

The University of Edinburgh

Student Checklist for the Examination of Research Degrees

This checklist should be made available by Colleges to all candidates at the start of the final year of their prescribed period.

Postgraduate Regulations and Codes of Practice: Candidates should refer to the current editions of the *Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees* and *A Code of Practice for Supervisors and Research Students* on which these guidelines are based. The most up to date editions may be found on the web. Candidates might also find it useful to refer to the University's *Code of Good Practice in Research*.

Documentation: At least two months before they expect to submit their theses, candidates should apply to their College for the necessary documentation ('*Notice of Intention to Present a Thesis for Examination*', '*Access to a Thesis and Publication of Abstract*', '*Abstract of Thesis*') (**Regulation 1.3**). The relevant forms are available to download from our website.

Timetable for the examination: Candidates should submit their '*Notice of Intention to present a Thesis for Examination*' to the relevant College at least two months before the anticipated date of submission in order that examiners may be appointed.

Candidates should note that the normal expectation is that examiners will read the thesis within three months, but they should allow for examiners' other commitments. Candidates should be kept informed by the internal examiner of any unexpected delays. If, because of visa restrictions, overseas candidates must return home promptly, they and their supervisors should make adequate allowance for this when submitting their theses. In calculating the likely timescale of the oral examination, candidates should allow time for the appointment of examiners, the examination itself, any revisions which might have to be made to the thesis and the dates of graduation. **Code of Practice paragraph 5.10**

Graduation ceremonies are held in July and December. In addition, candidates may graduate *in absentia* in January/February and October.

Grounds for the award of degree: – see **Appendix 2 of the Regulations; Code of Practice paragraph 5.11**

NB: The degree of PhD by Research Publications is available for staff and alumni of the University only, and is not an alternative to the traditional PhD by thesis. A compendium of papers/articles is not acceptable for the traditional PhD thesis.

Contents: the contents of the main body of the thesis – see **Code of Practice paragraph 5.10**

Quality: the quality of a thesis and decision of when to submit – see **Code of Practice paragraph 3.3**

Maximum length of a thesis: See **Appendix 2 of the Regulations, Code of Practice paragraph 5.10**

Copyright and IP: - see **Code of Practice paragraph 3.3**

Early submission of a thesis: – Candidates may, with their supervisor's support, seek permission to reduce their period of study and submit their theses early - see **Regulation 1.1; Code of Practice paragraph 5.10**

Format and binding of a thesis: see **Regulation 3**.

Published papers: Candidates are encouraged to publish their work and such material should be bound in the thesis – see **Regulation 3.1.11; Code of Practice paragraph 5.11**

Date of Submission: The date of presentation (either as a submission or resubmission) should be shown on the title page. The year of graduation should be shown at the foot of the spine.

Data in electronic form: Candidates may be advised or required by examiners to present their data in electronic form. This material is supplementary to the main text - see **Regulation 3.1.12; Code of Practice paragraph 5.10**

Access to a thesis: This should be submitted to the College Office at the same time as submitting the *Notice of intention to submit a thesis* or with the thesis. This authorises the Main Library to allow access to the thesis and to publish the abstract; although access may be restricted in exceptional circumstances for a maximum period of five years (renewable annually).

Abstract of a thesis: Six copies of the abstract are required, and should be submitted to the College Office at the time of lodging the *Notice of intention to submit a thesis*. Three copies are lodged in the University Library, and copies are sent to the examiners when they are invited to act. The text of the abstract should also be bound in the thesis – see **Regulation 3.1.14**.

Lay summary of thesis: the lay summary is intended as a supplement to the abstract (see *Degree Regulations & Programmes of Study Regulation 5.8 and Guidance on Academic Services website*)

Appointment of examiners: Candidates and their supervisors should be consulted by the head of School about the nomination of examiners – see **Code of Practice paragraph 5.11**

Examiners: Usually one internal and one external examiner are appointed, although there may be exceptions – see **Code of Practice paragraph 5.11**

Examiners' reports: Before the oral examination, each examiner, acting independently, submits an initial report on the thesis. Following the oral a joint report is submitted to the College Postgraduate Studies Committee or equivalent – see **Regulation 4.1.7**

Oral Examination: The nature and conduct of the oral examination – see **Code of Practice paragraph 5.11**

Oral examination by video link: There may be circumstances when it is appropriate to arrange to hold the oral by video link - see **Code of Practice paragraph 5.11**, and separate **Guidelines**.

Supervisor's attendance at the oral: The role of the supervisor as an observer, and his or her role in any resubmission – see **Code of Practice paragraph 5.11**.

Outcome of the oral examination: The examiners may tell the candidate what their views are at the end of or after the oral exam, but their view is a recommendation to the College PGS Committee and not a final decision. The Committee has the power to modify or, exceptionally, to overturn the examiners' recommendation. See **Regulation 4.1.8 (PhD), or 4.2.3 (MPhil) for details of the possible recommendations which the examiners can make. See also Code of Practice 5.11**

NB: after amendment or resubmission, the final version of the thesis must formally be submitted to the University. One hard bound copy of your thesis and an electronic version on CD must be deposited with the College Office. Candidates cannot graduate until they have formally submitted the final version of their thesis to the University. Further info on the submission of theses is available from the Edinburgh Research Archive (ERA)

Appeals – see, **Code of Practice paragraph 7** and Academic Services website

If you have any suggestions for changes or additions to this checklist, please send them to the Academic Services. Old College.

Academic Services

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