be indicated in the annual Academic Calendar. Faculties may schedule additional meetings where necessary, subject to consultation with the Registry.
 - The timing of the spring and autumn meetings is chosen to facilitate consideration and approval by Academic Council of the relevant Examiners' recommendations in relation to the award of higher degrees by research and submission of a thesis.
 - The fixing of these two dates will thus provide clear benchmarks to postgraduate students planning to submit their theses. In order to meet a specific date on the schedule above, a postgraduate student should submit his/her thesis at least eight weeks in advance.
 - 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.
3. Remit of Faculty Awards Board for Research Degrees
 - Processing of Examiners' Reports and their Recommendations
 - The Board will be required to ensure that the examination process for each candidate has been carried out in accordance with existing academic regulations.
 - The Board will be required to draw the attention of Academic Council to individual comments by Examiners if in so doing they provide useful feedback to the University.
 - 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 Academic Council for its 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 postgraduate student concerned.

- The Board will prepare a composite listing of candidates recommended for awards by Examiners and submit this list to the Registry for consideration and approval by Academic Council at its next meeting.
- 4. Documentation for Meetings

Examiners' Reports on candidates for higher degrees will be provided by the Registry and will be available before the meeting commences for consultation. A copy of each thesis examined will be available in the Registry if required by the Board to clarify issues raised by the Examiners.

11. REGULATIONS FOR THE ADMISSION OF CANDIDATES WHO DO NOT HAVE A PRIMARY DEGREE COGNATE TO THE AREA OF PROPOSED RESEARCH

1. The admission of candidates not holding prior degree qualifications, cognate to the area of research being undertaken, shall be strictly limited and applicable in exceptional cases only.
2. The case of each applicant, whose primary qualification is not in a cognate area, should be considered on its own merits; such applications must be fully supported and endorsed by the School in which the research will be carried out and supervised.
3. The onus will be on the sponsoring School and Supervisor to give clear reasons for their recommendation in such a case. They will be required to state explicitly:
 - the reasons in support of the acceptance of the applicant;
 - the skills and knowledge to be acquired by the applicant prior to undertaking meaningful research work in the proposed area;
 - the particular qualities and knowledge possessed by the applicant which will offset the lack of a relevant and cognate prior degree qualification;
 - whether or not the applicant will require more advice and guidance than would be necessary for a student with a cognate degree background and if so, whether such a commitment is an effective use of School time.

**12. REGULATIONS FOR THE ADMISSION OF CANDIDATES
LIVING OUTSIDE IRELAND**

1. In normal circumstances, research students registered at DCU must reside within Ireland unless they are required by their academic Supervisor to undertake a part of their research programme in another institution outside the country. Other registered DCU students, or new applicants wishing to reside and undertake research outside Ireland for a period of 6 months or more, must obtain permission from the University for this mode of research. Ideally the student should spend an initial period of time (4 weeks to 6 months) in the parent institution¹, fine-tuning the proposal, undertaking initial research and receiving guidance from the main supervisor. Supervisory arrangements for this mode of research should follow the guidelines for remote supervision in section 5.2 above.
2. If a student's research is to be undertaken as part of employment with a company abroad, there must be an approved collaboration agreement between the employer and the University, together with the appointment of a suitable External Supervisor in the company 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.
3. Appropriate financial arrangements will need to be negotiated between DCU and the overseas institution.

13. MASTER’S QUALIFYING EXAMINATION

1. There shall be two prescribed forms of Master's Qualifying Examination:
 - Directed Study and Formal Examination only
 - A prescribed course of study and directed reading together with any other academic exercise thought necessary shall be proposed to Academic Council by the relevant Head of School following consultation with the assigned Supervisor and the relevant External Examiner. The duration of this period of study should be about one academic year and should culminate in a formal written examination for the candidate (three 3-hour examination papers approved by relevant External Examiners). A standard of attainment equivalent to not less than Honours 2.2 standard will be required; the result of such examinations are to be submitted to a meeting of the appropriate Faculty Awards Board for Research Degrees for recommendation.
 - Directed Study and Formal Examination with Submission of Dissertation
 - A reduced programme of directed study, as outlined above, shall be proposed. Examination will be in the form of 3-hour written paper. In addition, candidates will be required to submit a substantial dissertation on the substance of a specific project directly related to the field of study being undertaken.
 - A standard of attainment equivalent to not less than Honours 2.2 standard will be required. The results of the examination and the dissertation will be referred to a meeting of the appropriate Faculty Awards Board for Research degrees for recommendation.
2. All proposed Master's qualifying programmes leading to examination, by either option above, must be submitted to Academic Council for approval before the candidate is permitted to embark on his/her period of directed study under the assigned Supervisor.
3. All assigned Supervisors are expected to maintain regular contact with the student concerned and to advise the student as appropriate on his/her progress with regard to fulfilling the academic requirements of the programme of directed study as approved by Academic Council.

14. DEFERRAL/WITHDRAWAL

1. Deferral

Research students wishing to defer a period of time (normally an academic year) from the University must notify the Registry, in advance of the deferral, in writing. Applications for Deferral (R-32a) are available at http://www.dcu.ie/registry/forms/pdfs/R32a_deferral.pdf

Deferrals must be approved by a student's academic supervisor and the relevant Head of School.

2. Withdrawal

Research students retiring from the University must notify the Registry in writing. Withdrawal forms (form R-27) are available at http://www.dcu.ie/registry/forms/pdfs/R27_withdrawal.pdf

15. GUIDELINES ON THE USE OF VIDEOCONFERENCING AT VIVA VOCE EXAMINATIONS FOR RESEARCH STUDENTS

1. Circumstances in which videoconferencing may be considered

- 1.1 Consideration may be given, in certain circumstances, to conducting viva voce examinations using the University's videoconferencing facilities.
- 1.2 These circumstances will normally pertain to the external examiner, not the candidate, i.e. will normally involve inability on the part of the external examiner to be physically present. For example, it may not be practicable for an external examiner to travel within a given period of time, or an unforeseen situation may arise which prevents him or her from travelling.
- 1.3 Provided the relevant School is satisfied that the circumstances relate to the external examiner and justify the use of videoconferencing, it will not be necessary to seek specific approval for its use from Standing Committee of Academic Council. The relevant School must, however, obtain a signed assurance from the candidate that he or she is willing to have videoconferencing included in the examination process.
- 1.4 Only in the most exceptional circumstances should consideration be given to using videoconferencing on the grounds that the candidate is in a remote location. Such circumstances must, in all instances, be documented and, together with an indication that the internal and external examiners are in agreement, be submitted for approval to Standing Committee of Academic Council. If the request is approved, the relevant School must obtain a signed assurance from the candidate that the technical and logistical arrangements in the remote location will be such as to ensure compliance with the relevant sections of the University's Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis (these are Section 6: Assessment Procedures and Section 9: Regulations for Examiners for Master's and PhD Degrees by Research).
- 1.5 Where videoconferencing is being contemplated, consideration should be given to the following:
 - the fact that it involves detailed logistical and technical preparation on the part of both staff of the University and staff at the remote location
 - the fact that a personal visit by an external examiner may facilitate more in-depth interaction with both the candidate and the staff members present as well as providing opportunities for networking and visiting research facilities
 - experience to date has indicated that some candidates may feel increased anxiety as a result of videoconferencing, notwithstanding their willingness to engage with it; conversely, its use has some advantages in that discussions can be facilitated by the use of different camera angles, and detailed scrutiny of diagrams, etc. is possible by means of the document camera.

It should also be noted that videoconferencing involves the use of ISDN facilities (see 3.3 below), and charges will apply.

2. Possibility of informal discussions prior to the examination

Where videoconferencing is used, consideration may be given to allowing the candidate an opportunity to engage in informal one-to-one discussions (by telephone with the external examiner(s) and face to face with the internal examiner) in the week prior to the examination. The aim of these discussions should be to clarify any issues about which there is uncertainty, thereby facilitating the smooth running of the examination. Such discussions may take place only provided all concerned agree to them and only on the understanding that they form no part of the assessment process.

3. Technical issues

- 3.1 In all cases in which videoconferencing is being contemplated, contact must be made at the earliest possible stage with Education Services. In no circumstances should this contact be initiated less than seven working days before the examination date.
- 3.2 Education Services must be informed of the name and contact details of the external examiner(s) and the name and contact details of the technician at the remote location. It should be borne in mind that, in some cases, the examiner(s) and the technician will be operating from different campuses (or other locations) and will need time to liaise with each other.
- 3.3 Videoconferencing can be organised only where the facilities at the remote location are at least of equal standard to those available at DCU (i.e. where they involve a high-speed ISDN line). Detailed advice on this issue will be provided by Education Services. In no circumstances can videoconferencing take place if the test call (see 3.7 below) is unsatisfactory.
- 3.4 Where time-zone differences raise the possibility that an examination may have to take place outside standard working hours, the matter must be discussed with Education Services at the earliest opportunity.
- 3.5 Education Services will normally ensure that technical support is available throughout the examination and will liaise with the technician in the remote location to agree a similar level of support there.
- 3.6 The videoconferencing facilities should be booked for as long as it is reasonably estimated the examination will take (including deliberation time and the recall of the candidate).
- 3.7 Education Services will make a test call to the remote location before the examination day to ensure that the facilities are working properly.
- 3.8 Relevant staff members, and the candidate in particular, should be encouraged to visit the videoconferencing facilities in advance of the examination to familiarise themselves with them and ask any questions they may have. It is most important that all requirements be specified to Education Services in as much detail as possible.
- 3.9 The candidate should be advised of the availability of the document camera, on which diagrams, equations, etc. may be drawn where appropriate.
- 3.10 If it is the candidate who is in the remote location, it is recommended that, during the period in which the examiners deliberate before calling him or her back in, the facilities be set to 'mute' rather than switched off. This is to avoid any possible problems in re-establishing the link. It is also recommended that the screen be switched off so that the candidate cannot see the examiners while they are deliberating.

- 3.11 One of the staff members who will be present at the examination should take overall responsibility for liaising with the candidate, the others staff members who are due to be present and Education Services about the videoconferencing arrangements.
- 3.12 Either this staff member, or a designated other staff member, should take responsibility for operating equipment at a basic level while the examination is in progress (and the staff member from Education Services is not actually present in the room). This work involves tasks such as adjusting the camera settings and (if it is the candidate who is in the remote location) setting the facilities to `mute' during the deliberation period.
- 3.13 It is rare for the facilities to malfunction while in use. However, the possibility that they might, and that the examination might therefore have to be rescheduled so as to allow the candidate to do full justice to his/her work, should be mentioned in advance to all concerned.
- 3.14 The following may be noted:
 - if there are two external examiners, in different locations, it may be possible to arrange videoconferencing by means of a `bridge' facility; the provision of such a facility is, however, a complex issue, and it would need to be raised with Education Services well in advance
 - it will be possible to see both the external examiner and the document camera at the same time, on two different screens, if there is compatibility between the system used in the University and the system used in the remote location; if there is not, the examiner and the camera will both be visible, but not at the same time.