Academic Regulations for Research Courses of Study (Including New Route PhD Courses)

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Note: these Regulations should be read in conjunction with the University Code of Practice for the Quality Assurance of Research Courses of Study.

# Scope and Applicability

1.1 Candidates may proceed under these regulations to:

1.1.1 the degree of Master’s of Arts (by research and thesis); the degree of Master’s of Science (by research and thesis); the degree of Master’s of Laws (by research and thesis); the degree of Master’s of Research; the degree of Doctor of Medicine; the degree of Master’s of Surgery; the degrees of Master’s and/or Doctor of Clinical Science; the degree of Master’s of Philosophy.

1.1.2 the degree of PhD in all Divisions.

1.1.3 the Postgraduate Diploma by Research and Training.

1.2 Candidates for the New Route PhD Courses shall be subject to these regulations, except insofar as they are amended or qualified in Annex 1 to these Regulations.

1.3 Wherever the words "Division” occur in these regulations they are to be taken to include also such other bodies as may be so designated by Ordinance for this purpose.

# Admission

2.1 Following a review of a candidate’s application with one or more members of the Division (including potential supervisors), the relevant Divisional Director of Graduate Studies and PG Student Experience (DDGSSE) may approve an applicant as a candidate for the degree of Master’s (by research and thesis), PhD, DClinSci or Postgraduate Diploma by Research and Training, provided they have been satisfied that:

2.1.1 The candidate meets the criteria for admission.

2.1.2 The candidate is adequately qualified to pursue the programme of training and research proposed (see Note 1).

2.1.3 The candidate meets the University’s criteria for competence in English.

2.1.4 The candidate’s references are of appropriate quality. Candidates should provide the names of two referees as evidence of their ability to undertake research in the field proposed.

2.1.5 A suitable programme of training and research, which could be completed within the proposed registration period, can be offered.

2.1.6 An appropriate member of staff of the University is available to act as the candidate's supervisor (see Note 2).

2.1.7 The facilities needed for the proposed programme of training and research can be made available.

2.1.8 The candidate is reasonably assured of financial support.

2.2 Candidates transferring from another institution will normally be expected to be registered at the University of Kent for a minimum period of one year (see section 4.1.3 for further information).

# Programme of Training and Research

3.1 A student admitted as a candidate for the degree of Master’s (by research and thesis), MD/MSurg, PhD, MClinSci, DClinSci or Postgraduate Diploma by Research and Training is required to undertake a programme of training and research approved by the Divisional Director of Graduate Studies and PG Student Experience and under the supervision of a member or members of the staff of the University approved by the relevant Division.

3.2 A candidate is required to maintain frequent consultation with their supervisor during the period of registration. [Annex H](https://www.kent.ac.uk/education/regulatory-framework/codes-of-practice-for-research-courses#annexh) of the Code of Practice for the Quality Assurance of Research Courses of Study provides further details of the responsibilities of both the supervisor and the candidate during the period of registration.

# Periods of Study

## 4.1 Overview

A candidate may be registered as a full-time or as a part-time student for the degrees of Master’s by Research and Thesis, PhD, MClinSci, DClinSci and Postgraduate Diploma by Research and Training. PhD courses shall commence at the beginning of the Autumn, Spring or Summer Terms for the period specified below. One year research courses shall commence at the beginning of the Autumn Term. The periods of registration for the University’s research degrees are outlined below.

### 4.1.1 Full-time Candidature

| **Degree** | **Registration Periods** |
| --- | --- |
| Master’s by Research and Thesis, Master’s of Arts, Master’s of Science, Master’s of Laws | One year |
| Master’s of Philosophy (not applicable for new entry) | Two years |
| Doctor of Philosophy (see note 1 and note 2) | Three years (minimum) and four years (maximum) |
| Doctor of Medicine or Master’s of Surgery | Two years |
| Postgraduate Diploma by Research and Training | One year |
| Doctor of Clinical Science or Master’s of Clinical Science (DClinsci/MClinsci) (see note 3) | Two years (minimum) and three years (maximum) |

Notes:

1. The minimum period of registration may be reduced, where the Dean of the Graduate and Researcher College deems it appropriate, by not more than one year (see Note 4).
2. Full fees will be payable up to the minimum period of registration if early completion is achieved.
3. The period of registration will depend upon the candidate’s initial qualification in the field of study.

### 4.1.2 Part-time Candidature

| **Degree** | **Registration Period** |
| --- | --- |
| Master’s by Research and Thesis, Master’s of Arts, Master’s of Science, Master’s of Laws | Two years |
| Master’s of Philosophy (not applicable for new entry) | Three years |
| Doctor of Philosophy (see note 4 and note 5) | Five years (minimum) and six years (maximum) |
| Doctor of Medicine or Master’s of Surgery | Within five years |
| Postgraduate Diploma by Research and Training | Two years |
| Doctor of Clinical Science or Master’s of Clinical Science (DClinsci/MClinsci) | Three years (minimum) and six years (maximum) |

Notes:

1. At the start of the PhD the minimum period of registration may be reduced, where the Dean of the Graduate and Researcher College deems it appropriate, by not more than one year (see Note 4).
2. Full fees will be payable up to the minimum period of registration if early completion is achieved.

### 4.1.3 Minimum Periods of Registration for Student Transfers

Where a student transfers to the University of Kent with their supervisor from another institution, the minimum period that the student should be registered at Kent in order to be eligible for a University of Kent award is as follows:

* Full-time: 12 months
* Part-time: 18 months

The maximum period of registration (i.e. fourth year for FT and sixth year for PT PhD students) will count towards this minimum period.

### 4.1.4 Serious Disruption to University’s Capacity to Deliver a Course

Periods where the University suffers serious disruption to its capacity to deliver a course or courses due to *Force Majeure* events will not be regarded as contributing to the minimum or maximum periods of study permitted for the completion of any award.

## 4.2 Continuation Category of Registration

It is the expectation of the University that candidates for the Doctor of Philosophy will conduct a programme of supervised research and training during the minimum registration periods outlined above. At the submission review (three months before the end of the minimum period of registration), a panel will determine: (i) whether the candidate will be ready to submit at the end of the minimum period of registration, (ii) whether the candidate needs to have their period of supervised research and training extended for a set period or (iii) whether the candidate is in a position to be registered on continuation status for the remainder of the maximum period of registration during which they will be required to complete and submit their thesis. The University expects that the candidate should submit as soon as possible after the end of the minimum period of registration. The candidate should only be registered on continuation status when:

* The candidate has completed the minimum period of registration.
* The transfer is approved by the submission review panel.
* The candidate is only making use of the University’s general facilities and is no longer using laboratories or other specialist facilities. The candidate is only receiving advice relating to the writing-up of the thesis at this stage.

# Attendance

## 5.1 Full-time Candidates

5.1.1 The candidate shall reside at or near their main place of study and attend the University for the whole period of registration except as provided for in sections 5.1.2 and 5.1.3.

5.1.2 A candidate may, with the approval of the appropriate Divisional Committee, spend a part of the prescribed period of full-time registration elsewhere, provided that not less than one third is spent in attendance at the University.

5.1.3 A candidate may, with the approval of the Division concerned, spend the whole of the prescribed period of registration at an institution recognised by the Senate for this purpose, and subject to such conditions as may be prescribed from time to time by the Senate (see Note 4).

## 5.2 Part-time Candidates

5.2.1 The candidate shall attend the University for consultation with their supervisor as frequently as the appropriate Divisional Graduate Studies and PG Student Experience Committee shall decide.

## 5.3 External Candidates

5.3.1 A candidate may, with the approval of the Dean of the Graduate and Researcher College, register as an external student of the University. Such candidates may register as either part-time external students or as full-time external students. For full guidelines to external candidature, please refer to the [‘University Procedures for the Approval of External Research Degree Candidature’](https://www.kent.ac.uk/education/documents/regulations-research/procedures-for-approval-external-research-degree-candidature.docx).

## 5.4 Split PhD Candidates

5.4.1 A candidate may, with the approval of the appropriate Dean of the Graduate and Researcher College, register as a split PhD candidate of the University. Such candidates must spend a minimum of one third of their registration period at the University and may spend the remaining period of registration at another institution. For full guidelines to split PhDs, please refer to the [‘University Procedures for the Approval of Split PhD Degree Candidature’](https://www.kent.ac.uk/education/documents/regulations-research/procedures-for-approval-split-research-degree-candidature.docx).

# Changes in Terms of Registration

6.1 In cases of illness and other good cause, a candidate may apply to the Divisional Graduate Studies and PG Student Experience Committee concerned for permission to interrupt the prescribed period of registration for a stated length of time. The period of intermission should not normally extend beyond twelve months.

6.2 Students are eligible to intermit prior to their first thesis submission, as long as they are within either their minimum period of registration, extended period of supervision or continuation period. The eligibility may be restricted by visa and/or scholarship arrangements.

6.3 A candidate may apply to the Divisional Graduate Studies and PG Student Experience Committee for permission to transfer registration to another degree or otherwise to vary the conditions attached to their registration. In each case the application shall be considered by the Divisional Graduate Studies and PG Student Experience Committee and, if granted, the Divisional Graduate Studies and PG Student Experience Committee shall prescribe the period of registration required and any other conditions attached to the registration. If a candidate for the award considers that an application made in accordance with section 6 of these regulations was not properly considered by the Divisional Graduate Studies and PG Student Experience Committee or wishes to present new and relevant evidence, they may appeal under Appendix 4 of the Academic Appeals Policy.

# Progression

Prior to the examination, candidates will be subject to formal progress reviews during their period of registration including induction, probation, mid-year (if required), annual and submission reviews. [Annex K](https://www.kent.ac.uk/education/regulatory-framework/codes-of-practice-for-research-courses#annexk)of the Research Code of Practice provides details of these review stages.

# Examination

## 8.1 Number of Examiners

Each candidate shall be examined by two or more examiners of whom at least one shall be an external examiner. The examiners may, at their discretion and subject to the agreement of the candidate, invite the candidate's supervisor to attend an oral examination as a silent observer.

## 8.2 Presentation of Thesis

A candidate must present two copies of the thesis (bound in accordance with the instructions issued to candidates) and an electronic copy of the thesis. The composition of the thesis must be wholly the candidate's own work and it must embody the results of the candidate's research during the period of registration. A thesis in a language other than English may be presented only if the appropriate Divisional Committee has so agreed before the start of the period of registration (see Explanatory Note 11).

8.2.1 Where examination is of research comprised in whole or in part by practice as research, the format and composition of the student’s thesis will have been agreed in advance between the student, supervisory team and Divisional Director of Graduate Studies and PG Student Experience or their subject-area nominee. Although practice will be examined under conditions appropriate to the subject, it is essential that students also submit documentation of their practice which can form an accessible and lasting record, this should be included with the bound copy.

8.2.2 Where a thesis is based in whole or in part on collaborative research, the extent of this collaboration must be clearly indicated in the thesis.

8.2.3 Any material which the candidate has previously presented and which has been accepted for the award of an academic qualification at this University or elsewhere must be clearly identified in the thesis. Such material will be ignored by the examiners in deciding whether the candidate is worthy of the award of a degree (see Explanatory Note 12). The electronic copy of the thesis may be run through text matching software in order to detect plagiarism.

## 8.3 Oral Examination

8.3.1 Candidates for a Master’s by research or thesis must attend an oral examination if the examiners so require.

8.3.2 PhD, DClinSci, MClinSci and MD/MSurg candidates must attend an oral examination unless specifically exempted from this requirement by the Divisional Graduate Studies and PG Student Experience Committee concerned.

8.3.3 Candidates for the Postgraduate Diploma by Research and Training must attend an oral examination if the examiners so require.

## 8.4 Assessment Criteria for Research Degrees

### 8.4.1 Master’s Degrees by Research and Thesis (Master’s of Arts, Master’s of Science, Master’s of Research, Master’s of Laws)

On successful completion of a Master’s degree course candidates will have:

1. met the *Framework for Higher Education Qualifications* (FHEQ) level descriptor for a Master’s degree (outlined below);
2. met any subject specific assessment criteria outlined in the course specification (if applicable);
3. shown appropriate ability in the organisation and presentation of their material in the thesis;
4. shown in the thesis ability to conduct an independent study and to understand its relationship to a wider field of knowledge.

The *Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* states that:

Master’s degrees are awarded to students who have demonstrated:

1. a systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of their academic discipline, field of study, or area of professional practice;
2. a comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship;
3. originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline;
4. conceptual understanding that enables the student:

* to evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline; and
* to evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses.

Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

1. deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, make sound judgements in the absence of complete data, and communicate their conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences;
2. demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level;
3. continue to advance their knowledge and understanding, and to develop new skills to a high level;

and will have:

1. the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring:

* the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility;
* decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations; and
* the independent learning ability required for continuing professional development.

### 8.4.2 Master’s of Philosophy

On successful completion of a Master’s of Philosophy degree course candidates will have:

1. met the Framework for Higher Education Qualification (FHEQ) level descriptor for a Master’s degree (outlined below);
2. met any subject specific assessment criteria outlined in the course specification (if applicable);
3. shown appropriate ability in the organisation and presentation of their material in the thesis;
4. acquired specialist knowledge in relation to their chosen area of research to a standard sufficient to conduct an original investigation.

The *Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* states that:

Master’s degrees are awarded to students who have demonstrated:

1. a systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of their academic discipline, field of study, or area of professional practice;
2. a comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship;
3. originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline;
4. conceptual understanding that enables the student:

* to evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline; and
* to evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses. Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

1. deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, make sound judgements in the absence of complete data, and communicate their conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences;
2. demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level;
3. continue to advance their knowledge and understanding, and to develop new skills to a high level;

and will have:

1. the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring:

* the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility;
* decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations; and
* the independent learning ability required for continuing professional development.

### 8.4.3 Doctor of Philosophy or Doctor of Clinical Science

On successful completion of a PhD or DClinSci course candidates will have:

1. met the Framework for Higher Education Qualification (FHEQ) level descriptor for a doctorate degree (outlined below);
2. met any subject specific assessment criteria outlined in the course specification (if applicable);
3. shown appropriate ability in the organisation and presentation of their material in the thesis.

The *Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* states that:

Doctorates are awarded to students who have demonstrated:

1. the creation and interpretation of new knowledge, through original research or other advanced scholarship, of a quality to satisfy peer review, extend the forefront of the discipline, and merit publication;
2. a systematic acquisition and understanding of a substantial body of knowledge which is at the forefront of an academic discipline or area of professional practice;
3. the general ability to conceptualise, design and implement a project for the generation of new knowledge, applications or understanding at the forefront of the discipline, and to adjust the project design in the light of unforeseen problems;
4. a detailed understanding of applicable techniques for research and advanced academic enquiry.

Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

1. make informed judgements on complex issues in specialist fields, often in the absence of complete data, and be able to communicate their ideas and conclusions clearly and effectively to specialist and non-specialist audiences;
2. continue to undertake pure and/or applied research and development at an advanced level, contributing substantially to the development of new techniques, ideas, or approaches;

and will have:

1. the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and largely autonomous initiative in complex and unpredictable situations, in professional or equivalent environments.

### 8.4.4 Doctor of Medicine or Master’s of Surgery

In order to be eligible for the award of the Doctor of Medicine or Master’s of Surgery the thesis should be an original contribution to knowledge or understanding in the field under investigation and should demonstrate the candidate's ability to test ideas, whether their own or those of others, and to understand the relationship of the theme of the investigation to a wider field of knowledge. It should be of such scholarly merit as would on that ground justify its publication either as submitted or in an abridged form. The candidate is also required to show appropriate ability in the organisation and presentation of their material in the thesis (see Explanatory Note 6).

### 8.4.5 Postgraduate Diploma by Research and Training

In order to be eligible for the award of the Postgraduate Diploma by Research and Training a candidate is required to show in the dissertation ability to conduct a programme of research and to show that they understand the relationship of this programme of research to a wider field of knowledge. A candidate is also required to show appropriate ability in the organisation and presentation of their material in the thesis (see Explanatory Note 6).

## 8.5 Presentation of a Thesis for Examination

8.5.1 A candidate may not present a thesis for examination earlier than three months before the end of the minimum period of registration prescribed. A candidate shall remain eligible to present a thesis for a further period after completion of the maximum period of registration provided that during this period they pay such annual fees as may be prescribed and submits such reports on progress as may be required by the Divisional Graduate Studies and PG Student Experience Committee. This period should not normally extend beyond twelve months. A full-time candidate for a research degree must have submitted their thesis for examination within five and a half years of their initial registration at the University to remain eligible for the award. A part-time candidate for a research degree must have submitted their thesis for examination within eight and a half years after their initial registration at the University to remain eligible for the award.

8.5.1.1 The maximum time period for submission of a thesis (i.e. five and a half years full-time, eight and half years part-time) is irrespective of any intermissions or extensions that a candidate may apply for. If a candidate’s intermission arrangements mean that submission of their thesis will be after the maximum time period they must apply for an extension to allow for this. Such an extension will need to be approved by the Dean of the Graduate and Researcher College, to confirm that the further extension is for appropriate reasons.

8.5.2 Where candidates for the award of MPhil or PhD or MD or MSurg choose to submit a thesis comprised exclusively of published papers or materials submitted for publication during the period of registration, this work should form a coherent description of a unified body of research. In such cases the candidate will be required to provide a statement indicating the context of the research, its main aims and a discussion of the main results or conclusions.

## 8.6 Examiners’ Recommendations

After examining the thesis presented by a candidate and considering the results of any oral or written examination which they have conducted the examiners, at their discretion, may recommend to the Divisional Graduate Studies and PG Student Experience Committee that:

8.6.1 The degree/diploma for which the candidate is registered be awarded;

8.6.2 The degree/diploma be awarded subject to certain minor corrections to the thesis being carried out to the satisfaction of the Internal Examiner within three months of the official notification to the candidate of the recommendation of the examiners.

8.6.2.1 Note: In cases where the examiners make the above recommendation, minor corrections include the following: spelling/typing errors, textual errors; reordering of material; correction of literature citations (possibly inclusion of a few additional citations); correction of figures, tables and diagrams (possibly inclusion of one or two additional figures/tables/ diagrams); additional sections for clarification or qualification. If a substantial amount of new material is needed, examiners should not use this recommendation.

8.6.3 The degree/diploma be awarded subject to revisions to the thesis being carried out to the satisfaction of the Internal and External Examiner within six months of the official notification to the candidate of the recommendation of the examiners.

8.6.3.1 Note*:* In cases where the examiners make the above recommendation, revisions will normally take the form of more extensive revisions than that implied by a decision of pass with minor corrections. This decision will not require any significant extension of the original research to be undertaken by the candidate, if this is deemed necessary, examiners should recommend a resubmission. The examiners must be agreed that the candidate will be able to achieve the amendments within no more than six months from notification.

8.6.4 The degree/diploma be not awarded at present but that the candidate be permitted to resubmit the thesis in a revised form not later (except in cases of illness or other good cause) than twelve months after the decision to allow resubmission has been made by the Divisional Graduate Studies and PG Student Experience Committee. If at least one of the examiners so wishes, they may require the candidate to undergo an oral or written examination or both.

8.6.4.1 Note: a candidate should only be permitted one opportunity to resubmit except in exceptional circumstances where mitigating circumstances may justify a second resubmission.

8.6.5 The degree/diploma be not awarded at present but that the candidate be permitted to take a further oral or written examination or both, on one further occasion, normally not later than six months after the decision to allow this has been made by the Divisional Graduate Studies and PG Student Experience Committee.

8.6.5.1 Note: This recommendation may only be made in cases where the candidate submits a thesis judged satisfactory for the award by the examiners but fails to satisfy the examiners in the written or oral examination or both.

8.6.6 in the case of candidates for the degree of Master’s of Philosophy:

8.6.6.1 in the humanities and social sciences subject areas: that the candidate be permitted to resubmit the thesis without alteration and without further scrutiny for the award of the degree of Master’s of Arts;

8.6.6.2 in the sciences and social sciences subject areas: that the candidate be permitted to resubmit the thesis without alteration and without further scrutiny for the award of the degree of Master’s of Science.

8.6.7 In the case of candidates for the degree of Master’s by Research and Thesis that the degree be not awarded but that the candidate be awarded a postgraduate diploma.

8.6.7.1 Note: Examiners may so recommend in the case of a candidate who has not shown the necessary ability to conduct an independent study but who has otherwise satisfied the requirements for the degree of Master’s as set out in section 8.2 of these regulations.

8.6.8 In case of candidates for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy or Doctor of Clinical Science:

8.6.8.1 that the degree of PhD or DClinSci be not awarded but that the candidate be permitted formally to resubmit the thesis without alteration and without further scrutiny for the award of Master’s of Philosophy or MClinSci;

8.6.8.2 that the degree of PhD or DClinSci be not awarded but that the candidate be permitted to resubmit the thesis for the award of the degree of Master’s of Philosophy or MClinSci subject to certain minor corrections being carried out to the satisfaction of the internal examiner within three months of the official notification to the candidate of the recommendation of the examiners;

8.6.9 The degree be not awarded.

8.7 The Divisional Graduate Studies and PG Student Experience Committee, after considering the examiners' reports, may if there is doubt or disagreement between the examiners, recommend to the Senate the appointment of one or more additional examiners.

8.8 The University Senate has agreed that, when examining an initial submission (i.e. where the candidate has not previously been examined and asked to revise and resubmit the thesis), examiners should, except in exceptional circumstances, recommend as per one of sections 8.6.1 – 8.6.5 above, i.e. that the candidate should be awarded the research degree or should be offered a further opportunity to meet the requirements for award of the research degree. However, examiners may, if they wish, recommend that the candidate be permitted to choose between 8.6.4 and 8.6.6 or between 8.6.4 and 8.6.8.2 above, i.e. between revising and resubmitting for the research degree or accepting the award of MPhil/MClinSci (with or without minor corrections).

8.8.1 In respect of 8.8 above, the initial submission should be found by the examiners to be at a standard of the award of MPhil/MClinSci as a minimum. Where the submission is not considered to reach the minimum standard the examiners may make recommendations for thesis corrections.

8.9 Where it has been recommended by the examiners that a research candidate should make thesis corrections, as set out above, and both examiners have subsequently agreed that those corrections have not been completed to a satisfactory level, the examiners, at their discretion, may recommend to the Divisional Graduate Studies and PG Student Experience Committee:

8.9.1 the award of the lower degree; or

8.9.2 that the candidate be permitted a further three months to complete the corrections and resubmit the thesis. If, after resubmission, the examiners find that the corrections are still unsatisfactory no further opportunity will be granted and the lower degree will be awarded; or

8.9.3 The degree be not awarded.

8.10 Examiners’ recommendations for the award of qualifications as per 8.6. – 8.9 must be approved by the Graduate Studies and PG Student Experience Committee of the Division and by the Senate or by persons authorised by the Graduate Studies and PG Student Experience Committee and the Senate to act on their behalf.

# Appeals

9.1 A research candidate may appeal under the Academic Appeals Policy

9.1.1 against the recommendation of the examiners as set out in one of sections 8.6.2 – 8.6.9 above;

9.1.2 against a recommendation made (i) by a review panel that a research candidate should not be upgraded from the degree of Master’s by Research and Thesis to the degree of Doctor of Philosophy; (ii) by a review panel that a research candidate should be transferred to another degree or withdraw from the University in the event of unsatisfactory progress or (iii) at submission review that a research candidate, previously upgraded to the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, should submit for the degree of Master’s of Philosophy;

9.1.3 against the decision to deny a research candidate permission to (i) interrupt the prescribed period of registration for a stated length of time in cases of illness or other good cause or (ii) transfer registration to another degree or otherwise vary the conditions to their registration or (iii) to have their period of registration extended for a stated period;

9.1.4 against the recommendation that a research candidates’ registration be terminated in the event of unsatisfactory progress (seeSection 12 of these Regulations);

9.1.5 against the decision that a student is no longer eligible to submit a thesis for examination, as set out in section 8.5 of these Regulations;

9.1.6 against a penalty imposed by a Divisional Academic Misconduct Committee or Chair under Regulation V3 of the General Regulations.

9.2 Such an appeal must be made in accordance with Academic Appeals Policy no later than 28 calendar days after the date of the notification to the candidate of the recommended result or decision.

9.2 The grounds for such an appeal may include allegations of any of the following:

9.2.1 That there are extenuating circumstances affecting the student's performance of which the relevant examiners or staff members were not, for good reason, aware when their decision was taken.

9.2.2 That there was administrative, procedural or clerical error in the conduct of the procedure of such a nature as to cause reasonable doubt as to whether the same decision would have been reached had this not occurred.

9.2.3 That there is evidence of prejudice or of bias or of inadequate assessment on the part of one or more of the examiners or staff members concerned.

9.3 A research candidate may not appeal:

9.3.1 against academic judgement; or

9.3.2 on the grounds of poor or inadequate research supervision. Such a matter would be the subject of an academic complaint, which should have been raised and resolved at the earliest opportunity through the complaints procedure.

9.4 The appeal must be made in accordance with Academic Appeals Policy.

# Academic Complaints

Academic complaints about research courses of study should be raised in the first instance with the Divisional Director of Graduate Studies (or their subject-area nominee) with a view to resolving any problems at the earliest possible opportunity. The academic complaints procedure is set out in the University of Kent [Complaints Procedure for Students](https://www.kent.ac.uk/guides/student-complaints)*.*

# Fees

11.1 The fee for the first examination of a candidate is included in the annual tuition fees.

11.2 A candidate who repeats a written or oral examination in whole or in part or resubmits a thesis must pay the fee prescribed in the schedule approved by the Council and in force for the time being.

11.3 A candidate who has not presented a thesis by the end of the period of registration must, in order to remain eligible to present it for examination, pay the annual fee prescribed in the schedule approved by the Council and in force for the time being.

11.4 The Finance Committee on the recommendation of the Divisional Graduate Studies and PG Student Experience Committee may waive or reduce the payment of these fees in special circumstances.

11.5 Theses submitted by candidates who have a tuition debt to the University will not be sent for examination until the debt has been paid or the Director of Finance is satisfied that adequate arrangements have been made with regard to payment.

# Termination of Registration

12.1 In the event of unsatisfactory progress or attendance during the period of registration the Divisional Graduate Studies and PG Student Experience Committee concerned may terminate a candidate's registration for the degree having first given the candidate the opportunity to appeal the recommendation under Appendix 4 of the Academic Appeals Policy. If the Division decides to terminate the candidate's registration, it may either:

12.1.1 require them to withdraw from the University; or

12.1.2 in the case of a candidate for the degree of Master’s or PhD, offer them registration as a candidate for another degree or postgraduate diploma.

12.2 Any student whose registration is terminated under the provisions of section 12.1 will be issued with a Completion of Procedures letter[[1]](#footnote-2) that will allow the student to take their case to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA)[[2]](#footnote-3).

# Procedure and Delegation of Powers

13.1 The operation of these regulations shall be governed by a Standing Order of the Senate, a copy of which may be inspected in the office of the Secretary to the Board for Research and Enterprise.

13.2 The Senate, the Boards of the Divisions and Committees of those bodies charged with responsibilities under these regulations may delegate such of their powers as they may from time to time determine.

# Powers of Dispensation

On the recommendation of the Dean of the Graduate and Researcher College the Senate may in special circumstances and subject to the Statutes and Ordinances dispense a candidate from any of these regulations.

# Explanatory Notes

These notes are provided for the guidance of candidates and do not form a part of the Regulations.

1. The standard of academic attainment normally expected of an applicant for registration as a candidate for research degrees is that of a first class or good second class honours degree of a British University in an appropriate subject. Holders of other qualifications will be considered individually.
2. Although it is in no way essential, applicants may find it convenient to consult a potential supervisor in the University informally before submitting an application for registration. Enquiries on this matter may be addressed to the Director of Graduate Studies of the appropriate Division.
3. The Senate has agreed that students registered for a higher degree by full-time study are permitted, with the consent of their supervisor, to undertake teaching approved by the appropriate Divisional Graduate Studies and PG Student Experience Committee up to a maximum (including preparation and marking) of sixty hours in any one term.
4. The provision for the remission of not more than one year of study is intended to apply in the case of candidates who have significant experience of advanced work in their intended field of study before the start of the period of registration. A request for a reduction in the period of registration can only be submitted at the start of the PhD based on previous experience.
5. In cases where a candidate is accepted for registration as a full-time student at an institution recognised by the Senate for this purpose under the terms of section 5.1.2, the appropriate Divisional Graduate Studies and PG Student Experience Committee must be satisfied that:
   1. all the conditions set out in sections 2 and 3 of the regulations can be fulfilled;
   2. after appropriate consultation with the institution concerned, satisfactory arrangements can be made for the supervision of the student and, where appropriate, the appointment of a member of staff of the institution to act as the internal supervisor;
   3. no undue restriction will be imposed in the publication of all or any part of the results of the student's research, subject to the normal safeguards concerning patent rights and copyright;
   4. the student will be able to attend the University as frequently as the Board deems appropriate.

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* 1. Candidates should note that conciseness of presentation is an essential part of the "appropriate ability in the organisation and presentation" of their material which they are required to demonstrate in accordance with Regulation 8.2. Candidates should not, therefore, regard the maximum length specified as a target length.
  2. The maximum length permitted for a thesis for each degree and subject will be published in the [Instructions for Candidates for Examination for Research Degrees](https://www.kent.ac.uk/education/documents/policies-procedures-examination-guidance/examination-guide-pgr-students.docx).
  3. Unless approval has been obtained from the appropriate Divisional Graduate Studies and PG Student Experience Committee, the length of a thesis must not be greater than the specified maximum.
  4. Examiners are entitled to refuse to examine a thesis where the maximum length specified has been exceeded without permission.
  5. Candidates are strongly advised to discuss the expected length of their thesis with their supervisor before making detailed arrangements for submission.

1. Candidates are required to give two months’ notice of their intention to submit a thesis for examination. While the University will endeavour to meet the convenience of candidates in the matter of the timing of oral or written examinations, it cannot guarantee to do so. Candidates who plan to leave the country at the end of their period of registration are particularly advised to give the maximum possible notice of their wishes.
2. If a candidate, in cases of illness or grave and exceptional misfortune, is unable to comply with the requirements of Regulation 6.2, they may seek an extension in the time permitted for the submission of a thesis in accordance with section 8.5 of the regulations.
3. This will normally not be more than one year.
4. If a candidate submits an appeal under the terms of section 9 or requests a review of their case under the terms of section 12 of the regulations, a final decision may be delayed until the term following the submission of the request.
5. Permission to submit a thesis in a language other than English will be granted only if the appropriate Divisional Graduate Studies and PG Student Experience Committee is satisfied that, by virtue of the subject, the intellectual quality of the thesis would thereby be enhanced and that a qualified supervisor and appropriate examiners can be appointed. The appropriate Divisional Graduate Studies and PG Student Experience Committee, in considering whether such permission should be granted, will take no account of whether the native language of the candidate is English or a language other than English.
6. Candidates are advised that they may, if they wish, submit for publication material which is to be included in their thesis before submission of the thesis.

# Appendix 1

1 Candidates on New Route PhD courses shall be subject to these *Regulations for Research Courses*, except insofar as they are amended or qualified below.

2 **Course Structure**

2.1 The first two years of the course will comprise taught modules in research and professional skills training and subject-specific modules and a research element in each year.

2.2 Years three and four will be devoted to the research project and production of the thesis although candidates will be expected to participate in careers related modules. Years three and four may also include modules that will complement the student’s specific research topic to be directed at the discretion of the supervisor and doctoral committee.

3 **Progression**

3.1 Students will be assessed annually and will be required to successfully complete each year of study (180 credits) before they may progress to the next year.

3.2 The supervisor will oversee this process and recommend (or otherwise) that the student be permitted to proceed. Candidates must successfully complete years one and two (360 credits) before they can be confirmed as PhD candidates.

3.3 Subject to approval of the relevant course specifications, candidates may exit from the course at different stages and may be eligible for the award of a postgraduate certificate (minimum 60 credits), postgraduate diploma (minimum 120 credits) or a Master’s degree (minimum 180 credits), depending on the satisfactory completion of appropriate modules during the period of their registration that satisfy rubrics set out in course specifications.

4 **Assessment**

4.1 Modules are assessed either by coursework, essays, presentations, examinations, a portfolio or a combination of any such methods. Students will be marked on each module and will be required to satisfactorily pass all modules in order to proceed with the course. In certain circumstances student who fail a module may be permitted either to re-sit the assessment or to re-take the module.

4.2 Students will be assessed on the basis of a thesis that is produced following the rules and procedures laid down in these Regulations and the [Instructions to Candidates for Examination of Research Degrees (including the Postgraduate Diploma for Research and Training)](https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/documents/quality-assurance/regulations/research/pgdipresc.pdf), and is of a length that is in accordance with section 5.2 of those instructions*.*

1. A Completion of Procedures Letter is a letter which a provider sends to a student when they have reached the end of the provider’s internal processes, whenever there is no further avenue for the student internally. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. The [OIA](https://www.oiahe.org.uk/) is an independent body set up to review student complaints about higher education providers in England and Wales. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)