

**BISHOP GROSSETESTE UNIVERSITY**

**Document Administration**

<b>Document Title:</b>	Regulations Governing Research Degree Programmes Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) and Doctor of Education (EdD)
<b>Document Category:</b>	Regulations
<b>Version Number:</b>	2.20
<b>Status:</b>	Approved
<b>Reason for development:</b>	To update guidance on the Regulations Leading to the award of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) and Doctor of Education (EdD) to reflect the revised structure at BGU.
<b>Scope:</b>	These Regulations apply to all applicants and registered research students for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) and Doctor of Education (EdD).
<b>Author / developer:</b>	Regulatory Compliance Manager / Head of Research
<b>Owner</b>	Regulatory Compliance Manager
<b>Assessment:</b> (where relevant)	<input type="checkbox"/> Equality Assessment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Governance <input type="checkbox"/> Legal <input type="checkbox"/> Academic Governance
<b>Consultation:</b> (where relevant)	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff Trade Unions via HR <input type="checkbox"/> Bishop Grosseteste University Students' Union <input type="checkbox"/> Any relevant external statutory bodies
<b>Authorised by (Board):</b>	Senate
<b>Date Authorised:</b>	1 March 2017
<b>Effective from:</b>	1 March 2017
<b>Review due:</b>	March 2020
<b>Document location:</b>	University website
<b>Document dissemination / communications plan</b>	University website link emailed to Student Advice, the International Office and the Students' Union.
<b>Document control:</b>	All printed versions of this document are classified as uncontrolled. A controlled version is available from the University Website.

**This document is available in alternative formats from  
the Quality Assurance and Student Data Office**

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## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 These Regulations (with appendices) shall apply to all applicants and registered research students for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) or Doctor of Education (EdD) at Bishop Grosseteste University only (hereafter referred to as 'the Institution' or BGU).
- 1.2 The Regulations (with appendices) conform to and comply with those presented as 'Senate Regulation Nine - Regulations Governing Research Degree Programmes' of the University of Leicester (Senate Regulations 1, 4, 6, 10, 11 and 12 are incorporated as required or appropriate) with necessary changes regarding Institutional nomenclature and terminology or reference to Institutional policies and procedures as appropriate.
- 1.3 The Regulations also comply with current QAA requirements, specifically *Chapters B10: Managing Higher Education provision with others and B11: Research degrees* and guidelines provided by other relevant bodies.
- 1.4 The University will make every effort to ensure that the published programme (course) details are complete and up-to-date. However, the University will be entitled to make reasonable changes to the course (including to the content and syllabus of the course, or the location of the course or the method of delivery or assessment of the course) where that will enable the University to deliver a better quality of educational experience to students enrolled on the course. In making such changes, the University will aim to keep the changes to the minimum necessary to achieve the required quality of experience and will notify and consult with affected students as appropriate.
- 1.5 In the exceptional situation of a programme being closed, students will be notified in a timely manner and appropriate support provided for them successfully to complete their studies. Monitoring of students' progress will be the responsibility of the Portfolio Management Group (PMG); where the PMG has identified at risk students, additional support, monitoring and review will be put in place.

## **2. Conflicts of interest**

- 2.1 Conflicts of interest exist or where there appears to exist situations such that an independent observer might reasonably question whether the professional actions or decisions of an individual have been influenced by their own interests or the interests of others.
- 2.2 Research students and all others involved in research student support should understand the potential for conflicts of interest and must take appropriate measures to avoid situations which could give rise to a conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest.

- 2.3 The Head of Research or their nominee shall be responsible for ensuring that initial arrangements for admission, supervision, progress reviews, and examination do not give rise to an actual or a reasonably perceived conflict of interest.
- 2.4 Research students and all others involved in research student support must disclose any circumstances that might reasonably give rise to an apparent or perceived conflict of interest. Apparent or perceived conflicts of interest can be as damaging as actual conflicts of interest. There is no definitive list of situations where a conflict of interest may arise but common examples involve personal and financial relationships. Research students and all others involved in research student support must disclose any circumstances if they are uncertain.
- 2.5 A disclosure should be normally made at the time the conflict first arises or at the time it is first recognised that a conflict might be perceived. The disclosure should be to the Head of Research or their nominee. If the Head of Research or their nominee has an interest in the matter to be disclosed, the disclosure must be made to the person at the next higher level of authority.
- 2.6 When notified of a conflict of interest, the Head of Research or their nominee must take appropriate steps to record and deal with the issue.

### **3. Admission and selection**

- 3.1 Applications for admission to a research degree programme shall be considered in accordance with these regulations and any additional requirements specified.

#### **General entry requirement**

- 3.2 The minimum entry requirement for a research degree programme shall be an upper second class honours degree, or an equivalent overseas qualification, in a relevant subject. In certain disciplines, applicants may be additionally required to have a Master's degree at an appropriate level in a relevant subject. A Master's degree with a minimum of three years' professional experience is normally considered an additional requirement for the EdD.
- 3.3 If the applicant does not have the above qualifications, a special case may be made to the Head of Research (in consultation with the Graduate School Office of the University of Leicester) for admission based on one or more of the following criteria:
- other qualifications held;
  - relevant training and professional experience;
  - published works;
  - upper second class strengths demonstrated in relevant modules of first degree.

Special cases for admission to a research degree programme shall be subject to approval from the Research Committee.

### **English language entry requirement**

- 3.4 Applicants for a research degree programme must satisfy the Institution's English language requirement for doctoral study.
- 3.5 Applicants shall be deemed to have satisfied the English language entry requirement if they are:
- a national of, and have completed secondary or tertiary education where the medium of instruction was English in, one or more of the countries specified (Appendix 1);
  - a national of a country other than those specified but who has completed in one or more of those specified countries their secondary education in the national qualification, and/or two years of Bachelors level education, and/or a higher degree, where the medium of instruction was English and provided that no more than three years has elapsed between the date they completed their qualification and the intended start date of research degree programme.
- 3.6 All other applicants for a research degree programme shall be required to provide evidence that they have successfully completed:
- within a period of no more than two years from the intended start date of the research degree programme one of the Secure English Language Tests specified in Section 1.15 at the level specified for the subject;
  - one or more of the qualifications specified (Appendix 2) at a level equivalent to the relevant Secure English Language Test score specified in 3.7.
- 3.7 Applicants seeking to satisfy the English language entry requirement on the basis of the International English Language Testing System (Academic Version) or Pearson Test of English (Academic Version) must have achieved at least the minimum specified overall and component scores as indicated:
- applicants for programmes including a PhD or EdD in Education (including Education-related) or a PhD in History, Archaeology, Psychology and Sociology shall be deemed to have satisfied the English language requirements if they have achieved a minimum score of 6.5 (IELTS) or 90 (TOEFL) or 61 (PTE) overall with a minimum score of 5.5 (IELTS) or 18 (TOEFL) or 51 (PTE) in each component.
  - applicants for programmes including a PhD in English (including English-related) and Health Sciences (or Health Science-related) shall be deemed to have satisfied the English language requirements if they have achieved a minimum score of 7.0 (IELTS) or 100 (TOEFL) or 67 (PTE) overall with a minimum score of 6.0 (IELTS) or 20 (TOEFL) or 56 (PTE) in each component.

Applicants for these programmes who have not met the normal requirements may be made an offer of admission to the research degree programme that is conditional on the

successful completion of the University of Leicester's relevant English language pre-sessional course at the appropriate level.

- 3.8 If there is any doubt about the applicant's English language ability, the Institution may require the applicant to achieve a satisfactory score in a recognised English language test or to pass a test of competence set and marked by the University of Leicester's English Language Teaching Unit.
- 3.9 Applicants intending to register for a full-time research degree programme may be required to attend English language classes as a pre-condition of registration and/or to attend such classes alongside the research degree programme.

#### **Accreditation of prior learning**

- 3.10 Accreditation of prior learning is the term used for the recognition of academic achievement prior to an applicant's admission to a research degree programme at the Institution.
- 3.11 If appropriate the Head of Research (in consultation with the Graduate School Office of the University of Leicester) may recommend that an applicant who has completed a period of research degree registration at another Institution – but who received no academic qualification for this – should receive equivalent registration credit. Such credit shall normally be for a maximum of one year (full-time) or two years (part-time) against the relevant registration period at the Institution. The accreditation of prior academic achievement shall be subject to approval from the Research Committee.
- 3.12 The applicant shall be responsible for applying for recognition of prior academic achievement and for providing all required evidence at the time of application.

#### **Admission decisions**

- 3.13 An assessment shall be made of the applicant's suitability for the research degree programme. That assessment shall normally be based on:
- the applicant's qualifications and preparedness for research degree level study;
  - the applicant's personal motivation and likely ability to complete the research degree within the specified maximum registration period;
  - the availability of an appropriate pre-determined research project or the applicant's ability to provide a research proposal which gives an adequate focus to, and demonstrates the applicant's knowledge of, the proposed area of research;
  - the availability of appropriate supervisory capacity and material resources;
  - any professional requirements associated with the programme.
- 3.14 The assessment of the applicant's suitability for a part-time research degree programme shall additionally include consideration of the applicant's likely access to appropriate resources and the Institution's ability to provide remote supervision.

- 3.15 The applicant shall normally be interviewed before they are permitted to register for a research degree programme and the interview shall normally take place before an offer of admission is made. The Head of Research or their nominee, together with a proposed supervisory team, shall be responsible for interviewing applicants. Interviews shall normally be conducted in person. If that is not possible – for example, where the applicant is not based in the United Kingdom – the interview may be conducted by any appropriate means of communication.
- 3.16 A decision to make an offer of admission to the degree of PhD or EdD must be endorsed by at least two members of academic staff involved in the interviewing process – normally either the Executive Dean: Research and Knowledge Exchange or the Head of Research and proposed first supervisor or other member of the programme team where appropriate.
- 3.17 A decision to make an offer of admission to a research degree programme must not be made by any member of staff who has or has had a close personal or professional relationship with the applicant or the applicant’s immediate family.
- 3.17 A decision to make an offer of admission to a research degree programme shall be made by staff who have received training and guidance in the selection and admission of research degree applicants. The Head of Research shall be responsible for ensuring that staff attend such training as is required.
- 3.18 The applicant may register for the degree of PhD under a practice based arrangement in exceptional circumstances only (in consultation with the Graduate School Office of the University of Leicester) – that is, an arrangement in which the research student shall submit for examination a thesis that comprises both a critical/reflective component and a practice component.
- 3.19 The formal offer of admission to the degree of PhD or EdD must be made by the Student Recruitment and Admissions Office of the Institution.
- 3.20 The offer of admission to a research degree programme may, with the approval of the Institution, be deferred for a period of up to twelve months. The offer of admission shall be withdrawn if the applicant does not register for the research degree programme within twelve months of the start date specified in the offer letter. The Institution may make a further offer of admission subject to successful re-application.

#### **4. Registration**

- 4.1 The research student shall be required to complete a registration process when they commence the research degree programme and shall be formally admitted to the Institution as a registered student only on satisfactory completion of this process.

- 4.2 The research student shall be required as a condition of registration to abide by these Regulations and all other regulations and procedures approved and amended from time to time by the Institution throughout the period of the research degree programme.

#### **Initial registration**

- 4.3 The research student shall commence registration at an appropriate date with the agreement of the Head of Research and the supervisory team.
- 4.4 Once the research student has completed the registration process the initial date of registration cannot be amended.
- 4.5 On completion of the registration process the research student shall receive a card of membership of the Institution. When on campus the research student must carry their student card with them at all times and must produce it upon request for inspection by any member of the Institution's staff or official of the Students' Union.
- 4.6 The use of the student card is personal to the individual to whom it is issued and the research student must not allow it to be used by another person, whether a registered student of the Institution or not. The Student Recruitment and Admissions Office must be notified if the card is lost or stolen. There shall be a fee for replacement cards.

#### **Research area**

- 4.7 Research students registered for the degree of PhD must as soon as possible following initial registration agree with the supervisory team the specific research question(s) to be addressed by the thesis together with a viable research plan for delivering the thesis.
- 4.8 In some cases, the specific research question(s) may be pre-determined. In other cases, agreement on the research question(s) should follow consultation between the research student and the supervisory team; this consultation may begin before an offer of admission has been made and may continue beyond the date of initial registration. Where such consultation is needed, the research question(s) shall normally be agreed within six months of initial registration (full-time PhD) or twelve months of initial registration (part-time PhD).
- 4.9 Research students registered for the degree of PhD must have agreed the research question(s) and research plan by the time the research student undertakes the probation review. The supervisory team must inform the Head of Research if there are any concerns that this may not be possible.
- 4.10 Research students registered for the EdD shall develop and agree in accordance with the programme requirements the specific research question(s) to be addressed by the thesis together with a viable research plan for delivering the thesis. In many cases the specific



research question(s) and research plan shall be developed through the assessed components of the programme.

- 4.11 Research students registered for the degree of PhD, and who will, in exceptional circumstances, submit a practice based thesis, shall normally have agreed the format of the practice component with the supervisory team within six months (full-time) or twelve months (part-time) of initial registration. The format for the practice component must be agreed by the time the research student undertakes the probation review. The supervisory team must inform the Head of Research if there are any concerns that this may not be possible.

#### **Address and residence**

- 4.12 The research student must register their address(es) with the Institution and must immediately notify the Student Recruitment and Admissions Office of any change of address.
- 4.13 Research students registered full-time shall normally reside in Lincoln or within easy commuting distance of the city and the Institution.

#### **International student visa requirements**

- 4.14 International research students from outside the European Union, and who are registered on a research degree programme requiring attendance on campus, shall be required to show evidence of a valid immigration status and to meet the requirements specified (Appendix 3).

#### **Annual re-registration**

- 4.15 Research students undertaking a research degree programme of more than one year in duration shall be required to complete an annual re-registration process.
- 4.16 Failure to complete the annual re-registration process by the specified deadline shall result in the research student being withdrawn from the research degree programme.

#### **Registration periods**

- 4.17 Each research degree programme shall have a specified minimum and maximum period of registration dependent on the research student's mode of study. The specified minimum and maximum periods shall be calculated by reference to the research student's initial date of registration.
- 4.18 The registration periods for the degree of PhD shall be:
- full-time minimum period 2.0 years, maximum period 4.0 years;

- part-time minimum period 4.0 years, maximum period 7.0 years.
- 4.19 The registration period for the degree of EdD shall be:
- part-time minimum period 3.0 years, maximum period 6.0 years.
- 4.20 Research students shall be required to maintain registration for at least the specified minimum period.
- 4.21 Research students shall not normally maintain registration beyond the specified maximum period. Research students who have experienced extenuating circumstances which are accepted by the Institution may be given an extension of registration beyond the specified maximum period.
- 4.22 Requests for an extension of registration require the support of the supervisory team and the Head of Research (in consultation with the Graduate School Office of the University of Leicester) and shall be subject to approval from the Research Committee. The research student's registration shall not normally be extended for a period of more than six months. The research student must submit the thesis for examination by the end of the extension period. Standard extension fees may be payable for the approved extension period.

#### **Writing up periods**

- 4.23 Research students registered for the degree of PhD shall be permitted to register for a writing-up period of no more than twelve months provided that the specified minimum period of registration has been completed and the Head of Research confirms that the student has completed the active research part of the degree – including all laboratory work, field work, and data collection.
- 4.24 Requests to register for a writing-up period require the approval of the Head of Research and must be submitted to the Student Recruitment and Admissions Office and the Graduate School Office at the University of Leicester.
- 4.25 The writing-up period shall count towards the specified maximum registration period. The research student shall not continue the writing-up period beyond the specified maximum registration period unless an extension of registration has been approved by the Head of Research (in consultation with the Graduate School Office of the University of Leicester).
- 4.26 Research students who have completed a twelve month writing-up period and have been given an extension of registration beyond this may be required to pay a standard extension fee for the extension period.
- 4.27 Research students in a writing-up period shall continue to be offered formal supervision and this shall include the first supervisor reading and commenting on the final draft of the thesis

provided that the thesis is presented by a mutually acceptable date in sufficient time before the required submission date.

- 4.28 Over the writing-up period the research student shall continue to have access to the Institution Library and their Institution IT account. Research students in a writing-up period may continue to have access to appropriate facilities subject to approval from the Head of Research.

#### **Changes of registration**

- 4.29 Following initial registration, the research student may change or vary the research degree programme – including changes to the mode of study – only with the approval of the supervisory team, Head of Research, the Research Students’ Committee and the Research Committee.
- 4.30 Requests to change or vary the research degree programme must be submitted to the Head of Research. Where a change in the mode of study is approved, the completed period of registration shall be re-calculated pro rata and this may change the date at which the research student will complete the specified maximum registration period.

#### **Suspension of programmes**

- 4.31 Research students who have experienced extenuating circumstances which are accepted by the Research Committee may suspend their programme. A suspension is an approved period of absence from the research degree programme.
- 4.32 Suspension of programme indicates that the research student is not actively engaged with the research degree programme but remains registered with the Institution. Over the suspension period, the research student shall not be offered formal supervision nor have access to facilities. Over the suspension period the research student will not normally have access to the Institution Library and their Institution IT account. Requests for suspension of programme require the approval of the Head of Research and the Research Committee and must be submitted to the Admissions Office and the Graduate School Office at the University of Leicester.
- 4.33 Periods of suspension shall normally be at least three months in duration. Research students shall not normally suspend their programme for a period exceeding twelve months over the duration of the research degree programme. Research students returning from a period of suspension shall normally resume their programme as of the first day of the relevant month. The suspension period shall not count towards the specified minimum and maximum registration periods.

#### **Withdrawal**

- 4.34 Research students wishing to withdraw permanently from the research degree programme must notify the Head of Research in writing. Research students considering withdrawal from the programme are strongly encouraged to first consult with the supervisory team.
- 4.35 Where owing to non-engagement the Institution considers that a research student has withdrawn from the research degree programme, the student shall be contacted in writing and asked to respond by a specified date. If the research student fails to respond satisfactorily by the specified date it shall be assumed that they have withdrawn from the research degree programme.

## **5. Induction and training**

- 5.1 The Head of Research shall ensure that the research student receives appropriate induction information at the start of the research degree programme. This must include guidance on:
- the roles and responsibilities of the research student and the supervisory team;
  - the nature of research and the standard of work expected of research students;
  - the specified maximum registration period and the planning of the research programme;
  - the relevant probation and progress monitoring requirements;
  - the identification and use of appropriate literature and information resources.
- 5.2 The research student shall be responsible for making themselves familiar at the start of the research degree programme with relevant Institutional policies and procedures. In particular, the research student must ensure that they are familiar with relevant Regulations and the Code of Conduct for Doctoral Research.

### **Skills and career development training**

- 5.3 The research student shall have the opportunity through the research degree programme and other Institutional events and materials, including those available at the University of Leicester, to develop relevant research and other skills.
- 5.4 The Head of Research or nominee shall ensure that the research student receives training and/or guidance to support the development of relevant research skills. Research students registered for the degree of PhD shall normally work with the supervisory team to identify the research skills needed for the research degree programme and to develop an appropriate training plan. Research students registered for other doctoral degree programmes shall normally develop relevant research skills through the assessed components of the programme.
- 5.5 All research students should, in addition to developing relevant research skills, make use of opportunities to develop their broader personal and professional skills. These may include written and oral communication skills, presentation skills, project management skills, interpersonal and leadership skills, and career planning skills.

- 5.6 The supervisory team and/or the Head of Research may require the research student to complete compulsory training activities. Research students registered full-time may be required to attend English language classes alongside the research degree programme where appropriate.
- 5.7 Research students shall be required to allocate to skills and career development training an appropriate portion of each year of registration. Research students registered for the degree of PhD shall normally take at least two weeks (full-time) or one week (part-time) each year for appropriate skills and career development activities such as attendance at formal training events, participation in research seminars and conferences, use of online materials, and self-directed learning activities. Research students registered for other doctoral degree programmes should complete an equivalent amount of training as appropriate within the programme requirements.
- 5.8 Research students registered for the degree of PhD must keep a record of all skills and career development training completed. This record shall be reviewed at the research student's probation review. Research students registered for other doctoral degree programmes should keep a record of all skills and career development activities completed beyond the assessed components of the programme.

## **6. Supervision of doctoral research students**

- 6.1 A supervisory team must be appointed for every research student. The Head of Research or their nominee shall be responsible for approving the appointment of each supervisory team's members (with the additional approval of the Graduate Dean of the University of Leicester).

### **Supervisory team members**

- 6.2 Each supervisory team must comprise at least two members and include:
- a clearly identified first supervisor – the first supervisor must have expertise in the student's area of research and shall have primary responsibility for the student's supervision;
  - a second or co-supervisor – the second supervisor must have expertise relevant to the student's area of research and shall either assist the first supervisor in the provision of guidance and support to the student or have a co-supervisor role.
- 6.3 The first supervisor must be one of the following:
- a member of the Institution's academic staff;
  - a research fellow of the Institution.
- 6.4 Other honorary and emeritus staff of the Institution shall not be appointed as first supervisors.

- 6.5 The second supervisor must be one of the following:
- a member of the Institution's academic staff;
  - a research fellow of the Institution.
- 6.6 Other honorary and emeritus staff of the Institution shall not be appointed as second supervisors.
- 6.7 A third supervisor may be appointed if needed. The third supervisor is not required to be a member of the Institution's academic staff and the use of non-Institutional staff as third supervisors may be appropriate where the research student will undertake a placement in industry. Honorary and emeritus staff of the University may be appointed as third supervisors.
- 6.8 The Head of Research shall be responsible for approving the appointment of a third supervisor who is not a member of the Institution's academic staff (with the additional approval of the Graduate Dean of the University of Leicester). Such supervisors shall be designated as external supervisors. If an external supervisor is appointed, it must be made clear to all parties that full control over supervision rests with the Institution.

#### **Appointment of the supervisory team**

- 6.9 The Head of Research must specify a named first supervisor at the point it makes a formal offer of admission to a PhD programme. The names of other members of the supervisory team shall be specified if known. Research students registered for other doctoral degree programmes must be informed of the members of the supervisory team at the appropriate point in their registration.
- 6.10 The Head of Research must notify the research student, the Research Students Committee and the Research Committee in writing should it be necessary to change the appointed supervisory team after a formal offer of admission has been made. The Head of Research or their nominee shall be responsible for making alternative supervision arrangements.
- 6.11 The supervisory team must have appropriate experience of the supervision of research students. The first and second supervisors shall normally between them have experience of successfully supervising at least three research students to completion. The approval of the Head of Research shall be required where it is proposed to appoint a supervisory team with less experience (with the additional approval of the Graduate Dean of the University of Leicester).
- 6.12 Members of the Institution's academic staff on probation may be appointed as either first or second supervisor (with the additional approval of the Graduate Dean of the University of Leicester). If a member of academic staff on probation is appointed as first supervisor, the other members of the supervisory team must between them have experience of successfully supervising at least three research students to completion.

6.13 Supervisors should not be appointed to, or be allowed to remain appointed to, a supervisory team where:

- they will be supervising a research student with whom they have or have had a close personal or professional relationship;
- they have or have had a close personal or contractual relationship with another member of the same supervisory team.

Members of the supervisory team must declare any such relationship(s) to the Head of Research or their nominee. The Head of Research or their nominee shall be responsible for making alternative supervision arrangements. The Head of Research or their nominee may, in exceptional circumstances, agree to the supervisory arrangements continuing unchanged – but only with full disclosure to and the agreement of the research student.

### **Supervision loads**

6.14 Members of the Institution's academic staff shall normally at any one time supervise no more than the equivalent of nine full-time research students with a maximum headcount of twelve.

6.15 In calculating supervision loads, the Head of Research shall normally take account of both first and second supervisory appointments that are held. The following weightings are used:

- first supervisor appointments: 1 x full-time student = 1.0 FTE, 1 x part-time student = 0.5 FTE;
- second supervisor appointments: 1 x full-time student = 0.5 FTE, 1 x part-time student = 0.25 FTE.

6.16 The Head of Research may specify a lower maximum supervision load if appropriate – for example, for part-time staff or staff with substantive managerial roles. The approval of the Head of Research is required if it is proposed that a member of staff should supervise more than the specified maximum number of research students.

### **Training and monitoring of supervisors**

6.17 The Institution's training programme for research student supervisors must have been completed by either the first or second supervisor within each supervisory team. The Head of Research shall be responsible for ensuring that staff involved in the supervision of research students, including external supervisors, complete this training programme.

### **Responsibilities of supervisors**

6.18 The supervisory team must ensure that the research student is in no doubt as to what shall be required of them. In particular, it must be emphasised that the thesis must be the

- research student's own work and that, within the supervisory framework, the student shall be responsible for planning and managing their work and for developing their own ideas.
- 6.19 The supervisory team and the research student must establish at an early stage a clear understanding as to the responsibilities of supervisory team, the relation of these to the responsibilities of the student, and the supervisory team's role in relation to the preparation and development of the student's written and other work. That understanding must cover the nature of guidance or comment that the supervisory team shall offer within the general principle that the thesis must be the research student's own work.
- 6.20 The supervisory team must ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place so that formal supervisory meetings with research students on a part-time research degree programme are held as specified.
- 6.21 The supervisory team must ensure that research students undertaking research as part of a team or research group understand how their own research relates to the research of the group as a whole.
- 6.22 The responsibilities of the supervisory team shall include:
- ensuring that the research student is familiar with relevant Senate Regulations and the Code of Conduct for Doctoral Research;
  - providing the research student with guidance on the nature of research and standard expected, the requirements of the degree for which they are registered, the planning of the research programme, literature and sources, obligations with respect to assessed components excluding the thesis and/or skills and career development training, required research techniques and methodologies, the need to develop oral and written communication skills, academic honesty and drawing attention to relevant regulations, including those relating to plagiarism;
  - monitoring the progress of the student's research through regular formal supervisory meetings and ensuring that the research student keeps an agreed record of these meetings;
  - being accessible at mutually convenient times when the research student may need advice;
  - giving detailed advice on the necessary completion dates of successive stages of the work so that the thesis can be submitted within the relevant maximum registration period;
  - emphasising the importance of timely submission of the thesis in terms of good academic practice and in relation to the requirements of the Institution;
  - requesting draft or preliminary written and other work as appropriate and returning such work with constructive criticism and within a reasonable time;
  - arranging, as appropriate, for the research student to present their work to staff and students, bearing in mind the demands of the viva voce examination;
  - ensuring that the research student is made aware of any concerns about their progress or the standard of their work and ensuring that the Head of Research and the Postgraduate Tutor are notified in writing if there are any concerns about the research student's progress or ability to achieve the degree for which they are registered;



- reading and commenting on the whole of the final draft of the thesis, provided that this is presented within a reasonable and agreed timeframe, and ensuring that the research student is aware that the thesis must comply with all relevant regulations, including those on word length, format, and binding;
- notifying the research student, the Head of Research and the Postgraduate Tutor if they have concerns about the quality of the thesis to be submitted for examination;
- liaising with the Head of Research and the Postgraduate Tutor and the Student Recruitment and Admissions Office to ensure that regulations are appropriately applied.

### **Formal supervisory meetings**

- 6.23 Formal supervisory meetings for full-time research students registered for the degree of PhD in the probation period shall normally be held at least monthly or every two months part-time. Following successful completion of the probation period, formal supervisory meetings shall normally be held at least every two months (full-time) or every four months (part-time).
- 6.24 Formal supervisory meetings for research students registered for other doctoral degree programmes shall normally be held at least monthly (full-time) or every two months (part-time). However, formal supervisory meetings may not commence until the research student has completed all assessed components of the programme excluding the thesis.
- 6.25 The research student shall be responsible for agreeing with the supervisory team a mutually acceptable annual schedule of formal supervisory meetings.
- 6.26 Formal supervisory meetings may not involve all members of the supervisory team. All formal supervisory meetings shall normally involve the first supervisor and there must be at least one formal supervisory meeting each year at which all members of the supervisory team are present.
- 6.27 Formal supervisory meetings with campus based research students shall normally be conducted in person. Formal supervisory meetings with other research students may be conducted by any appropriate means of communication, but meetings in person should be used where possible.
- 6.28 The research student shall be responsible for preparing a brief written record – around 100 words – of each formal supervisory meeting. The first supervisor must check this record for accuracy and confirm whether it is accurate. The research student and the supervisory team must each keep an agreed record of all formal supervisory meetings.

### **Postgraduate tutors**

- 6.29 The Institution will appoint a designated Postgraduate Tutor. The Head of Research shall be responsible for appointing the Postgraduate Tutor. The Postgraduate Tutor shall provide pastoral and other general guidance as appropriate to both the research student and the

supervisory team. The Postgraduate Tutor may supervise research students in their own right. Where the regular Postgraduate Tutor is supervising a research student in their own right, the Head of Research must appoint an alternative Postgraduate Tutor for that student.

6.30 The responsibilities of the Postgraduate Tutor shall include:

- providing research students with advice on the role of the Postgraduate Tutor and their availability for consultation;
- ensuring that research students are aware of and adhere to relevant Regulations and the Code of Conduct for Doctoral Research;
- contributing to the oversight and operation of research student admissions decisions;
- assisting in identifying possible supervisors, probation and progress review panel members, and examiners;
- contributing to the oversight and operation of research student progress monitoring mechanisms and ensuring that probation and progress reviews take place at the appropriate point in each research student's registration with an appropriately composed review panel;
- monitoring the frequency of formal supervisory meetings;
- monitoring research student participation with respect to assessed components excluding the thesis and/or skills and career development training;
- ensuring that appropriate personal support is available to research students and providing guidance on other sources of support and advice to research students and supervisory teams;
- providing initial mediation in a dispute between the research student and the supervisory team;
- working with supervisory teams to ensure timely submission of theses;
- acting where appropriate on behalf of the research student, including seeking guidance on regulatory issues from the Student Recruitment and Admissions Office.

## **7. Progress review monitoring**

7.1 Research students registered for the degree of PhD must successfully complete a regular formal review of their progress.

7.2 The progress of research students registered for other doctoral degree programmes shall be reviewed through their completion of the assessed components and other programme requirements.

### **Probation period and probation review**

7.3 Research students registered for the degree of PhD shall be registered on probation for the first year of the degree (full-time) or first two years of the degree (part-time).

- 7.4 Before the end of the specified probation period, the research student must be assessed and a decision made as to whether they have successfully completed the probation period and should be permitted to continue with the degree.
- 7.5 For research students registered for the degree of PhD the first formal progress review shall be used to decide whether the student has successfully completed probation. This review must take place before the end of the research student's first year of registration (full-time) or before the end of the second year of registration (part-time).
- 7.6 For the probation review the research student must prepare:
- a written report on their progress to date – this shall normally be of 5,000 to 10,000 words and may be accompanied by relevant supporting research outputs;
  - a work plan for completing the thesis over the remaining part of the specified maximum registration period;
  - a record of skills and career development training completed to date – where there are compulsory training requirements, this record must include evidence that these have been met;
  - written records of all formal supervisory meetings held to date.
- 7.7 The above are minimum requirements and the Head of Research may require research students to produce additional materials as appropriate.
- 7.8 For the probation review, the supervisory team must prepare written feedback – around 300 words – on the research student's progress. This feedback must include:
- a discussion of the research student's progress to date;
  - a discussion of the feasibility of the research student's proposed work plan;
  - recommendations for further training that is required.
- 7.9 The probation review must be conducted by a probation review panel. A probation review panel must be appointed for every research student registered for the degree of PhD. The Head of Research or their nominee shall be responsible for the appointment of the probation review panel.
- 7.10 Each probation review panel must comprise at least two members at least one of whom must be a member of the University's academic staff. All members of each probation review panel must be one of the following:
- a member of the Institution's academic staff;
  - a research fellow of the Institution.

- 7.11 Other honorary and emeritus staff of the Institution shall not be appointed as members of a probation review panel. The Head of Research or their nominee may, if appropriate, appoint an additional external adviser to assist the probation review panel.
- 7.12 Members of the research student's supervisory team must not be members of the same student's probation review panel.
- 7.13 Members of the probation review panel must not have or have had:
- a close personal or professional relationship with the research student or the research student's immediate family;
  - a close personal or contractual relationship with any member of the supervisory team or any other member of the panel.
- 7.14 Members of the probation review panel must have expertise relevant to the student's area of research. Each probation review panel must have appropriate experience of the supervision of research students. The members of each probation review panel shall normally between them have experience of successfully supervising at least three research students to completion. The approval of the Head of Research shall be required if it is proposed to appoint a probation review panel with less experience.
- 7.14 The probation review shall provide the research student with the opportunity to discuss their research, their findings so far, and their plans for completing the thesis. The research student must give a presentation and defence of their work. This shall normally take the form of an oral examination and/or a presentation followed by questions.
- 7.15 In advance of the probation review, the Head of Research or nominee must provide the probation review panel with copies of the research student's progress report and the written feedback of the supervisory team.
- 7.16 The probation review must be conducted in person and shall normally take the form of a meeting between the research student and the probation review panel. The research student may be required to give a separate presentation to the probation review panel, members of the Institution, and others. The probation review panel may ask the research student questions on any relevant matters as needed to form an opinion on the student's progress to date and their ability to complete the degree within the specified maximum registration period.
- 7.17 Members of the research student's supervisory team may attend the student's probation review meeting, including any separate presentation session, as observers. If members of the supervisory team are in attendance, the research student must be given the opportunity to discuss privately with the probation review panel any other relevant matters that they may wish to raise.

- 7.18 At the end of the probation review, the probation review panel must make a recommendation to the Head of Research as to whether the research student should be permitted to continue with the degree. The panel shall recommend one of the following:
- that the research student has successfully completed probation for the degree for which they registered and should be permitted to continue as a registered student;
  - that the research student has not successfully completed probation for the degree for which they registered and should be required to remain on probation for that degree for a period of no more than six months and complete a further and final probation review before the end of that period;
  - that the research student has not successfully completed probation for the degree for which they registered but should be permitted to register for a lower award (research students registered for the degree of PhD);
  - that the research student has not successfully completed probation and should have their registration terminated.
- 7.19 At the end of the probation review, the probation review panel must prepare a brief written report indicating their recommendation and the reasons for making this. Copies of this report must be provided to the research student, the supervisory team, and the Student Recruitment and Admissions Office.
- 7.20 If the probation review panel has recommended that the research student should remain on probation for a period of no more than six months, a further probation review must be held before the end of that period. At the end of that subsequent probation review, the probation review panel must make a recommendation to the Head of Research or as to whether the research student should be permitted to continue with the degree. The panel shall recommend one of the following:
- that the research student has successfully completed probation for the degree for which they registered and should be permitted to continue as a registered student;
  - that the research student has not successfully completed probation for the degree for which they registered but should be permitted to register for a lower award (research students registered for the degree of PhD);
  - that the research student has not successfully completed probation and should have their registration terminated.
- 7.21 At the end of the subsequent probation review the probation review panel must prepare a brief written report indicating their recommendation and the reasons for making this. Copies of this report must be provided to the research student, the supervisory team, and the Student Recruitment and Admissions Office.
- 7.22 Research students who have not successfully met the specified requirements shall normally have their registration terminated.

#### **Subsequent progress reviews**

- 7.23 Following the probation review, the progress of research students registered for the degree of PhD, and whose degree is of more than one year in duration, shall be monitored by a progress review panel.
- 7.24 The progress review panel must comprise at least two members. Members of the research student's supervisory team may be members of the same student's progress review panel, but the progress review panel must include at least one member who is not also a member of the supervisory team – normally this shall be a member of the original probation review panel. The Head of Research or their nominee shall be responsible for the appointment of the progress review panel.
- 7.25 Before the end of each year of their registration – excluding the final year – the research student must submit a written report on their progress to the progress review panel. This report shall normally be of at least 2,000 words and may be accompanied by relevant supporting research outputs.
- 7.26 The progress review panel must arrange regular progress review meetings with the research student. Progress review meetings must take place at least annually (full-time PhD) or every second year (part-time PhD). Progress review meetings with campus based research students shall normally be conducted in person.
- 7.27 Progress review meetings shall provide the research student with the opportunity to discuss their research, their findings so far, and their plans for completing the thesis. There is no requirement for the research student to give a presentation or defence of their work at subsequent progress reviews; however, the institution may require this as appropriate. Research students must be given appropriate notice if they shall be required to present or defend their work.
- 7.28 At the end of each progress review meeting, the progress review panel must prepare a brief written report on the research student's progress since the last progress review meeting. The report must make clear any concerns that the progress review panel has about the research student's progress or ability to achieve the degree for which they are registered within the specified maximum registration period.
- 7.29 A copy of the progress review panel's report must be provided to the research student and the Student Recruitment and Admissions Office. If the progress review panel has serious doubts about the research student's progress or ability to achieve the degree for which they are registered, a copy of the report must be provided to the Head of Research who may initiate proceedings for neglect of academic obligations as specified.

#### **Student annual reports**

- 7.30 Alongside the Institution's formal progress review framework, research students registered for the degree of PhD or on the research phase of the EdD, and whose degree is of more

than one year in duration, must submit an annual progress report to the Head of Research or their nominee.

- 7.31 Research students are encouraged to share with the supervisory team the contents of the annual report to the Head of Research or their nominee, but it is recognised that some may choose not to do so. The research student must though raise with the supervisory team any issues having an adverse effect on their progress at the time they occur and prior to submission of the thesis for examination.

## **8. Research student obligations and research conduct**

- 8.1 Research students must familiarise themselves with the general definitions of misconduct specified in Appendix 4. These include both academic and non-academic forms of misconduct.
- 8.2 All students of the Institution shall be subject to the Student Disciplinary Procedure and the Code of Practice for Academic Misconduct in respect of their studies and period of registration. The University Council, following consultation with Senate and representatives of the students, is responsible for determining rules with respect to the students, including procedures for suspension and expulsion.
- 8.3 In addition to these regulations, research students shall be required to abide by the Code of Conduct for Doctoral Research.

### **Responsibilities of research students**

- 8.4 The research student shall have primary responsibility for the direction and progress of their research and for the delivery of a thesis of an appropriate standard within the specified maximum registration period.
- 8.5 The research student shall be expected to adopt a professional approach to their research degree programme, including:
- good timekeeping;
  - observing deadlines;
  - reading and responding to communications from the supervisory team and other members of the Institution;
  - taking responsibility for their own skills and career development.
- 8.6 The responsibilities of the research student shall include:
- completing initial registration and any subsequent re-registration as required and, in the case of international research students, complying with all relevant immigration requirements;

- making themselves familiar with relevant policies and procedures – in particular, with these regulations and the Code of Conduct for Doctoral Research;
- developing an appropriate research plan that will enable submission of the thesis for examination within the specified maximum registration period;
- managing and sustaining progress in accordance with the agreed research plan, including the submission to the supervisory team of interim work as required;
- recognising when they need help and taking the initiative in raising any concerns and problems as early as possible with the supervisory team or the Postgraduate Tutor;
- complying with all relevant requirements with respect to intellectual property;
- making time at the start of the research degree programme to discuss with the supervisory team the nature of research, the standard of work expected of research students, and the respective roles and responsibilities of the research student and the supervisory team;
- confirming with the supervisory team how supervision will work in practice and clarifying their own preferences with respect to the type of supervisory guidance needed and the ways in which this might be provided;
- maintaining regular contact with the supervisory team and taking the initiative in agreeing with the supervisory team a mutually acceptable schedule for formal supervisory meetings;
- attending formal supervisory meetings as scheduled and making appropriate arrangements if it is not possible to attend a scheduled supervisory meeting;
- reflecting on and responding to feedback and guidance provided by the supervisory team at formal supervisory meetings;
- preparing and keeping an agreed written record of each formal supervisory meeting;
- complying with the Institution's requirements for formal progress reviews;
- undertaking appropriate skills and career development training;
- maintaining a record of completed skills and career development activities and reviewing and revising their training plan as appropriate;
- providing the supervisory team with a complete final draft of the thesis by a mutually acceptable date in sufficient time before the required submission date for the supervisors to read and comment on;
- reflecting on and responding to feedback and guidance provided by the supervisory team with regards to the final draft of the thesis;
- ensuring that the thesis complies with all relevant regulations, including those on word length, format, and binding;
- making appropriate preparations for the viva voce examination and attending the examination as required by the examining team;
- complying with all thesis final submission requirements – submission to the library and the University of Leicester library of one hard bound copy of the thesis and one electronic copy of the thesis.

### **Ethical approval of research**

- 8.7 Research students undertaking work that involves human participants must receive ethical approval prior to its commencement. The research student must familiarise themselves with the requirements for the approval of work on ethical grounds, outlined in the



Institution's Research Ethics Policy, including the need to complete an ethics application form for review by the Institution's Research Ethics Committee and any external bodies as required. Research involving human participants must not commence without the prior approval of the relevant committee(s).

- 8.8 The research student must consult the supervisory team if they are thinking of making any changes to the proposed research after having received ethics approval. If the research student fails to seek appropriate ethical approval prior to commencing their work, or fails to consult with the supervisory team regarding major changes to their work once it has commenced, the Head of Research may initiate proceedings for academic misconduct as specified in the Code of Practice for Academic Misconduct (see Appendix 4).

#### **Academic misconduct and dishonesty**

- 8.9 The Institution's primary functions of teaching and research involve a search for knowledge and the truthful recording of the findings of that search. Any action that is knowingly taken by the research student which involves misrepresentation of the truth shall be considered as academic misconduct and as such is an offence which the Institution believes should merit the application of very severe penalties.

- 8.10 Offences in this category shall include, but are not confined to:

- cheating in assignments;
- copying work from or using work written by another student;
- copying from published authorities, including online sources, without acknowledgement;
- making work available to another person for copying;
- soliciting or commissioning work;
- pretending or claiming ownership of another's ideas;
- falsifying results;
- undertaking research without appropriate ethical approval.

- 8.11 If the research student is deemed to have been guilty of academic misconduct, the Head of Research is authorised to apply the following penalties:

- for academic misconduct in assessed components excluding the thesis, penalties shall be applied in accordance with Appendix 7 (research students registered for the degree of EdD);
- for academic misconduct in a formal progress review report and/or presentation, the research student shall be given a severe written warning and permitted to repeat the progress review – except in such cases where the level of misconduct is such that the Head of Research considers it necessary to refer the case to a higher authority e.g. Registry (research students registered for the degree of PhD);
- for academic misconduct in the development of the thesis or in other non-assessed work, the research student shall be given a severe written warning – except in such cases where

the level of misconduct is such that the Head of School / Department considers it necessary to refer the case to a higher authority e.g. Registry;

- if academic misconduct is found in a thesis submitted for examination this must be reported immediately to the Head of Research (the examination shall be suspended and the Head of Research shall instigate an investigation – where academic misconduct is confirmed, a viva voce examination shall not be held and the examiners shall normally recommend failure without right of resubmission - if appropriate, further action may be taken as specified in Appendix 4).

### **Academic obligations**

- 8.12 The nature of a research student's academic obligations varies from programme to programme. If the supervisory team or progress review panel has concerns about whether the research student is meeting their academic obligations or has serious doubts about the student's progress or ability to achieve the degree for which they are registered, the Head of Research and the Postgraduate Tutor must immediately be notified in writing.
- 8.13 The Head of Research, in consultation with the Postgraduate Tutor and the supervisory team, shall decide on the most appropriate course of action.
- 8.14 The Head of Research must ensure that the research student fully understands their responsibilities and the reasons why their progress is considered to be unsatisfactory. Initial measures taken by the Institution shall normally be supportive – for example, a suspension of registration if there are personal or medical difficulties, reformulation of the research area, or transfer to a lower degree.
- 8.15 If after such action the research student's progress remains unsatisfactory, or the research student is unable to demonstrate the ability to perform at the required level, the Head of Research shall either:
- issue a formal warning to the student as specified in Appendix 4;
  - refer the matter to a higher authority e.g. Registry with a recommendation that the student should have their registration terminated.

### **Intellectual property**

- 8.16 Intellectual property shall be attributed in accordance with the requirements specified in the Code of Conduct for Doctoral Research.
- 8.17 The research student shall be responsible for complying with such requirements for the protection of intellectual property as are specified by the Institution as well as any other applicable requirements for the protection of third party intellectual property.
- 8.18 There are a number of ways in which confidentiality can be compromised by disclosure of a discovery or invention. Research students must be aware that disclosure can occur as a

result of an academic presentation (such as a spoken presentation, conference abstract, poster, etc.) or any other conversation (such as a written, spoken, or electronic communication, etc.). Breaches of confidentiality may result in an inability to protect the intellectual property in the future. They may also result in actions for recovery of losses against the Institution and the individual concerned.

- 8.19 The research student must consult the supervisory team if they have any concerns regarding the possible disclosure of intellectual property. The research student and/or the supervisory team may consult further as required.

### **Copyright**

- 8.20 The research student shall hold the copyright for their thesis.
- 8.21 The research student shall be responsible for ensuring that they comply with any requirements for their use of material to which a third party holds the copyright. This shall include the use of such material in the thesis and in papers, posters, presentations, etc.

### **Proof reading services**

- 8.22 Research students may use an external proof reading service but with care and take care to avoid any allegation of misconduct arising as a result.

### **Illness**

- 8.23 Research students who suffer a minor illness for a period of less than seven days must report it to the Head of Research (who will refer it to Registry) where this may have affected their ability to meet their academic obligations.
- 8.24 Research students who suffer an illness of more than seven days' duration or that is of a non-minor nature must seek medical advice and obtain a medical certificate. A copy of the medical certificate must be provided to the Head of Research (who will refer it to Registry).
- 8.25 The research student shall be responsible for providing such documentation as shall be required by the Institution as evidence of their illness or of their fitness to resume the research degree programme.

### **Leave and holidays**

- 8.26 Full-time research students may in each calendar year take periods of annual leave, normally up to a maximum of twenty-four (full-time) or twelve (part-time) leave days. Requests to take annual leave must be made through the supervisory team and recorded by the Research and Innovation Centre. Requests to take leave for a period of more than one month shall not normally be approved.

- 8.27 In addition to the annual leave entitlement, there are a number of United Kingdom public holidays and a further number of days in each year which are allocated by the Institution as closure days around the Christmas and Easter periods.
- 8.28 Sponsored research students must comply with any conditions for taking leave that are associated with the terms of their sponsorship. International research students must comply with all attendance monitoring requirements regardless of any agreed leave period.

### **Paid employment**

- 8.29 Full-time research students may with the approval of the Head of Research undertake paid employment (excluding internships or other placements arranged as part of the research degree programme) normally up to a maximum of eight hours each week.
- 8.30 Sponsored research students must comply with any conditions for undertaking paid employment that are associated with the terms of their sponsorship. International research students must comply with any conditions for undertaking paid employment that are associated with the terms of their immigration status.
- 8.31 The undertaking of paid employment alongside a research degree programme will not be accepted as an extenuating circumstance for poor academic performance, neglect of academic obligations, or academic misconduct.

### **Internships and placements**

- 8.32 The research student may, with the approval of the supervisory team, undertake an internship or other placement over the duration of the research degree registration. In some cases, the completion of an internship/placement may be a condition of the research student's sponsorship.
- 8.33 The duration and timing of the internship/placement shall be agreed between the research student, the supervisory team, and the internship/placement host. The supervisory team shall have the final say on the duration and timing of the internship/placement.
- 8.34 If the internship/placement is not undertaken as a condition of the research student's sponsorship, it shall not normally exceed three months either as a block of time or spread over the duration of research degree programme. The prior approval of the Head of Research shall be required for internships/placements not undertaken as a condition of the research student's sponsorship and which would exceed three months.
- 8.35 The internship/placement period shall normally count towards the specified minimum and maximum registration periods.
- 8.36 International research students must comply with all attendance monitoring requirements regardless of any agreed internship/placement period.

## **Appeals and complaints**

- 8.37 The research student may appeal against an academic decision concerning progress, the award of a degree lower than that for which they were registered, or the termination of their registration. Research students who wish to appeal against an academic decision of these types must submit a formal academic appeal as specified in Appendix 5.
- 8.38 Research students who are dissatisfied with any element of the research degree programme or supervision must raise any concerns at the time they occur and prior to submission of the thesis for examination. The research student must raise any such concerns with the supervisory team in the first instance. Research students who are dissatisfied with the response of the supervisory team should take their concerns to the Postgraduate Tutor or the Head of Research. Where the Head of Research is the supervisor, they should take their concerns to the Executive Dean: Research and Knowledge Exchange. Research students who are unable to resolve difficulties through these routes may submit a formal complaint as specified in the Institution's Procedure for Dealing with Complaints by Students (see Appendix 6).

## **9. Thesis and assignment submission**

- 9.1 To be awarded the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, the research student must satisfy the examiners by means of a thesis which makes a distinct and original contribution to knowledge in the discipline and contains work which is considered to be worthy of publication. The research student must demonstrate a broad knowledge and understanding of their discipline and its associated research techniques and show that these have been successfully applied. Specific requirements for EdD assignments and the EdD thesis are presented in Appendix 7.
- 9.2 The thesis must be:
- the result of the research student's own work - where parts of the thesis are the result of work undertaken by or with others, this must be explicitly acknowledged in the thesis text and/or references;
  - the result of work undertaken by the research student over their period of registration.

### **Thesis format**

- 9.3 With the exception of short quotations for which an English translation is provided, the thesis must be written in English unless the Head of Research (in consultation with the Graduate School Office of the University of Leicester) has given approval prior to submission for examination for all or part of the thesis to be in another language.
- 9.4 The thesis must be presented on good quality A4 paper.

- 9.5 The thesis pages must be printed on one side only. The printed text must be of good quality with 1.5 line spacing and should normally be in the approved Institutional font and 12 point type.
- 9.6 The thesis pages must have a margin of at least 3.5 centimetres on the left side of each page to allow for binding. All other margins must be of at least 2.5 centimetres.
- 9.7 The first page of the thesis must be a title page that includes the following information:
- the full title of the thesis;
  - the research student's full name;
  - the name of the research student's Department and the Institution;
  - the month and year in which the thesis was submitted for examination.
- 9.8 The title page of the thesis must be followed by the thesis abstract. The abstract must not exceed 300 words and must include in the form of a heading the full title of the thesis and the research student's full name.
- 9.9 The thesis abstract must be followed in this order by:
- acknowledgements page;
  - table of contents;
  - main body of the thesis;
  - appendices (if needed).
- 9.10 Explanatory notes, if required or by convention, must be numbered and presented as footnotes at the bottom of the relevant page.
- 9.11 The thesis appendices – or the main body of the thesis if there are no appendices – must be followed by a complete and accurate reference list. All works referenced in the thesis must be included in the reference list.
- 9.12 Addenda to the thesis, such as loose maps or DVDs, must be secured in a pocket attached to the inside of the back cover. Addenda must be labelled with:
- the research student's full name;
  - the degree for which the thesis was submitted for examination;
  - the month and year in which the thesis was submitted for examination.

### **Thesis word length**

- 9.13 For research students at the Institution, the length of the thesis – including footnotes, but excluding the table of contents, tabulated data, diagrams, any appendices, the reference list, and table(s) of cases/legislation/treaties cited – must not exceed:

- PhD 80,000 words
- EdD 55,000 words

9.14 The thesis must not exceed the specified maximum word limit unless the Head of Research (in consultation with the Graduate School Office of the University of Leicester) has given approval for a higher word limit prior to submission of the thesis for examination.

### **Thesis submission**

9.15 The research student must on the request of the Research Committee confirm the date by which they expect to submit the thesis for examination. The Head of Research will inform the Graduate School Office of the University of Leicester.

9.16 The research student must be registered on the date that they submit the thesis for examination. The research student must submit the thesis for examination by the date at which they complete the specified maximum registration period unless they have been given an extension of registration by the Head of Research.

9.17 The research student shall be responsible for deciding whether to submit the thesis for examination. This decision should take account of the opinion of the supervisory team. The supervisory team's opinion is advisory only. An opinion that the thesis is ready for submission must not be taken as a guarantee that a degree will be awarded and a decision to award a degree rests wholly with the examining team.

9.18 Research students submitting the thesis for examination must submit to the Assignment Office two soft bound copies of the thesis.

9.19 Research students who following examination have been referred for resubmission must submit to the Assignment Office two soft bound copies of the revised thesis.

9.20 Research students who following examination have been awarded a research degree must submit to the library of the Institution and to the University of Leicester:

- one hard bound copy of the thesis - the cover of the hard bound copy must be standard green (Aberlave Library Buckram No. 563);
- one electronic copy of the thesis - the electronic copy of the thesis shall be deposited in the Institution and Leicester University's Research Archive and made available through the British Library's Electronic Theses Online Service.

### **Restrictions on access to theses**

9.21 A request to restrict access to the thesis may be made if there are extenuating reasons for doing so.

- 9.22 If there are extenuating reasons for restricting access to the thesis, the research student and/or the supervisory team may request that the thesis should be placed under an embargo for a period of no more than three years. The request for a thesis embargo must be made to the Graduate School Office on or before the date at which the thesis is submitted for examination. The application of a thesis embargos shall be subject to approval from the Graduate Dean. An approved embargo may apply to the electronic copy of the thesis only or to both electronic and print copies of the thesis.
- 9.23 Access to the thesis shall be restricted if the research is the subject of a formal confidentiality agreement with a sponsor. In such cases the Head of Research shall notify the Graduate School Office of the University of Leicester of the relevant conditions.
- 9.24 Sponsored research students must comply with any conditions for open access to the thesis that are associated with the terms of their sponsorship.

#### **Thesis examination**

- 9.25 All research students must successfully defend their thesis in a viva voce examination before a research degree shall be awarded.

#### **Examining teams**

- 9.26 The viva voce examination must be conducted by an examining team. Each examining team must comprise at least two members. At least one member of the examining team must be an external examiner.
- 9.27 Members of the research student's supervisory team must not be members of the same student's examining team.
- 9.28 A second external examiner must be appointed if it is not possible to appoint an internal examiner.
- 9.29 The examining team must comprise two external examiners if the research student to be examined is a member of the Institution's academic staff.
- 9.30 The examining team shall normally comprise one internal examiner and one external examiner if the research student to be examined is a member of the Institution's non-academic staff, including research students who have held Graduate Teaching/Research Assistant posts. The Head of Research may if appropriate require that two external examiners shall be appointed.
- 9.31 Members of the examining team must not:
- have or have had a personal or contractual relationship with the research student to be examined, the research student's immediate family, any member of the student's



supervisory team, any other member of the examining team, or – if appointed – the chair of the viva voce examination;

- have had substantial involvement in the work of the research student to be examined – including substantial co-authoring and collaborative activities;
- have their own work as the focus of the work of the research student to be examined.

9.32 The Head of Research or their nominee shall be responsible for nominating members of the examining team. The Head of Research or their nominee shall normally take advice from the supervisory team of the research student to be examined in identifying possible examiners, but the final decision rests with the Head of Research or their nominee.

9.33 The appointment of all research degree examiners shall be subject to approval from the Head of Research (in consultation with the Graduate School Office of the University of Leicester).

### **Internal examiners**

9.34 The internal examiner must be one of the following:

- a fully qualified member of the Institution's academic staff.

Honorary and emeritus staff of the Institution shall not normally be appointed as internal examiners.

9.35 A member of the probation review panel of a research student registered for the degree of PhD may be appointed as the same student's internal examiner.

9.36 The internal examiner must have expertise relevant to the student's area of research and must be an experienced researcher – demonstrated through research publications – or have equivalent professional experience.

9.37 The internal examiner shall be responsible for:

- making all arrangements for the viva voce examination, including any subsequent viva voce examination if the student is referred for resubmission, and communicating these arrangements to the research student and the external examiner(s);
- notifying Registry of the date and time at which the viva voce examination will take place;
- ensuring that they are familiar with these regulations and the decisions that the examining team may make on completion of the viva voce examination;
- undertaking an assessment of the thesis in advance of the viva voce examination and completing an independent pre-viva voce examination report which must be submitted to Registry at least one day before the viva voce examination takes place
- conducting the viva voce examination with the external examiner(s) and agreeing with them a joint decision on completion of the examination;

- advising the research student of the decision made by the examining team;
- providing the research student with a verbal report (minor amendments) or written report (major amendments or referral for resubmission) on the changes and corrections to the thesis required by the examining team;
- preparing a joint post-viva voce examination report with the external examiner(s) and submitting this to Registry and the Graduate School Office at the University of Leicester together with, if required, a copy of the written report on the changes and corrections to the thesis required by the examining team;
- assessing the changes and corrections made to the thesis by the research student and then confirming whether these have been completed satisfactorily if the examining team has required either minor or major amendments;
- assessing the resubmitted thesis and, if needed, conducting a further viva voce examination if the examining team has decided that the research student should be referred for resubmission;
- informing Registry and the Graduate School Office at the University of Leicester of the final outcome at the conclusion of the process.

#### **External examiners**

- 9.38 The external examiner must not be a member of the Institution's staff.
- 9.39 The external examiner must have expertise in the student's area of research and be an experienced researcher – demonstrated through research publications – and have experience of supervising and examining research students.
- 9.40 Former members of Institutional staff may be appointed as external examiners provided that they continue to be actively engaged in research and there has been a period of at least three years between them leaving the Institution and the date of the viva voce examination. A longer period may be required if appropriate. Other honorary and emeritus staff of the Institution shall not be appointed as external examiners. Emeritus staff of another institution may be appointed as external examiners provided that they continue to be actively engaged in research.
- 9.41 The external examiner must not:
- have been involved in the three years immediately before the viva voce examination in any collaborative project, including co-authoring, with any member of the supervisory team of the research student to be examined or any other member of the examining team;
  - have or have had a close personal relationship with any member of the staff associated with the research student;
  - have or have had a close contractual relationship with any member of the staff associated with the research student if this may give rise to a perception of a conflict of interest
- 9.42 The external examiner shall be responsible for:

- undertaking an assessment of the thesis in advance of the viva voce examination and completing an independent pre-viva voce examination report which must be submitted to Registry at least one day before the viva voce examination takes place;
- conducting the viva voce examination with the internal examiner and agreeing with them a joint decision on completion of the examination;
- agreeing with the internal examiner the requirements for changes and corrections that the student will be asked to make to the thesis;
- preparing a joint post-viva voce examination report with the internal examiner;
- assessing the changes and corrections made to the thesis by the research student and then confirming whether these have been completed satisfactorily if the examining team does not include an internal examiner and has required either minor or major amendments;
- assessing the resubmitted thesis and, if needed, conducting a further viva voce examination if the examining team has decided that the research student should be referred for resubmission.

### **Examination chairs**

- 9.43 A chair for the viva voce examination shall be appointed if one or more of the following criteria apply:
- the internal and external examiners have between them examined fewer than five research students in the past three years;
  - the internal examiner has little or no experience of examining research students at the Institution;
  - the examining team does not include an internal examiner;
  - the research student to be examined is a member of the Institution's staff
  - the examining team requests that a chair is appointed;
  - the Head of Research or the Graduate Dean of the University of Leicester requests that a chair is appointed.
- 9.44 The chair of the viva voce examination is not a member of the examining team and shall not examine the thesis. The chair of the viva voce examination shall be present to ensure that the viva voce examination is conducted in accordance with these regulations and standard practice for the discipline.
- 9.45 The chair of the viva voce examination must be a senior member of the Institution's academic staff who has previously examined at least one research student of the Institution or a senior member of staff from the University of Leicester.
- 9.46 A member of the research student's supervisory team must not be appointed as the chair for the same student's viva voce examination.

- 9.47 The chair of the viva voce examination must not have or have had a close personal or contractual relationship with the research student to be examined, the research student's immediate family, or any member of the research student's supervisory team.
- 9.48 The Head of Research or their nominee shall be responsible for nominating the chair of the viva voce examination. The appointment of the chair of the viva voce examination shall be subject to approval from the Graduate Dean of the University of Leicester.
- 9.49 The chair of the viva voce examination shall be responsible for:
- providing the examining team with administrative and/or procedural advice as needed;
  - ensuring that the examining team's joint decision on completion of the viva voce examination is consistent with the decisions permitted under these regulations.

If the examining team does not include an internal examiner, the chair of the viva voce examination shall be responsible for making all arrangements for the viva voce examination, including any subsequent viva voce examination if the research student is referred for resubmission, and communicating these arrangements to the research student and the external examiners.

#### **Examination conduct**

- 9.50 Research degree viva voce examinations shall normally be held at the Institution. In exceptional circumstances, and with the prior approval of the Graduate Dean of the University of Leicester, the viva voce examination may be held at another appropriate location.
- 9.51 The viva voce examination shall normally be held within three months of the examiners receiving the research student's thesis.
- 9.52 Only the research student, the examining team, and – if appointed – the examination chair, shall normally be present during the viva voce examination. Members of the research student's supervisory team may attend the student's viva voce examination as observers. The attendance of members of the supervisory team shall be at the discretion of the examining team and permitted only with the consent of the research student.
- 9.53 The research student's first supervisor shall normally be available at the time of the viva voce examination should they need to be contacted by the examining team.

#### **Examination outcomes**

- 9.54 The examiners shall on completion of the viva voce examination jointly make one of the following decisions:
- to award the degree for which the research student was examined;

- to award the degree for which the research student was examined subject to the satisfactory completion of minor amendments to the thesis;
- to award the degree for which the research student was examined subject to the satisfactory completion of major amendments to the thesis;
- to refer the research student for resubmission of the thesis for the same degree as which they were examined;
- to award a degree lower than that for which the research student was examined (research students examined for the degree of PhD or EdD);
- to award a degree lower than that for which the research student was examined subject to the satisfactory completion of minor amendments to the thesis (research students examined for the degree of PhD or EdD);
- to refer the research student for resubmission of the thesis for a degree lower than that for which they were examined (research students examined for the degree of PhD or EdD);
- to fail the thesis with no right of resubmission.

9.55 If the examining team is unable to agree a joint decision, advice must be sought from the Head of Research, or, where the Head of Research is the supervisor, the Executive Dean: Research and Knowledge Exchange (with the additional approval of the Graduate Dean of the University of Leicester) as to whether an additional external examiner should be appointed and a further viva voce examination held.

9.56 The examining team may take into account the wishes of the research student if presented with a choice between a decision to:

- refer the research student for resubmission of the thesis for the same degree as which they were examined;
- award a degree lower than that for which the research student was examined.

The research student's wishes should be discussed at the time of the viva voce examination but the student shall not be required to provide an immediate response. The wishes of the research student should be made known to the examining team before its decision is submitted to Registry and the Graduate School Office of the University of Leicester. The examining team shall not be bound to follow the expressed wish of the research student.

9.57 A decision to award a degree subject to the satisfactory completion of minor amendments shall involve amendments that are:

- largely typographical or grammatical and may include corrections to references and/or diagrams and the re-writing of small sections of text;
- communicated verbally to the research student at the end of the viva voce examination;
- completed and submitted to the internal examiner within one to three months, as specified by the examiners, of the viva voce examination.

9.58 A decision to award a degree subject to the satisfactory completion of major amendments shall involve amendments that are:

- more than typographical and other minor corrections and may include substantial re-writing of parts of the thesis;
- communicated in writing to the research student following the viva voce examination;
- completed and submitted to the internal examiner within three to six months, as specified by the examiners, from the date at which the research student is provided with the examining team's post-viva voce examination report including details as to the changes and corrections required.

9.59 A decision to award a lower degree to a research student who was examined for the degree of PhD or EdD shall be conditional on:

- the thesis meeting the requirements for the degree of MPhil (research students examined for the degree of PhD or EdD);
- the student having successfully completed the assessed components excluding the thesis and other programme requirements (research students examined for the degree of EdD).

9.60 A decision to refer the research student for resubmission of the thesis shall be made if the examining team agrees that the research student should:

- undertake further research or repeat completed research;
- re-write or restructure large parts of the thesis.

The examining team shall specify a referral period of between six and twelve months from the date at which the research student is provided with the examining team's post-viva voce examination report including details as to the changes and corrections required. A resubmission fee may be payable.

9.61 If the research student is referred for resubmission of the thesis, the examining team shall decide whether a further viva voce examination is needed. The decision whether to hold a further viva voce examination shall be taken once the examiners have assessed the resubmitted thesis. A further viva voce examination shall, if needed, normally be held within three months of the examiners receiving the resubmitted thesis.

9.62 The examiners shall on completion of the assessment of the resubmitted thesis, and a further viva voce examination if one is held, jointly make one of the following decisions:

- to award the degree for which the research student was examined;
- to award the degree for which the research student was examined subject to the completion of minor amendments to the thesis;
- to award a degree lower than that for which the research student was examined (research students examined for the degree of PhD or EdD);

- to award a degree lower than that for which the research student was examined subject to the completion of minor amendments to the thesis (research students examined for the degree of PhD or EdD);
- to fail the thesis with no right of resubmission.

9.63 If the examining team decides following resubmission to award the degree for which the research student was examined subject to the completion of minor amendments, the amendments needed shall be as specified above.

9.64 If the examining team decides following resubmission to award a degree lower than that for which the research student was examined, this shall be conditional on the requirements specified above.

9.65 Research students who are required to make minor or major amendments to the thesis or who are referred for resubmission of the thesis must not contact members of the examining team regarding the changes or corrections required. Research students who need clarification on any points relating to the changes or corrections required must seek advice from the supervisory team.

#### **Award and conferral**

9.65 The research student shall receive formal notice of the award of the degree following receipt by Registry and the Graduate School Office of the University of Leicester of a decision by the examining team that an award should be made.

9.66 The Institution may withhold the award of a research degree until such time as the research student has complied with all thesis final submission requirements – see above.

9.67 The conferral of the degree shall take place at the first appropriate degree congregation of the University of Leicester following award of the degree. Full academic dress must be worn when the research student is presented at the degree congregation.

**Appendix 1: Countries accepted as teaching in the medium of English (Senate Regulation One, 1.12, University of Leicester)**

Anguilla	Lesotho
Antigua and Barbuda	Malawi
Australia	Malta
Bahamas	New Zealand
Barbados	Niue
Belize	Norfolk Islands
Bermuda	Papua New Guinea
Botswana	Sierra Leone
British Virgin Islands	Singapore
Canada	South Africa
Cayman Islands	St Kitts and Nevis
Christmas Island	St Lucia
Cocos Islands	St Vincent and the Grenadines
Cook Islands	Swaziland
Dominica	Tanzania
Falkland Islands	Tonga
Fiji	Trinidad and Tobago
Gambia	Turks and Caicos Islands
Gibraltar	Uganda
Grenada	UK
Guyana	USA
Ireland	Zambia
Jamaica	Zimbabwe
Kenya	



**Appendix 2: English language test equivalencies (Senate Regulation One, 1.14,  
University of Leicester)**

		<b>IELTS</b>				
		5.5	6.0	6.5	7.0	7.5
<b>Tests</b>	TOEFL	70	80	90	100	110
	Pearson	46	54	61	68	68
	Cambridge CPE	Grade C	Grade C	Grade C	Grade C	Grade C
	Cambridge CAE	Grade C	Grade C	Grade C	Grade B	Grade B
	TEEP	5.5	6.0	6.5	7.0	7.0
	OIBEC	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass
	ESOL	Level 2	Level 2	Level 2	Level 1	Level 1
<b>Qualifications</b>	GCSE English language	C	C	C	B	B
	Cambridge O level	C	C	C	B	B
	Cambridge international GCSE	C	C	C	B	B
	International Baccalaureate	4 in SL EL	4 in SL EL	4 in SL EL	5 in SL EL	5 in SL EL
	European Baccalaureate	80% in EL	80% in EL	80% in EL	90% in EL	90% in EL
	Indian National Board Standard XII	70%	70%	70%	80%	80%
	Indian State Board Standard XII	80%	80%	80%	90%	90%
	WASSCE English	C6	C6	C6	C4	C4
	Sri Lankan O level in English	Credit	Credit	Credit	Distinction	Distinction
	HKDSE English language	Grade 4	Grade 4	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 5
	HKAL	C	C	C	B	A

**Appendix 3: International student visa requirements (Senate Regulation Four, 4.6-4.10, University of Leicester)**

- (3)1. All international students (if non-EU) studying a programme requiring attendance on campus will be required to show evidence of a valid immigration status, such as leave to remain which entitles them to study at the Institution in order to complete the registration process for each academic year.
- (3)2. The continuing registration of students with a Tier 4 visa will be subject to students meeting their obligations as required by the Institution's tier 4 sponsorship of them. This includes:
- the provision of an up to date UK address and telephone number;
  - attending all scheduled learning and teaching sessions associated with the programme of study on which they are registered;
  - providing up to date contact details for any periods spent away from the Institution, such as undertaking placements or field trips;
  - provision of any new visas granted during the programme of study on which they are registered, including the extension of a Tier 4 visa or any change in immigration status to a different visa.
- (3)3. Failure to meet these obligations may result in registration being cancelled.
- (3)4. All international students studying on a programme which requires attendance in the UK are required to have valid leave to remain in the United Kingdom that entitles them to study at the Institution. If a student's leave to remain expires whilst registered on their programme, the student must apply for new leave before their existing leave expires.
- (3)5. All international students are required to provide evidence on their leave to remain in order to register at the commencement of their programme, upon any change in immigration permission during their programme, upon expiry of any existing leave during their programme and upon request at any time during their programme.
- (3)6. If a student does not hold valid leave to remain, fails to provide supporting evidence when requested to do so by the Institution or otherwise behaves in a manner which puts the Institution's ability to meet the conditions of its Tier 4 sponsorship of the student in jeopardy, the Institution shall take action to withdraw the student from their programme. This means that the student would be unable to complete study. The student's right to redress in these circumstances will be the published complaints process.

#### **Appendix 4: Student discipline and misconduct: introduction, definitions, scope (Senate Regulation Eleven, Parts 1 and 2, University of Leicester)**

- (4)1. This section of the regulations sets out Bishop Grosseteste University's definitions of misconduct and general expectations of students in relation to their personal conduct, their academic honesty and academic obligations, and their professional conduct at doctoral level.
- (4)2. The Procedures Relating to Student Disciplinary Offences and the Code of Practice for Academic Misconduct should be referred to where a student is suspected of being guilty of an offence which constitutes misconduct. These procedures are available to students on the University website and staff via the Portal. All matters concerning discipline and misconduct must be drawn to the attention of the Dean of Graduate Studies at the University of Leicester.
- (4)2. Colleagues at BGU represent a community drawn together by a shared desire to learn and to understand. Our search for knowledge requires an environment in which we are free to question, to explore, and to debate new and challenging ideas. It demands that we are tolerant of the views and beliefs of others. However, we will not tolerate behaviours which incite hatred or which seek to coerce others into accepting those views or beliefs.
- (4)3. Students are expected to show consideration for the feelings and sensibilities of others, to play their part in maintaining a harmonious atmosphere among fellow students and staff and to conduct themselves with propriety at all times when they can be identified as a representative of the Institution. This includes behaviour both in and around its buildings, in public places and in the use of on-line services.

#### **General definitions and scope of student misconduct**

- (4)4. The essence of misconduct under the Procedures Relating to Student Disciplinary Offences is, improper conduct or obstruction the proper functioning or activities of the University or of those who work and study in the University. It also includes conduct which damages the University or the reputation of the University on or off campus and misconduct of University students within a placement setting.
- (4)5. The University has the power under the Student Disciplinary Procedure to discipline, exclude or expel students as a result of misconduct. The actions listed below would constitute misconduct:
- Conduct which constitutes a criminal offence;
  - Disruption of, or improper interference with, the academic, administrative, sporting, social or other activities of the University ;
  - Obstruction of, or improper interference with, the functions, duties or activities of any student or staff member of the University or any visitor to the University;

- Making frivolous, vexatious and/or malicious allegations or complaints;
- Violent, indecent, disorderly, threatening, intimidating, discriminatory or offensive behaviour or language;
- Sexual or racial harassment of any student, member of staff or any visitor to the University;
- Fraud, deceit, deception or dishonesty in relation to the University or its staff, students or visitors;
- Theft, misappropriation or misuse of University property, or the property of staff, students or visitors, including misuse of computers under the terms of the IT Systems Acceptable Use Policy;
- Misuse or unauthorised use of University premises, for example, by failure to comply with the terms of the Catering and Residence Agreement;
- Damage to University property or the property of staff, students or visitors, caused intentionally or recklessly;
- Action likely to cause injury or impair safety on University premises;
- Failure to respect the rights of others to freedom of belief or freedom of speech within the law;
- Failure to observe all University rules and regulations;
- Failure to disclose personal details to a member of staff of the University in circumstances in which it is reasonable to require that such information be given;
- Failure to comply with a reasonable instruction relating to discipline issued within this procedure.

The list is not intended to be exhaustive and any deliberate or reckless action which causes, or is liable to cause, damage to University property, injury, offence or distress, or which interferes with the operation of the University's activities, or affects the reputation of the University may result in the application of the University's Procedures Relating to Student Disciplinary Offences.

#### **Definitions of academic misconduct**

- (4)6. The Institution's primary functions of teaching and research involve a search for knowledge and the truthful recording of the findings of that search. Any action knowingly taken by a student which involves misrepresentation of the truth amounts to academic dishonesty and

as such, is an offence which the Institution believes should merit the application of very severe penalties. The Code of Practice for Academic Misconduct defines academic misconduct as, any intentional or reckless conduct by a student, or students, with the aim of gaining an unfair advantage or benefit, or causing an unfair disadvantage or loss to another student, or students, in pursuit of an academic qualification at the University. It includes conduct which is an attempt to gain such an advantage or to disadvantage another student or students, whether successful or not.

(4)7. The Code of Practice for Academic Misconduct states that offences in this category include, but are not confined to:

- Plagiarism
- Copying work from or using work written by another person;
- Cheating in written examinations or assignments (e.g. EdD);
- Collusion
- Falsifying results.
- Impersonating another student during an examination
- Making false statements or using false evidence to defer an assessment, withdraw from an exam or seek extenuating circumstances
- Falsifying or destroying documents and making false statements to gain admission
- Deliberate misinterpretation of material created or written by others
- Using racist ideas and language in assessed work unless clearly identified as necessary in the research for a topic or outcome

NB: The above list is not exhaustive. Further information on the definitions and scope of the offences outlined above can be located in the Code of Practice for Academic Misconduct, on the University website.

All disciplinary issues and allegations of misconduct should be referred to the Academic Co-ordinator and the Head of Research for initial consideration and drawn to the attention of the Dean of Graduate Studies at the University of Leicester. Depending on the nature of the alleged misconduct, the matter will be dealt with in accordance with the Procedures Relating to Student Disciplinary Offences or the Code of Practice for Academic Misconduct. Please refer to the procedures on the University website for more information or contact the Head of Research to be provided with a hard copy of the Procedure / Code.

## Appendix 5: Academic Appeals (Senate Regulation Ten, University of Leicester)

- 5(1). These Regulations apply to all students who wish to appeal against any decision associated with the assessment, progression and award while registered for a doctoral qualification. All matters concerning appeals must be drawn to the attention of the Dean of Graduate Studies at the University of Leicester.
- 5(2). A student may only appeal on the following grounds:
- that there are or were circumstances materially affecting the student's performance, for which supporting evidence exists, which were not known at the time a decision was taken and which it was not reasonably practicable for the student to make known beforehand;
  - that there were procedural irregularities in the conduct of examination or assessment procedures of such a nature as to create a reasonable possibility that the result may have been different if it had not occurred;
  - that there is evidence of prejudice or bias or lack of proper assessment on the part of one or more of the examiners.
- 5(3). An appeal which questions the academic or professional judgement of those responsible for assessing a student's academic performance or professional competence will not be permitted.
- 5(4). Where a student's appeal is based on extenuating circumstances as indicated above, medical certificates from a qualified medical practitioner or other independent documentary evidence must be provided to support the claim. The evidence supplied must be in English and where the original is in another language a certified copy in English must be submitted. Medical certificates or other documentary evidence should normally be submitted at the time of the illness or other circumstances. Retrospective evidence will be considered at the discretion of an Academic Appeals Panel and students must provide an explanation as to why it was not possible to submit the evidence at the time. Panels will only accept evidence where it considers there was a good reason for it not to have been submitted at the appropriate time.
- 5(5). A student must submit an appeal on their own behalf. An appeal form with supporting evidence must be submitted to Quality Assurance and Student Data by published deadlines.
- 5(6). It is a student's responsibility to submit an appeal by the given deadline. Appeals submitted after the deadline will be deemed to be out of time and will not be considered unless there is clear documentary evidence which the Institution accepts as demonstrating that a student was prevented from submitting the appeal by the deadline.
- 5(7). On receipt an appeal will be reviewed by Quality Assurance and Student Data to determine whether eligible grounds and supporting evidence have been presented. Where this is not the case the appeal may either be rejected or a request for further information or evidence made. In reaching its decision, Quality Assurance and Student Data may also request a report from the relevant department.

- 5(8). If it appears that the appeal has been made on one of the grounds specified above, Quality Assurance and Student Data will obtain a report on the appeal from the relevant Head of Research or their nominee. This report, along with the student's appeal form and supporting evidence will be considered by the next available Academic Appeals Panel. A copy of the report will be provided to the student.
- 5(9). If on receipt of a copy of an appeal it is considered that there is new evidence of either extenuating circumstances that were not known at the time for good reason or a procedural irregularity in light of which a different decision may have been reached, the Academic Appeals Panel may request the opportunity to refer the student's case back to the examiners.
- 5(10). An Academic Appeals Panel will comprise three members of the academic staff of the Institution, one of which will act as Chair. No member of the panel will be drawn from the student's own department(s) or have had previous involvement with the student.
- 5(11) A member of Quality Assurance and Student Data will serve as Officer to each panel. The student and department will be notified of the date on which an appeal will be considered.
- 5(12). All appeals are considered on the basis of documentation only, submitted by students and their departments.
- 5(13). Students and departments may not attend appeal panel meetings but will be notified in writing of the panel's decision within seven days of the date of its meeting.
- 5(14). After considering the evidence an Academic Appeals Panel may decide in the case of research students, in consultation with BGU Code of Practice for Academic Appeals:
- to dismiss the appeal;
  - to uphold the appeal and recommend that the student be permitted to re-submit for the degree for which he/she was registered;
  - to uphold the appeal and recommend that the student be permitted to re-submit for a master's degree. In this case, the panel may choose to recommend the allocation of new examiners.
- 5(15). At the point BGU concludes the appeal process, a letter will be issued notifying a student of their right to contact the University of Leicester who may undertake a final review. In addition the student has the right to submit a complaint to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education, if it is eligible under its scheme.
- 5(16). BGU reserves the right not to continue with the operation of appeals procedures if the appeal is conducted in a way which is abusive, offensive, defamatory, aggressive or intimidating, or pursued in an unreasonably persistent or vexatious manner. If there is good cause to consider that this expectation has been contravened at any stage, the matter shall be reported to the Registrar and Secretary. If the Registrar and Secretary refers the matter for consideration under BGU's Student Disciplinary Procedure consideration of the appeal shall be suspended pending the outcome of the Student Disciplinary process. If the Student

Disciplinary Procedures are found to have been breached in the context of an appeal, the Registrar and Secretary may decide to close the appeal.



## Appendix 6: Complaints (Senate Regulation Twelve, University of Leicester)

- 6(1). Advice on the operation of the complaints regulations can be obtained from the Governance Office, Student Advice or the Students' Union. The latter can also provide assistance in formulating complaints, and in supporting students throughout the formal stages of the complaints procedure.
- 6(2). Bishop Grosseteste University seeks to maintain high standards both in the quality of the education which it offers to students and in the administrative and other services which support its academic provision. The University, within the Procedure for Dealing with Complaints by Students, provides for instances where a student believes an aspect of the University's services or facilities falls below acceptable standards. This procedure is available to students on the University website and staff via the Portal.
- 6(3). Where students feel that their legitimate expectations are not being met, or where misunderstandings about the nature of the Institution's provision occur, the Institution expects that problems will be speedily and effectively dealt with.
- 6(4). Students are encouraged to utilise the consultative and organisational arrangements in place at Institutional or departmental level (these include Head of Research, the personal tutor system, student-staff committees and various user groups). Students are expected to familiarise themselves with the constitution and membership of those bodies which are intended to represent their interests. These processes fall outside of the complaints procedure but will often provide an appropriate way forward by which students may raise matters of concern without recourse to this procedure. If it is not appropriate for the matter to be raised through the consultative processes of the Institution, an informal approach might be made to the person/s most directly involved with the matter at issue or immediately responsible for that service (such as a Head of Research or a manager of a service unit).
- 6(5). The Institution's complaints procedure is founded on the assumption that staff will at all times deal thoughtfully and sympathetically with students' problems, so as to minimise the extent to which the formal stages of the procedures need to be followed. Students are encouraged to attempt to resolve matters which they are concerned about informally, without recourse to the formal stage set out in part 8 of the Procedure for Dealing with Complaints by Students.
- 6(6). Students are encouraged to seek advice from the Students' Union when raising a concern. Where a complaint is not resolved informally, the procedure provides for further formal consideration of the matter at the formal level of consideration.
- 6(7). The Institution reserves the right not to continue with the operation of complaints procedures if the complaint is conducted in a way which is abusive, offensive, defamatory, aggressive or intimidating, or pursued in an unreasonably persistent or vexatious manner. If there is good cause to consider that this expectation has been contravened at any stage, the matter may be recommended for consideration under the Institution's Procedure Relating to Student Disciplinary Offences. The Student may also be informed that their complaint has

been dismissed and then referred to the Appeals stage of the complaints procedure. All matters concerning appeals must also be drawn to the attention of the Dean of Graduate Studies at the University of Leicester.

Please refer to the procedures on the University website for more information or contact the Head of Research to be provided with a hard copy of the Procedure for Dealing with Complaints by Students.

## **Appendix 7: Professional doctorate programmes (Senate Regulation Nine, Appendix 3, University of Leicester)**

### **General**

- 7(1). These regulations shall apply to professional doctorate students registered for the degree of Doctor of Education (EdD).
- 7(2). These regulations shall govern those requirements of professional doctorate programmes which differ from or are additional to those specified in the regulations for Doctoral Research Degree Programmes. In respect to all other matters, including assessment of the thesis, these regulations shall apply unless otherwise specified.
- 7(3). The Head of Research shall be responsible for the secure operation of assessment procedures and practices on professional doctorate programmes.

### **Intermediate qualifications**

- 7(4). Professional doctorate programmes may have intermediate qualifications for professional doctorate students:
- who do not meet the requirements for progression to the thesis stage of the programme;
  - who progress to the thesis stage of the programme but do not meet the requirements for the award of a doctoral degree provided that they have met the specified requirements for the intermediate qualification.
- 7(5). Intermediate qualifications shall, if offered, be described in the validated programme specification.
- 7(6). The award and classification of intermediate qualifications on professional doctorate programmes, except the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy, shall be in accordance with the requirements specified.
- 7(7). The decision to award an intermediate qualification, except the decision to award the degree of Master of Philosophy, shall rest with the Board of Examiners.

### **Marking of assessed work excluding the thesis**

- 7(8). Marking shall be undertaken in accordance with agreed written criteria. All marking schemes and practices regardless of format should secure reliability and transparency through the use of assessment criteria, rubrics, or marking grids to which all markers and professional doctorate students shall have access.
- 7(9). Marking outcomes shall be measured against the written criteria and shall not be adjusted against a statistical distribution.

- 7(10). Assessed components which would not contribute to the award of an intermediate qualification may be marked on a pass/fail basis. Otherwise, the pass mark for assessed components shall be 50% except for:
- the probation review at the end of the second year for the degree of EdD where the pass mark shall be 60%.
- 7(11). Assessed components which would contribute to the award of an intermediate qualification shall be graded according to the mark achieved. The grading scheme shall be described in the programme specification.
- 7(12). Professional doctorate students cannot carry an assessed component for which they fail to gain a pass mark or which is deemed to have failed for any reason. The markers shall normally recommend to Senate that such students should have their registration terminated.
- 7(13). The professional doctorate student shall be deemed to have failed an assessed component owing to non-submission if they do not submit the required assessed component.
- 7(14). The professional doctorate student shall be deemed to have failed an assessed component owing to late submission if they:
- submit the assessed component after the specified deadline without an approved extension;
  - submit the assessed component after the end of an approved extension period.
- 7(15). Course results, module results, and assessed component results shall not be released to professional doctorate students who are in debt to the Institution.

### **Marking practices**

- 7(16). Senate shall be responsible for the appropriateness of the marking practices for the assessed components of the degree excluding the thesis. The marking practices for professional doctorate programmes shall be reviewed through the annual and periodic review mechanisms.
- 7(17). With the exception of assessed components that are marked automatically by electronic or other means, assessed components shall be subject to one or more of the following systems of moderation:
- double marking – two markers work to the same mark scheme, they may either mark blind in parallel or the second marker reviews the reliability of the first marker's grading and comments (rather than directly assessing the work itself).

An agreed mark must be reached for each piece of work. If it is not possible to reach an agreed mark, a third marker should be involved.

- sampling – work is marked by the first marker and a sample of work is seen by the second marker who blind marks, samples can be a random selection, a stratified random sample from different grade boundaries, borderline cases between grade boundaries, or other sampling as appropriate.

If it is not possible to reach an agreed mark, a third marker should be involved

- moderation – work is marked by the first marker, the second marker receives a full set of marks and a sample of work – the sample selected using one of the means described above – which can be used to test the robustness of the marking; the second marker does not directly assess the work itself;
- blind marking – work is provided to the second marker or moderator as original copies without any grade or comments from the first marker.

7(18). Any first marking not undertaken by members of the Institution's academic staff – such as first marking undertaken by an associate tutor – shall be subject to a system of moderation by a member of the Institution's academic staff.

7(19). Honorary and emeritus staff shall not be appointed as first or second markers or moderators. Current research students shall not be appointed as first or second markers or moderators.

7(20). The markers shall be responsible for:

- confirming that the approved system of moderation has been applied;
- approving provisional assessment component results for reporting to Senate;
- approving re-submission opportunities with respect to the first submission of assessed components which fail to achieve a pass mark or which are deemed to have failed owing to non-submission or late submission;
- recommending to Senate termination of registration with respect to assessed components which are deemed to have failed owing to plagiarism;
- recommending to the Senate termination of registration with respect to resubmitted assessed components which fail to achieve a pass mark or are deemed to have failed for any reason;
- recommending to Senate termination of registration or transfer to a lower intermediate qualification with respect to professional doctorates students who do not meet the progression requirements specified;
- agreeing the release of provisional assessment component results to professional doctorate students.

- 7(21). The markers shall make decisions on the basis of evidence of the professional doctorate student's achievement. Scaling or norm referencing of marks shall not be used. Marks which have been approved by the markers may not be adjusted except as specified.

**Return of marked work and feedback**

- 7(22). The Head of Research shall be responsible for ensuring that the marking practices are in accordance with the Institution's guidelines on returned work.
- 7(23). Marked assessed components should be returned to the professional doctorate student via the assignment office with appropriate feedback to enable the student to identify both where they have demonstrated particular strengths and how they can improve their performance in subsequent assessed components.
- 7(24). Professional doctorate students should be provided with a provisional mark and associated feedback on submitted assessed components within twenty-eight days from the date that the assessed component was submitted.
- 7(25). In exceptional circumstances where marked assessed components cannot be returned within the specified period, the programme team shall notify the relevant professional doctorate students of the expected return date and the reasons for the longer turn-around time. The relevant professional doctorate students shall be provided with interim feedback where possible.

***Submission of assessed work excluding the thesis***

- 7(26). The professional doctorate student shall be required to comply with such requirements for the submission of assessed components as are specified by the programme team.
- 7(27). The professional doctorate student shall be required to submit assessed components for assessment by the specified deadline.
- 7(28). The professional doctorate student shall be responsible for seeking advice from the programme team if they are unclear on any aspect of the requirements for the submission of assessed components.

***Re-Submission of assessed components***

- 7(29). Professional doctorate students shall be given one opportunity to re-submit an assessed component which fails to achieve a pass mark or which is deemed to have failed owing to non-submission or late submission.
- 7(30). Professional doctorate students who submit an assessed component which achieves a pass mark shall not be given the opportunity to re-submit this regardless of any extenuating circumstances that may have affected their academic performance.

- 7(31). Professional doctorate students shall not be given the opportunity to re-submit an assessed component which is deemed to have failed owing to plagiarism or academic misconduct. The markers shall recommend to Senate that the professional doctorate student's registration should be terminated.
- 7(32). Unless the assessed component is marked on a pass/fail basis, the mark for re-submitted assessed components shall be capped at 50% except for:
- the probation review at the end of the second year for the degree of EdD where the mark shall not be capped.
- 7(33). The professional doctorate student shall not be allowed a second re-submission opportunity if the re-submitted assessed component fails to achieve a pass mark or is deemed to have failed for any reason. The markers shall normally recommend to Senate that the student should have their registration terminated.
- 7(34). Professional doctorate students shall not normally be permitted to continue with the doctorate programme if they fail to meet the specified progression requirements:
- professional doctorate students registered for the degree of EdD shall not be permitted to continue to the thesis stage of the programme should they fail to achieve a mark of at least 60% in the probation review at the end of the second year of the programme; the markers shall normally recommend to Senate that such students should be permitted the opportunity to meet the requirements for a lower intermediate qualification;
  - professional doctorate students registered for the degree of EdD shall not be permitted to continue to the thesis stage of the programme should they fail at the first submission to gain a pass mark for more than two assessed components; the markers shall normally recommend to Senate that such students should be permitted the opportunity to meet the requirements for a lower intermediate qualification.

***Late submission of assessed components***

- 7(35). Professional doctorate students who have experienced extenuating circumstances which are accepted by the Institution may be given an extension to the submission or re-submission period and allowed to submit an assessed component later than the specified deadline. Requests for an extension to the submission or re-submission period should be submitted in good time before the specified submission date and shall be subject to approval from the Head of Research or nominee.
- 7(36). Extensions to the submission or re-submission period shall be approved only if the professional doctorate student has experienced unforeseen and/or unpreventable circumstances likely to affect their ability to submit an assessed component by the specified deadline (see Code of Practice for Assessment).

- 7(37). The professional doctorate student shall be responsible for providing such evidence in support of their request as is required by the Institution and this evidence must relate to the relevant period. Such evidence must be in English or submitted with a certified English translation. Evidence relating to circumstances of a medical nature must be from a qualified medical practitioner. The Institution may require independent verification of evidence submitted in support of a request for an extension to the submission or re-submission period for an assessed component.
- 7(38). Extensions to the submission or re-submission period shall not be approved more than once in respect to each specific assessed component.
- 7(39). The Head of Research or nominee shall specify the duration of the extension period. The extension period shall not exceed fourteen days from the original deadline for submission or re-submission.
- 7(40). Professional doctorate students who believe that their circumstances are such that they cannot submit the assessed component within the maximum permitted extension period should submit a claim of extenuating circumstances as specified.
- 7(41). The Head of Research may initiate proceedings for neglect of academic obligations as specified where recurrent requests for extensions give rise to concerns regarding the academic progress of the professional doctorate student.

***Extenuating circumstances for assessed components excluding the thesis***

- 7(42). Professional doctorate students must notify the Head of Research or nominee of any circumstances that may adversely affect their ability to complete the specified assessed components. All claims of extenuating circumstances must be received by the programme team no more than five working days after the specified submission deadline for the assessed component or, if applicable, the end of an approved extension period. Claims of extenuating circumstances that are received after that time shall not be considered. The professional doctorate student shall be responsible for ensuring that the claim of extenuating circumstances has been received on time.
- 7(43). Professional doctorate students may submit a claim of extenuating circumstances for their assessment performance:
- in respect of assessed components that fail to achieve a pass mark;
  - in respect of assessed components that were deemed to have failed owing to non-submission or late submission;
  - in respect of assessed components which could not be submitted within the maximum permitted extension period.
- 7(44). Professional doctorate students may not submit a claim of extenuating circumstances for their assessment performance in respect of assessed components that:



- achieved a pass mark;
- were deemed to have failed owing to plagiarism or academic misconduct.

7(45). Quality Assurance and Student Data shall normally be responsible for considering claims of extenuating circumstances in respect of assessed components. A Mitigating Circumstances Panel, operating under delegated authority of Senate, shall be convened if the programme team is satisfied that there is a good reason for a decision in respect to a claim of mitigating circumstances to be taken earlier than the next meeting of Senate. The membership of the Mitigating Circumstances Panel shall be subject to approval by the Head of Research or their nominee and must comprise at least two academic members of the programme team or programme markers.

7(46). Senate/Mitigating Circumstances Panel shall accept claims of mitigating circumstances in respect of assessed components only where the circumstances described were:

- unforeseen and/or unpreventable;
- significant in nature;
- likely to have had a significant adverse effect on the academic performance of the professional doctorate student;
- the professional doctorate student has provided all appropriate evidence in support of the claim.

7(47). The professional doctorate student shall be responsible for providing such evidence in support of their request as is required by the Institution and this evidence must relate to the relevant period. Such evidence must be in English or submitted with a certified English translation. Evidence relating to circumstances of a medical nature must be from a qualified medical practitioner. The Institution may require independent verification of evidence submitted in support of a claim of extenuating circumstance.

7(48). In considering a claim of extenuating circumstances the Extenuating Circumstances Panel may consider as relevant:

- what efforts had been made by the professional doctorate student at the time to notify the programme team of their circumstances;
- whether the professional doctorate student had requested an extension to the specified submission or re-submission period;
- whether the professional doctorate student had requested a suspension of their registration;
- whether there had been any reasonable adjustment(s) to the assessment arrangements owing to the professional doctorate student having a specific learning difficulty, disability, or long-term medical condition.

7(49). The Extenuating Circumstances Panel shall on completion of consideration of a claim of extenuating circumstances make one of the following decisions:

- to accept the claim of extenuating circumstances;
- to reject the claim of extenuating circumstances.

7(50). If the claim of extenuating circumstances is accepted, the Extenuating Circumstances Panel shall normally require the professional doctorate student to repeat the relevant assessed component(s) without penalties:

- where the extenuating circumstances have been accepted in relation to the original submission of an assessed component, the student shall be given a further opportunity to submit this with no cap on the marks awarded; a subsequent re-submission shall be permitted where appropriate;
- where the extenuating circumstances have been accepted in relation to the re-submission of an assessed component the student shall be given a further opportunity to re-submit this and the mark shall be capped at the minimum required for a pass; a further re-submission shall not be permitted.

7(51). In exceptional circumstances and only if it is impracticable to require the professional doctorate student to repeat the assessed component, the Board of Examiners may require the professional doctorate student to complete an alternative form of assessment through which the student can demonstrate achievement of the same intended learning outcomes. The Extenuating Circumstances Panels may not approve the completion of an alternative form of assessment in such cases but may make a recommendation to the Board of Examiners to this effect.

7(52). In exceptional circumstances and only if the professional doctorate student is unable through illness or other sufficient cause to repeat the assessed component or complete an alternative form of assessment, the Board of Examiners may award a pass mark for the assessed component if the student has in other successfully completed assessed components demonstrated achievement of the same intended learning outcomes sufficient for an overall mark to be derived. The derivation of an overall mark in this way shall be used only to allow the professional doctorate student to satisfy the requirements for an intermediate qualification and shall not be used to enable the student to continue with the doctoral programme. Extenuating Circumstances Panels may not approve the derivation of an overall mark in such cases but may make a recommendation to the Board of Examiners to this effect.

7(53). If the claim of extenuating circumstances is rejected, the professional doctorate student may submit a formal academic appeal as specified.

7(54). A decision on a claim of extenuating circumstances that has been taken by the Extenuating Circumstances Panel shall be documented and reported to the next meeting of the Board of Examiners.

### **Specific learning difficulties, disability, and long-term medical conditions**

- 7(55). Professional doctorate students are encouraged to notify the Institution if they have a specific learning difficulty, disability, or long-term medical condition that will or may have an effect on their academic performance or ability to meet the programme requirements.
- 7(56). Professional doctorate students who have a specific learning difficulty, disability, or long-term medical condition are encouraged to make use as needed of the support and resources available through Student Advice and Learning Development.
- 7(57). Professional doctorate students who have notified the Institution that they have a specific learning difficulty, disability, or long-term medical condition may request reasonable adjustment(s) to the assessment arrangements. Requests for reasonable adjustment(s) to the arrangements for the assessed components of the degree excluding the thesis shall be subject to approval from the Head of Research who may require an assessment of the professional doctorate student's needs from Student Advice and Learning Development.
- 7(58). The approval of reasonable adjustment(s) to the assessment arrangements shall be on the condition that the academic standards of the programme are maintained. Any approved reasonable adjustment(s) shall be made up to the point of assessment and a specific learning difficulty, disability, or long-term medical condition shall not be considered in the marking of an assessed component.
- 7(59). Professional doctorate students who experience a marked deterioration in a pre-existing condition that will or may have an effect on their academic performance in a specific assessed component may suspend their registration in accordance with the requirements specified or, in respect of assessed components that fail to achieve a pass mark or were deemed to have failed owing to late submission or non-submission, submit a claim of extenuating circumstances as specified.

### **External examining for assessed components excluding the thesis**

- 7(60). External examiners shall be appointed to provide impartial and informed comment on the academic standards of the programme and on professional doctorate student achievement in relation to those standards.
- 7(61). There shall be at least one external examiner for each professional doctorate programme. The total number of external examiners to be appointed must be sufficient to cover the full range and complexity of the syllabus and the size of the professional doctorate student cohort.
- 7(62). External examiners must not be:
- members of the Institution's staff;
  - members of staff of an associated institution;

- honorary or emeritus staff of the University;
- former staff or students of the Institution unless a period of at least five years has elapsed.

7(63). External examiners must not:

- have or have had a close personal, professional, or contractual relationship with any member of the programme team including the programme markers;
- have or have had a close personal, professional, or contractual relationship with a professional doctorate student registered on that programme;
- be or know that they will be in a position to influence significantly the future of professional doctorate students registered on that programme;
- hold concurrently more than two external examiner appointments at the Institution or another institution excluding appointments as external examiner for a research student viva voce examination.

7(64). Staff from the same department and institution shall not be appointed as external examiners for the same professional doctorate programme where their terms of appointment would be concurrent. An external examiner whose term of appointment has ended shall not be directly succeeded by a member of staff from the same department or institution.

7(65). Retired and emeritus staff of another institution may be appointed as external examiners provided that they can demonstrate continuing involvement in the discipline and familiarity with current developments in higher education teaching, learning, and assessment.

7(66). The Head of Research shall be responsible for nominating external examiners. The appointment of all external examiners shall be subject to approval by Academic Enhancement Committee and Senate.

7(67). The nomination of an external examiner shall demonstrate evidence of:

- knowledge and understanding of the UK higher education sector's agreed reference points for the maintenance of academic standards and quality assurance and enhancement;
- competence and experience in the relevant area(s) covered by the professional doctorate programme;
- relevant academic experience to at least the level of the qualification to be examined as well as relevant professional/practitioner experience as appropriate;
- competence and experience in the design and operation of a variety of assessment activities appropriate to the discipline and the assessment activities used on the programme;
- standing, credibility, and breadth of experience within the discipline sufficient to command the respect of academic peers and, where appropriate, professional peers.
- familiarity with the standard of academic achievement professional doctorate students are required to demonstrate in order to achieve the qualification to be examined;
- appropriate English language proficiency;

- compliance with any applicable criteria specified by relevant professional, statutory, or regulatory bodies;
- awareness of current developments in the design and delivery of relevant curricula;
- competence and experience relating to the enhancement of the student learning experience.

### **Terms of appointment**

- 7(68). The term of appointment for external examiners shall normally be four years. An extension of no more than one year may be approved by Senate where this is needed to ensure continuity in the delivery and/or assessment processes of the programme.
- 7(69). The external examiner shall not normally be reappointed to the same programme. In exceptional circumstances where reappointment is proposed, a period of at least five years must have elapsed since the end date of the previous appointment.
- 7(70). The Institution may terminate the appointment of an external examiner should they fail to meet the specified requirements of the role.

### **Responsibilities of external examiners**

- 7(71). External examiners shall be provided by the programme team with evidence of the intended assessment patterns and assessment instruments sufficient to determine the appropriateness of the assessment strategy.
- 7(72). External examiners shall be provided by the programme team with samples of the assessed work submitted by professional doctorate students together with the agreed marks of the markers sufficient to determine whether the markers have properly assessed student performance against the specified marking criteria. Samples of work submitted by professional doctorate students should be sufficient to provide confidence in the standard of marking and constitute a sample across the range of student achievement.
- 7(73). External examiners should be consulted regarding access to non-written assessed components and attendance at any live assessment events. External examiners may be required to attend non-written assessed components regardless of location.
- 7(74). External examiners shall be required to provide informative comment and recommendations as to whether or not:
- the Institution is maintaining the threshold academic standards for its awards in accordance with the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications and relevant subject benchmark statements;
  - the assessment process measures professional doctorate student achievement rigorously and fairly against the intended learning outcomes of the programme and is conducted in accordance with the Institution's policies and regulations;

- the academic standard and the achievement of professional doctorate students on the programme are comparable with those on equivalent programmes at other higher education institutions with which the external examiner is familiar.

7(75). External examiners are invited to comment on the standard of marking against the written criteria but may not seek, or be invited, to raise or lower the marks of individual professional doctorate students. External examiners may ask for marks across a full cohort to be reconsidered by markers against the written criteria if they consider that there is evidence to suggest under- or over-marking or they have concerns about the robustness of marking.

#### **External examiner reports**

7(76). The external examiner shall at the end of each annual assessment cycle submit a written report to the Vice-Chancellor. The report shall:

- confirm whether the Institution is maintaining the threshold academic standards for its awards in accordance with the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications and relevant subject benchmark statements;
- confirm whether the assessment process measures professional doctorate student achievement rigorously and fairly against the intended learning outcomes of the programme and is conducted in accordance with the Institution's policies and regulations;
- confirm whether the academic standard and the achievement of professional doctorate students on the programme are comparable with those on equivalent programmes at other higher education institutions with which the external examiner is familiar;
- confirm whether the external examiner received sufficient information and/or evidence to fulfil their role;
- state whether issues and/or concerns raised by the external examiner in previous reports have been appropriately addressed;
- address any issues specifically required by any relevant professional, statutory, or regulatory bodies;
- provide an overview report at the end of the external examiner's term of appointment.

7(77). The Institution reserves the right to reject the view(s) of the external examiner but shall do so only after careful consideration of the issue(s) raised.

7(78). The external examiner may if needed raise in confidence directly with the Vice-Chancellor any matters of serious concern.

7(79). The external examiner may invoke the Quality Assurance Agency's Concerns Scheme or inform the relevant professional, statutory, or regulatory bodies if they have a serious concern relating to systemic failings with the academic standards of the professional doctorate programme and they have exhausted all published applicable Institutional procedures, including the submission of a confidential report to the Vice-Chancellor.

7(80). With the exception of any matters which the external examiner has raised in confidence directly with the Vice-Chancellor, external examiner reports shall be made available in full to students and others.

7(81). Senate shall receive from the Academic Enhancement Committee an annual digest of the comments made by the external examiners for all professional doctorate programmes and shall use these to identify issues where further action may be needed.

#### **Boards of examiners for assessed components excluding the thesis**

7(82). A Board of Examiners shall be convened for each professional doctorate programme. The Board of Examiners shall be directly responsible to Senate for the conduct of its business.

7(83). The Board of Examiners shall be responsible for:

- confirming the provisional assessment component results of professional doctorate students registered for that programme;
- considering and confirming the academic performance of individual professional doctorate students as it relates to progression or award decisions – including decisions to award an intermediate qualification or to terminate registration;
- receiving reports on claims of extenuating circumstances that have been accepted by a Extenuating Circumstances Panel or where a Extenuating Circumstances Panel has made a recommendation for the Board's approval;
- considering and deciding on claims of extenuating circumstances not considered by a Extenuating Circumstances Panel.

7(84). The membership of the Board of Examiners shall be agreed annually.

7(85). The Board of Examiners shall comprise:

- a Chair who shall normally be a senior member of the Institution's academic staff and independent of the programme;
- at least two markers from the programme team both of whom are either members of the Institution's academic staff;
- other members of the Institution's academic staff nominated by the Head of Research as needed to ensure that the Board can make informed progression and award decisions;
- the external examiner(s) for the professional doctorate programme.

7(86). The Board of Examiners shall meet at least annually. Meetings of the Board of Examiners must be attended by all those members specified. Meetings where required members are absent shall be declared inquorate and rescheduled.

7(87). The external examiner(s) for the professional doctorate programme shall normally attend all meetings of the Board of Examiners. External examiners who cannot attend a meeting of the Board of Examiners shall be required to submit for consideration at the meeting written

comments on the module outcomes and the performance of professional doctorate students.

- 7(88). The Institution shall provide a secretary to attend each meeting of the Board of Examiners. The secretary shall be responsible for recording the decisions of the Board and for providing a written account of the Board's discussions in relation to any difficult cases.
- 7(89). All members of the Board of Examiners, including external examiners, are equal and shall participate in the transaction of the Board's business. If in any specific case a vote of the Board's members is needed, the Chair shall have the casting vote.
- 7(90). The Board of Examiners shall make decisions on the basis of evidence of professional doctorate student achievement. The Board of Examiners shall not adjust marks for any individual student or group of students except as specified.
- 7(91). External examiners shall be invited to endorse the decisions of the Board of Examiners to indicate that they are satisfied with the conduct of the assessment process rather than to indicate agreement with each individual assessment decision.
- 7(92). The Board of Examiners may defer a decision in relation to an individual professional doctorate student where it does not hold sufficient information about the student's academic record and/or any claim of extenuating circumstances. The Board of Examiners may authorise the Chair to make that decision on its behalf at the earliest subsequent opportunity. The Board of Examiners may not authorise the Chair to make a decision to award an intermediate qualification.