

Summary of changes to the Research Degree Regulations for 2017/18

With effect from 1st August 2017, the University has made some changes to the regulations governing Research Degrees. These changes are the result of the University's continuous review of its programme, services, and facilities to ensure quality enhancement. The changes were made to simplify where possible, provide clarification, and increase transparency in some areas of the University's procedures. The recommendations were made to the University Senate via specific working groups of the Postgraduate Research Quality, Monitoring, and Enhancement Subcommittee, a subcommittee of the Academic Quality and Standards Committee, all of which have student representation. The key changes are listed below and summarised in the remainder of the document:

- Structural changes to [Section V](#) of the University Calendar
- Changes to the [Regulations Governing Special Considerations for Research Degree Programmes](#)
- Changes to the [Code of Practice for Research Candidature and Supervision \(CoP\)](#) and [Procedures for circumstances that may lead to withdrawal or Termination \(Termination procedures\)](#)
- Changes to the [Members of Staff in Candidature for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy](#) regulations
- Alternative thesis submissions

Overview of change	Details of the change	Reason for change	Document
Structural changes to Section V of the University Calendar	The following sets of regulations have been merged into a new 'Regulations for Research Degrees' document: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Master of Philosophy, Doctor of Philosophy and Doctor of Business Administration - Master of Philosophy and Doctor of Philosophy for Mayflower Scholars - Research Degrees with a Major Taught Component - Integrated PhD in Named Subjects - Doctor of Medicine - Definitions of Terms used in the Higher Degree Regulations 	To remove duplication of information, and to make the regulations easier to navigate for students and staff.	Section V of the University Calendar
	Section V has been renamed from ' <i>Higher Degree Regulations</i> ' to ' <i>Regulations for Research Degrees and Higher Doctorates</i> '	To better explain the contents of Section V of the University Calendar.	
	The ' Master of Research ' and ' Postgraduate Degrees of Master by Taught Course ' regulations have been removed from Section V.	The information contained within these document are repeated elsewhere.	
Special Considerations	Separation of procedure for suspension of candidature not related to Special Considerations Requests of this nature can now be made on a simpler version of the form, ' <i>SC2: Suspension of Research Candidature Request Form (not related to Special Considerations)</i> ', and a recommendation can now be made by an appropriate subset of the Special Considerations Board. All other requests are made on the: ' <i>SC1 – Special Considerations Request Form for Postgraduate Research students</i> '.	In recognition of the fact that these types of request do not require the same level of scrutiny as those related to Special Considerations. It is envisaged that this will speed up the consideration of these more straightforward requests.	Regulations Quality Handbook
	The following types of request may now be considered by an appropriate subset of the Board : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suspension not related to Special Considerations 	As above	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short-term requests (up to a period of 3 months) • Time-critical requests (where the date to which the request relates to is within 25 working days of the date of the submission of the request) 		
	Supervisory input is now required as part of the process.	To help the Board in consideration of the requests by providing context.	
	Requests must now be submitted in advance of any assessment or deadline . Only in exceptional circumstances will a request be accepted up to five working days later.	To clarify expectations to students and staff on the submission of requests.	
	Research students may now request that their circumstances are logged until such a time that they may wish to make a request.	To allow students to log circumstances that are affecting their candidature, but are not yet in a position to submit a request.	
	Requests for an extension to a revised thesis submission deadline are now included as part of this procedure rather than directly to the Faculty Graduate School Directorate.	To bring this request in line with requests prior to submission.	
	A statement regarding retrospective suspension has been added to the regulations, stating that retrospective suspensions are not normally permitted.	To provide clarity to students and staff on retrospective suspensions.	
	For confidentiality reasons, a research student may request that their application is considered in another Faculty .	To permit consideration of a request in another Faculty for confidentiality reasons.	
	Recommendation codes are now available for Boards, and listed in the ' <i>Guidance for Faculties on Regulations Governing Special Considerations and suspension of candidature for Postgraduate Research students</i> '	To increase parity of outcome across the University.	
	There is increased clarity provided on the requirements for Faculties with regards to record keeping and reporting of Special Considerations requests.	To increase the clarity to Faculties with regards to expectations in record keeping and reporting of requests.	
Changes to the CoP and Termination Procedures	There is now explicit clarification of the implications of not submitting material for a progression review within the listed deadlines . Students who do not submit material for attempt one of a progression review will be deemed to have failed the attempt. Students who do not submit material for attempt two of a progression review will be deemed to have failed the attempt and may be withdrawn.	To provide explicit clarification of the implications of not submitting material for a progression review within the listed deadlines.	CoP [para 64] Procedures for termination... [para 4]
	The inclusion of expectations of student time commitment and increased clarification of holiday entitlement .	To provide clarification and increase awareness of expectation.	CoP [para 48 and 61].
	Specific inclusion in the Ongoing Responsibilities of supervisors , that they must be aware of progression review deadlines and ensure that their research student is aware of these.	To increase supervisor and student awareness of their responsibilities.	CoP [para 40b]
	The inclusion of a procedure for research students who wish to undertake their progression review early .	To provide clarification.	CoP [para 64]
	The addition of statement requiring any conflicts of interest in the composition of the supervisory team to be communicated to the research student, and an additional supervisor or advisor appointed to the team.	To increase transparency.	CoP [para 39]

<p>Staff candidature – submission by published work</p>	<p>The regulations now provide clarification on a number of areas relating to the submission of PhD by published work for members of staff, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The definition of a PhD by Published Work • The requirements and procedure for admission • Minimum and maximum period of candidature, and type of registration permitted • Payment of fees • Allocation of the Academic Mentor • Requirements for: the submitted publications; an accompanying commentary; and final submission • The permitted recommendations of examiners 	<p>To strengthen the current regulations and provide clarification on the requirements and procedures for these awards.</p>	<p><u>Regulations for members of staff in candidature for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy</u></p>
<p>Alternative thesis submissions</p>	<p>Rather than listing individual, discipline-specific requirements for ‘alternative’ thesis submissions in the regulations, there will now be a statement of the general requirements which will apply to all ‘alternative’ submissions. The Individual requirements, within the agreed boundaries, will instead be listed in the Doctoral Programme Profiles. The regulations will also list the disciplines within which ‘alternative’ submissions are permitted.</p>	<p>To ensure consistency in expectations for ‘alternative’ doctoral submissions across the University.</p>	<p><u>Regulations for Research Degrees</u> [para 45-46 and 52] <u>CoP</u> [para 3-4, 8-10, and 86] <u>Appendix 1: Research Degrees in Music</u> [removed]</p>