



## **Graduate School**

# **Postgraduate Research Assessment Regulations**

**2025**

| Date of Review | Summary of Revisions   | Author       |
|----------------|--|--------------|
| May 2022       | Substantial revisions following validation of doctoral programmes  | Tom Grimwood |
| May 2023       | No revisions   | Tom Grimwood |
| May 2024       | No revisions   | Tom Grimwood |
| May 2025       | Change to 6.2 Appointment of Examiners – All awards Safeguards have been put in place where two examiners from the same University may, in exceptional cases, be appointed to as part of the examination process | Tom Grimwood |

**These regulations should be read in conjunction with the relevant sections of the University's academic procedures**

Detailed information on research degree awards are set out in the Postgraduate Research Code of Practice, the Research Degrees Handbook and other supporting documentation. Students registered for research degrees must ensure that their work meets the University's expectations relating to research integrity and ethical approval.

## **1. Research Awards**

The University currently offers the following awards (see Appendix One of these Regulations for definitions of these awards):

- Doctor of Philosophy (PhD; via publication, art practice, thesis or alternative format)
- Master of Philosophy (MPhil)
- Doctor of Professional Studies (DProf)
- Doctor in Business Administration (DBA)

In addition, the University offers the following related award:

- Master of Research (MRes)

*Note: The University categorises the Master of Research (MRes) as a postgraduate research degree award. Such programmes are, however, governed by the regulations for postgraduate taught programmes for the purposes of assessment and classification, and as such the MRes is included within the Postgraduate Taught Assessment Regulations.*

## 2. PgR Target and Exit Awards

| Award                                      | Target or Exit award | NQF Level | CAT Points | Professional Body Accreditation / Qualification |
|--|----------------------|-----------|------------|---|
| PgC Research in Professional Practice      | Exit                 | 7         | 80         | N/A   |
| Master of Research (MRes)                  | Target               | 7         | 180        | N/A   |
| PgC Business Research                      | Exit                 | 7         | 60         | N/A   |
| PgD Business Research                      | Exit                 | 7         | 120        | N/A   |
| Masters of Business Research (MBR)         | Exit                 | 7         | 180        | N/A   |
| Doctorate in Business Administration (DBA) | Target               | 8         | 360 (540)  | N/A   |
| Master of Philosophy (MPhil)               | Exit/Target          | 8         | N/A        | N/A   |
| Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)                 | Target               | 8         | N/A        | N/A   |
| Doctor of Professional Practice (DProf)    | Target               | 8         | N/A        | N/A   |

## 3. Registration

Candidates may register as PhD, DBA, DProf, MPhil or MRes. Under standard circumstances, DProf candidates will initially register as MRes students. It is also possible for PhD candidates to register as MRes students (see section 4 below).

Students may be permitted, with the approval of the body with delegated responsibility from Academic Board, to register for shorter period, as proposed by the Graduate School. A shorter registration period, of no less than twelve months for full time students and no less than twenty-four months for part-time students, may be justified by accrediting the applicant's attainment in original

research prior to application and not otherwise accredited for a degree already awarded. In this case, a statement of support from the student's supervisor and host Institute will be required.

An extension beyond the maximum period of registration will not be permitted. A request beyond the maximum would be at the discretion of the body delegated from Academic Board.

| <b>Award</b>                             | <i>Minimum</i> | <i>Maximum</i> |
|--|----------------|----------------|
| <b>PhD</b>                               |                |                |
| Standard registration period (full time) | 36 months      | 48 months      |
| Standard registration period (part-time) | 48 months      | 84 months      |
| <b>DBA</b>                               |                |                |
| Standard registration period (part-time) | 48 months      | 84 months      |
| <b>DProf</b>                             |                |                |
| Standard registration period (part-time) | 36 months      | 84 months      |
| <b>MPhil</b>                             |                |                |
| Standard registration period (full time) | 24 months      | 36 months      |
| Standard registration period (part-time) | 36 months      | 60 months      |

#### **4. Progression**

##### **4.1 Progression through PhD (without MRes)**

Within the first six months (full time) or twelve months (part-time) all research students must fulfil the following process:

- (a) attend an approved induction programme;
- (b) carry out an approved Personal Development Plan (PDP) or equivalent in consultation with their supervisors, and keep a record of agreed follow-up to the PDP;
- (c) take the appropriate research training activities, informed by the PDP as guided by their supervisors;
- (d) complete a research proposal or plan of work that the supervisors approve as appropriate and viable;
- (e) agree a projected completion timetable with their supervisors; and,
- (f) complete any additional requirements to meet the particular needs of the individual awards.

Any research student who does not demonstrate satisfactory progress during the first six months full time should be:

- carefully monitored and supported,
- informed about any reasons for concern,
- set objectives, and
- their progress reviewed before the twelve-month deadline.

If their progress is still not satisfactory, they will be excluded from the programme. Students who have been excluded for failing to make satisfactory progress may appeal against the exclusion under the procedures for Academic Appeals as defined in the document on Academic Appeals.

Continued registration of each research student in years 2, 3 and 4 is conditional upon:

- a) submission of an appraisal (progress) report, involving input from the student, and supervisors;
- b) evidence, confirmed in the appraisal (progress) report, that the student has:
  - i) attended the annual researcher development progress briefing session;
  - ii) reviewed/revised their PDP;
  - iii) completed the agreed research training;
  - iv) been offered adequate supervision (as outlined in the University's Postgraduate Research Code of Practice), accepted it, and attended supervisory sessions;
  - v) agreed a realistic completion timetable with their supervisors;
  - vi) demonstrated sufficient progress with their research/thesis; and
  - vii) completed any additional requirements previously agreed.

Where students fail to meet the criteria for continued registration they will be excluded. Students who have been excluded for failing to make satisfactory progress may appeal against the exclusion under the procedures for Academic Appeals as defined in the document on Academic Appeals.

During the first six months of the second year (or part-time equivalents), any student whose PhD registration has not yet been confirmed will be referred to the PhD Confirmation Panel.

#### *PhD Confirmation Panel*

The Graduate School shall publish clear information for students on the procedures for confirmation (see *Monitoring & Assessing Research Students Good Practice Guide*). The procedures include details of:

- a) membership of the panel;
- b) volume, level and type of work to be submitted as evidence to the panel;
- c) the expected period in which a student should expect to have his/her PhD registration status confirmed of month 12-18 (FT) or month 18-24 (PT) for MPhil transfer or PhD Confirmation; and,
- d) the two times a student may be considered for confirmation of PhD status.

Students not successful in receiving confirmation of PhD status may appeal against the recommendation under the procedures for Academic Appeals as defined in the document on Academic Appeals.

#### ***4.2 Progression from MRes to DProf or PhD***

The MRes consists of taught components and guided independent research. Progress is monitored through achievement of a **pass mark of 50% or above**, regulated through the *Postgraduate Taught Assessment Regulations*.

Following successful completion of 180 credits, students may either:

- a) Transfer to a DProf pathway (requires completion at an average **pass mark of 60% or above**)
- b) Transfer to a PhD pathway (requires completion at an average **pass mark of 60% or above**)
- c) Exit with the MRes award

In the case of a) and b), upon meeting the average mark requirement students are automatically confirmed as DProf/PhD students. Unlike the traditional PhD pathway, no PhD Confirmation Panel is required.

Once confirmed as a PhD or DProf, subsequent progression is monitored under the criteria of 'continued registration' detailed in 4.1 above.

#### ***4.3 Progression through DProf (without MRes)***

It is possible for a candidate to register for a DProf without undertaking the MRes. An equivalent qualification and research proposal will be required, and this will be assessed via the standard PhD process.

#### ***4.4 Progression through DBA***

The DBA consists of two years of taught modules and three years of independent research. Progress is monitored through achievement of a **pass mark of 50% or above**, with standard academic regulations applied for resubmission.

In order to progress beyond Year 2, the module DBAD7004 will be assessed via a 10,000-word submission and viva. There is a requirement of a pass mark of 60% or above to progress to Year 3 of the DBA.

Students who achieve a pass mark of 50-59%, and have successfully completed the previous modules, will be eligible for the MBR exit award. Note: In the event that the Board recommends (c), the candidate shall be eligible to appeal.

- a) A candidate in respect of whom the Board has recommended (a) above, shall submit to a supervisory panel, normally within six calendar months from the date of notification of (a), a proposal for a thesis of appropriate wordage for the intended award. After consideration of the proposal, the panel may recommend one of the following:
  - i) that the candidate's registration for a PhD/DProf be confirmed, or,
  - ii) that the candidate be invited to revise and re-submit the proposal with one further opportunity to apply for a transfer of registration to PhD/DProf; or,
  - iii) that the candidate be invited to complete the requirements for the award of MPhil, or MBR if student on DBA and has successfully completed the level 7 modules.

#### ***4.5 Progression through MPhil***

In exceptional circumstances, candidates may register as MPhil students. Within the first six months (full time) or twelve months (part-time), all MPhil students must fulfil the following, or an equivalent process:

- a) attend an approved induction programme;
- b) carry out an approved Personal Development Plan (PDP) or equivalent in consultation with their supervisors, and keep a record of agreed follow-up to the PDP;
- c) take the appropriate research training activities, informed by the PDP as guided by their supervisors;
- d) complete a research proposal or plan of work which the supervisors approve as appropriate and viable;
- e) agree a projected completion timetable with their supervisors; and,
- f) complete any additional requirements to meet the particular needs of the individual awards.

Any student who does not demonstrate satisfactory progress during the first six months full time (or twelve months part time) should be:

- carefully monitored and supported,
- informed about any reasons for concern,
- set objectives, and
- their progress reviewed before the twelve-month deadline.

If their progress is still not satisfactory, they will be excluded from the programme. Students who have been excluded for failing to make satisfactory progress may appeal against the exclusion under the procedures for Academic Appeals as defined in the document on Academic Appeals.

Where work is deemed to be of sufficient merit a recommendation may be put to the body with delegated authority from Academic Board that the student's registration be transferred from MPhil to a doctoral programme in which case the Confirmation of PhD procedure will apply (see 4.1 above).

## **5. Criteria for Award**

### ***5.1 PhD, DProf and DBA criteria***

The degree shall be awarded on the examination of a thesis (and other submitted materials where relevant for *PhD by Published Work, Art Practice or Alternative Format*) embodying the results of a candidate's research, and on an oral examination, the viva voce. The criteria for award is based on the QAA Characteristics Statement for Doctoral Degrees.

A successful candidate for a doctoral award shall show convincing evidence of the capacity to pursue scholarly research or scholarship in their field of study on a scale, which should be completed during the appropriate timeframe of the programme of study. The results of this research shall then be embodied in a thesis, which makes an original contribution to knowledge, which extends the forefront of a discipline. The completed thesis must contain material of a standard appropriate for scholarly publication. The thesis shall comply with the requirements for the form, submission and deposit of theses.

All doctoral graduates should be able to:

- a) search for, discover, access, retrieve, sift, interpret, analyse, evaluate, manage, conserve and communicate an ever-increasing volume of knowledge from a range of sources
- b) think critically about problems to produce innovative solutions and create new knowledge
- c) plan, manage and deliver projects, selecting and justifying appropriate methodological processes while recognising, evaluating and minimising the risks involved and impact on the environment
- d) exercise professional standards in research and research integrity, and engage in professional practice, including ethical, legal, and health and safety aspects, bringing enthusiasm, perseverance and integrity to bear on their work activities
- e) support, collaborate with and lead colleagues, using a range of teaching, communication and networking skills to influence practice and policy in diverse environments
- f) appreciate the need to engage in research with impact and to be able to communicate it clearly and effectively to diverse audiences (specialist and non-specialist), including the public
- g) build relationships with peers, senior colleagues, students and stakeholders with sensitivity to equality, diversity and cultural issues.

Doctoral degrees are awarded to students who have demonstrated:



- a) 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
- b) a systematic acquisition and understanding of a substantial body of knowledge that is at the forefront of an academic discipline or area of professional practice
- c) 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
- d) a detailed understanding of applicable techniques for research and advanced academic enquiry.

## **5.2 MPhil criteria**

A successful candidate for the degree of MPhil shall display a convincing grasp of the techniques of research appropriate to the field of study on a scale, which can be completed during two years, or at most three years, of full-time study or equivalent. The thesis embodying the results of the research shall demonstrate evidence of originality, a systematic understanding of knowledge, a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights at the forefront of their academic discipline, field of study or area of professional practice, and shall achieve a high standard of competence in argument and presentation. The thesis shall comply with the requirements for the form, submission and deposit of theses.

MPhil degrees are awarded to students who have demonstrated:

- a) 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
- b) a comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship
- c) 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
- d) conceptual understanding that enables the student:
  - i) to evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline
  - ii) to evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses.

Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

- a) 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
- b) demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level

- c) continue to advance their knowledge and understanding, and to develop new skills to a high level.

## 6. Examination

The decision to submit a thesis for examination is taken by the student, although the opinion of the supervisor should be taken into account. Details of the format and submission process can be found in Appendix Two.

### 6.1 Word limits

Candidates who have satisfied the requirements for a doctoral award shall be required to submit a written thesis according to the following guidelines:

| Award                      | Length of Thesis                    |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| PhD                        | Not normally more than 80,000 words |
| PhD by Art Practice*       | Not normally more than 40,000 words |
| PhD by Alternative Format* | Not normally more than 40,000 words |
| PhD by Published Works*    | Not normally more than 50,000 words |
| DProf                      | Not normally more than 70,000 words |
| DBA                        | Not normally more than 60,000 words |
| MPhil                      | Not normally more than 60,000 words |

(\* PhD by Art Practice, Alternative Format and Published Works require submission of further work beyond the written thesis, which are stipulated in Appendix Three and the relevant *Good Practice Guides*)

### 6.2 Appointment of examiners – all awards

Where possible, there shall always be at least one internal examiner and one external examiner, however in areas where a suitable internal examiner cannot be identified e.g subject expertise, that two external examiners are then appointed. If a student is a permanent member of staff at the University of Cumbria on an academic contract, then a second external examiner is required. Candidate's supervisors cannot be appointed as an examiner. Where two external examiners are required, they will normally work in different institutions but there may be circumstances in specific specialist or niche subject areas of research where examiners may be appointed from the same institution. In such cases, internal processes will set out clearly the formal requirement of independence of scrutiny of the thesis, to ensure there is no conflict of interest or discussion of the candidate's work.

### **6.3 Assessment – all awards**

Assessment for research degrees must be conducted according to the procedures set out in the Guide to the Examination of Research Degrees. The body with delegated authority from Academic Board on the nomination of the institute concerned (see section on Appointment of Examiners (All Research Degrees)) shall appoint examiners (including at least one External Examiner). Two External Examiners shall be appointed for theses submitted by candidates who qualify for remission of fees as members of staff. The candidate's supervisor shall not act as an examiner.

Each examiner shall report independently on the thesis before the oral, or any other examination required by the examiners, takes place and submit the report to the University prior to the examination. All examiners shall participate in the oral examination. The student's supervisor may be present at the oral examination as an observer and note taker with the agreement of the student and the examiner(s). After the oral examination, each examiner shall report on the examination and make a recommendation based on both the report on the thesis and on the evidence from the oral, and any other examinations that have taken place.

### **6.4 Examiner recommendations – PhD, DProf and DBA**

The examiners shall make one of the following recommendations:

- a) that the degree of PhD/DProf/DBA be awarded immediately: A pass with no or very minor corrections, i.e. typographical or presentational corrections only. The candidate is to make very minor corrections, if required, within one month prior to submission of the final version of the thesis and there is no requirement for these to be approved by the internal or the external examiner. It should take a candidate less than 1 month to make this level of corrections.
- b) that the degree of PhD/DProf/DBA be awarded subject to *minor* corrections being made within three months. 'Minor corrections' refers to e.g. a number of significant stylistic errors such as needing to clarify or rephrase points or add/edit blocks of text. There will be no requirement to conduct further research or to undertake substantial further work. The internal examiner must approve the corrections. A second oral examination is not required. It should take a candidate fewer than 3 months to make this level of corrections, depending on personal circumstances.
- c) that the degree of PhD/DProf/DBA be awarded subject to *major* corrections being made within six months: There is a requirement for significant further work, but there is not an automatic requirement for a second oral examination. Changes may include but are not limited to: the addition of substantial new material; rewriting and editing sections of the thesis; re-analysis of existing data. Either the internal examiner or the internal and the external examiner, as agreed by the examiners must approve the corrections. The examiners will determine if a second oral examination is required. It should take a candidate between 3 and 6 months to make this level of amendments, depending on personal circumstances.
- d) that the degree of PhD/DProf/DBA should not be awarded but the candidate should be permitted to revise and resubmit the thesis within twelve months for the degree of

PhD/DProf /DBA : The requirements for the degree of PhD/DProf/ DBA have not been met. Changes may include but are not limited to: extensive rewriting and editing sections of, or the whole of, the thesis; carrying out further research and/or experimental work. Both the internal and the external examiner must approve the revisions. The examiners will determine if a second oral examination is required. It should take a candidate between 6 and 12 months to make this level of amendments, depending on personal circumstances.

- e) that the degree of MBR be awarded immediately: The requirements for the degree of DBA have *not* been met but the requirements for the MBR have been met.
- f) that the degree of MPhil be awarded immediately: The requirements for the degree of PhD/DProf have *not* been met but the requirements for the MPhil have been met, with no or very minor corrections, i.e. typographical or presentational corrections only. The candidate is to make very minor corrections, if required, within one month prior to submission of the final version of the thesis and there is no requirement for these to be approved by the internal or the external examiner. It should take a candidate less than 1 month to make this level of corrections, depending on personal circumstances.
- g) that the degree of MPhil be awarded subject to minor corrections being made within three months: The requirements for the degree of PhD/DProf have not been met but the requirements for the MPhil have been met with minor corrections, e.g. a number of significant stylistic errors such as needing to clarify or rephrase points, or add/edit blocks of text. There will be no requirement to conduct further research or to undertake substantial further work. The internal examiner must approve the corrections. A second oral examination is not required. It should take a candidate fewer than 3 months to make this level of corrections, depending on personal circumstances.
- h) that the candidate be permitted to revise and resubmit the thesis within twelve months for the degree of MPhil: The requirements for the degree of PhD/DProf have *not* been met but the candidate is permitted to submit a revised thesis for the lower award. Changes may include but are not limited to: extensive editorial corrections and revisions; rewriting a part, parts, or the whole of the thesis; carrying out further research or experimental work. Both the internal and the external examiner must approve the revisions. The examiners will determine if a second oral examination is required. It should take a candidate between 6 and 12 months to make this level of corrections, depending on personal circumstances

Students given the opportunity to make corrections or amendments shall be given **one opportunity** to make the changes required as specified by the examiners.

### **6.5 Examiner recommendations – MPhil**

The examiners shall make one of the following recommendations:

- a) that the degree of MPhil be awarded forthwith as pass or distinction
- b) that the degree of MPhil be awarded subject to corrections being made within three months (corrections could include typographical errors, occasional stylistic or grammatical flaws, corrections to references etc.) verified by either the internal examiner only, external examiner only or all examiners;

- c) that the degree of MPhil shall be awarded subject to corrections being made within six months (corrections may include minor deficiencies requiring some textual revision);
- d) that the degree of MPhil should not be awarded.

The examiners, for an outstanding and memorable thesis and defence, may award the MPhil with distinction. The work should be well researched and substantially original, bearing in mind that originality has many dimensions. The thesis and defence will be ambitious in scope, show depth of research and sophistication of conceptual understanding, and be of high quality in its argument.

Students given the opportunity to make corrections or amendments shall be given only one opportunity to make the changes required as specified by the examiners.

Students may appeal against the outcome of the examination under the procedures for Academic Appeals as defined in the document on Academic Appeals.

#### ***6.6 Disagreement between examiners on first submission – all awards***

If there is no unanimity among the recommendations from the examiners of the thesis at the first submission the following procedure shall be adopted. In the first instance, the Graduate School shall consult with the examiners to see whether an agreed recommendation can be decided upon.

If agreement is not achieved, the body with delegated authority from Academic Board may appoint an additional external examiner. Any additional examiners shall be informed that the examiners appointed initially have submitted conflicting recommendations but shall not be told the identity of these examiners nor their specific recommendations. Unless the additional examiners recommend that the candidate pass, a further oral examination must be held. The student's supervisor may be present at the oral examination as an observer and note taker.

A recommendation based on the reports from all of the examiners shall be made by the body with delegated authority from Academic Board to the Committee of the Academic Board. If this recommendation is for re-submission of the thesis it shall include the nomination of the panel of examiners for the resubmitted thesis.

#### ***6.7 Resubmission for the degree of PhD, DProf or DBA***

It is at the examiners' discretion as to whether a second oral examination is necessary. It is advised that a second viva should be held if consideration is being given to award of MPhil or no award.

For theses resubmitted for PhD/DProf/DBA, after holding an oral examination the examiners, shall make one of the following recommendations:

- a) that the degree of PhD/DProf/DBA be awarded;
- b) that the degree of PhD/DProf/DBA be awarded subject to minor presentational corrections being made within one month of notification of the decision;

- c) that the PhD/DProf thesis be judged to be already of a standard that the degree of MPhil be awarded immediately;
- d) that the PhD/DProf thesis may be resubmitted for a second time but for the degree of MPhil (within six months of the date of formal notification of the decision);
- e) that the DBA not be awarded and the MBR degree be awarded;
- f) that no award be made.

Students may appeal against the outcome of the examination under the procedures for Academic Appeals as defined in the document on Academic Appeals.

### ***6.8 Resubmission for the degree of MPhil***

After examination of the resubmitted thesis the examiners shall recommend one of the following recommendations:

- (a) that the degree of MPhil be awarded forthwith;
- (b) that the degree of MPhil be awarded subject to corrections being made within one month of notification of the decision (corrections could include typographical errors, occasional stylistic or grammatical flaws, corrections to references etc.) verified by either the internal examiner only, external examiner only or, all examiners;
- (c) that the degree of MPhil should not be awarded.

It is at the examiners' discretion as to whether a second oral examination is necessary. It is advised that a second viva should be held if consideration is being given that no award be made.

Students may appeal against the outcome of the examination under the procedures for Academic Appeals as defined in the document on Academic Appeals.

### ***6.9 Disagreement between examiners upon thesis resubmitted – all awards***

The body with delegated authority from Academic Board shall consider each case where the examiners of a resubmitted thesis are unable (after attempts have been made to reconcile their views) to reach an agreed recommendation. They shall have discretion to determine an appropriate course of action, including, if necessary, the appointment of an additional external examiner.

## **Appendix One: Definitions of postgraduate research awards**

### ***Doctoral level awards***

#### *Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)*

A doctoral-level award assessed through a research thesis and oral defence. There are agreed variants to the body of work to be assessed:

#### *PhD by Alternative Format*

A doctoral programme where the body of work to be assessed is in a format other than the traditional single volume format. The Graduate School is required to publish guidelines on what constitutes an appropriate alternative format (or formats) for the discipline concerned. An example of an alternative format might be a series (minimum three) of related articles suitable for peer reviewed journal publication.

#### *PhD by Published Work*

A doctoral-level award comprising an assessment of a candidate's published works within a related field of study.

#### *PhD by Art Practice*

A doctoral-level award comprising assessment of a candidate's art practice, for example artefacts and/or performance or exhibition.

#### *Professional Doctorate*

A doctoral-level qualification involving a thesis with formal professional engagement through placement or other arrangement.

- *Doctor of Professional Studies (DProf)* - A professional doctorate taken within the multiple professions comprising taught elements (MRes) with a thesis.
- *Doctor of Business Administration (DBA)* - A professional doctorate taken within business administration comprising taught workshops with a thesis.

Specific assessment regulations for these awards are detailed in Appendix Three.

### ***Masters level awards***

#### *Master of Philosophy (MPhil)*

Typically an exit award, and in exceptional circumstances a target award. A Masters-level qualification undertaken entirely by research and assessed on the production of a thesis. The thesis will constitute a less substantial body of work than for the PhD/DProf/DBA in terms of either range, depth, originality of concept, or a mixture thereof.

#### *Masters of Research (MRes)*

Both a target and an exit award. A Masters-level qualification involving taught elements, a research proposal and formal research training. A candidate shall undertake taught courses specified upon registration. Such courses shall normally be completed within twenty-four months of first registration and lead to the award of MRes.

#### *Masters of Business Research (MBR)*

An exit award of the DBA only. A Masters-level qualification involving taught elements, a research proposal and formal research training of the DBA degree. A candidate shall undertake taught courses specified upon registration. Such courses shall normally be completed within twenty-four months of first registration and lead to the award of MBR.



## Appendix Two: The form, submission and deposit of theses

### ***Presentation of the thesis***

1. The thesis should be presented as follows:
  - a) To allow for printing and annotations which might be undertaken by an examiner at the examination stage or if the candidate wishes to have a copy bound for their individual use:
    - i) The page size should be A4 (210 x 297 mm)
    - ii) Margins - top, bottom and right-hand side, should be 25 mm. The left-hand side margin should be 35 mm
    - iii) Line spacing should be 1.5
  - b) Formatting of the electronic document should adhere to the University of Cumbria guidance on [MS Word Styles and Headings](#). Guidance on accessible documents and resources can be found on the Graduate School Blackboard.
  - c) Font size may be smaller for legends, e.g. figure and table titles, and footnotes
  - d) Candidates must avoid typographical, spelling and other minor errors. If any such errors are made, the candidate must correct them to the examiners' satisfaction before a degree is awarded.
  - e) The thesis must be written in English.

### ***Order of the thesis***

2. The first page of the thesis should be the title page and should include:
  - a) the author's full name, and, if desired, qualifications
  - b) the full title of the thesis, and the subtitle, if any
  - c) the total number of volumes if more than one and the number of the particular volume
  - d) the degree for which the thesis is submitted (phrasing to be used:  
*This thesis is submitted for the degree of [xxxx]*)
  - e) the name of the University
  - f) the name of the Institute, school or centre in which the research was conducted
  - g) the month and year of submission
  - h) the total word count of the thesis, including appendices
  - i) Candidates may also include the logo of a sponsoring organisation where this has been agreed with or requested by the sponsor.

The title page should be followed by:

- j) The abstract  
The abstract should not exceed 300 words and show the name of the author and the title of the thesis at the top. It should provide a synopsis of the thesis, stating the nature and scope of the work undertaken and the contribution made to knowledge in the subject treated
- k) The table of contents

The author shall provide as an integral part of the thesis a comprehensive list of contents, with page numbers, including: preliminary pages, titles of chapters, sections and subsections; the list of abbreviations/glossary; any appendices; the bibliography/list of references comprehending all materials cited or referred to in the whole submission

- l) The list of tables (if required)
  - m) The list of figures (if required)
  - n) The acknowledgements page
  - o) The author's declaration page
  - p) The main body of the text (divided into chapters, sections, etc)
  - q) The appendices (if required)
  - r) Glossary and/or abbreviations (if required)
  - s) The bibliography and/or references.
3. A thesis for which approval has been granted for submission in an **Alternative Format** shall include:
- a) an introductory chapter covering the whole of the background and context of the research and demonstrating the overall unity of approach(es) and theme(s);
  - b) a final chapter summarising the achievements and conclusions of the whole of the research;
  - c) a full statement of authorship for each multi-authored publication, accompanied by written certification by the other authors of each publication of the proportion for which credit is due the candidate for carrying out the research and preparing the publication; and,
  - d) where appropriate a consolidated bibliography, in addition to these elements as they appear in individual paper-format chapters.
4. All items submitted for the degree of **PhD by Published Work** shall be submitted for examination in electronic form, with the covering paper. Hyperlinks to books should be provided where possible. A frontispiece, giving the author's name, the name of the degree and year of submission, shall be included.
5. Items submitted for the degree of **PhD by Art Practice** shall be submitted for examination in an appropriate form, with the covering paper. Electronic formats are encouraged. A frontispiece, giving the author's name, the name of the degree and year of submission, shall be included.

### ***Citing references***

6. A bibliographic reference should be given for every work, published or unpublished, in the work. The correct referencing style for the discipline should be applied consistently through the text. Candidates should seek advice from their supervisor on the most appropriate referencing system to use. The Library web page [Referencing Guides](#) includes general information and guidance on referencing styles.

### ***Pagination***

7. Pagination shall extend to the whole of each volume, including any diagrams, appendices, or other matter. Every page in the thesis (except the Title page) must be numbered. Page numbers should be centred at the bottom of each page. For material preceding the main body of the thesis, roman numerals may, if wished, be used. If chapters have numerical subdivisions these shall be recorded in the contents list.

### ***Submission of theses for examination***

8. For examination, the candidate should submit one electronic copy in PDF format of the thesis, and any supplementary files, directly to the Graduate School
9. **Author's declaration:** Candidates must make a declaration that the thesis is their own work and has not been submitted in substantially the same form for the award of a higher degree elsewhere. Any sections of the thesis which have been published, or submitted for a higher degree elsewhere, shall be clearly identified. If the thesis is the result of joint research, a statement indicating the nature of the candidate's contribution to that research, confirmed by the supervisor(s), shall be included.

### ***Deposit of the final version of the thesis***

10. Following examination and viva, and the approval of any necessary amendments or revisions required by the examiner(s), the final version of the thesis should be uploaded as a PDF file to the INSIGHT portal (further guidance is available via the Library's [Thesis Deposit Instructions](#) . A completed **Thesis Access Declaration Form** should be returned or emailed to the Graduate School at the same time as the electronic copy is uploaded to INSIGHT. Students may access a copy of the **Thesis Access Declaration Form** from the [Thesis Deposit Instructions](#) webpage. The **Thesis Access Declaration Form** grants the institutional repository a number of permissions and conditions with respect to online access to the work. If any subsidiary material owned by third party copyright holders has been included, candidates must declare on the form that, where necessary, permission has been sought and obtained to make it available in digital format; and that included content does not break any UK law or infringe any third party's copyright or other Intellectual Property Right.
11. The degree shall not be awarded until: the thesis has been corrected or amended to the satisfaction of the examiners; a PDF file of the thesis has been uploaded to the INSIGHT portal; a completed and signed copy of the **Thesis Access Declaration Form** has been forwarded to the Graduate School.
12. More detailed information and guidance on thesis deposit procedures following examination and notification that the thesis has fulfilled the criteria for the degree to be awarded is available from the Library's webpage [Thesis Deposit Instructions](#).

***Embargoing access to the thesis***

13. The candidate, in consultation with the supervisor and Dean of Institute/Centre, shall instruct the Graduate School if the thesis is **not** to be made available immediately for general public use. The candidate shall request such an embargo via the **Thesis Access Declaration Form** which shall be submitted to Graduate School at the same time as the thesis is deposited in INSIGHT. The request must be approved by the Dean of Institute/Centre who shall sign the form. No thesis shall normally be withheld from public use for more than five years.

### **Appendix Three: Regulations for Art Practice, Alternative Format and Published Work Doctoral Awards.**

#### ***Research degrees undertaken in Institute of the Arts (see PhD by Art Practice Brief Guide)***

1. Subject to careful negotiation with Institute of the Arts, a candidate for the degree of PhD or MPhil may submit, as an alternative to the standard PhD or MPhil written thesis, a project on a single research topic that has two components:
  - j) a written thesis; and,
  - k) a substantial practical work (e.g., a theatrical production, installation, exhibition of work, recital, lecture-recital, or some other performative event, a play, a translation, a design, computer software, etc.).
2. The practical and written components, which interdependently constitute the “thesis” as such, will be evaluated in relation to each other after the written component has been submitted.
3. The practical component must negotiate and articulate a response to the research questions through a high level of skill in the manipulation of the materials of production or performance event.
4. If the practical component involves the creation of a performance event/works or exhibition of work (other practical outputs could also include, a model/prototype, or a series of conceptual works):
  - l) the Board of Examiners is required to attend the performance;
  - m) an audio-visual record of that event/work, or even live performances of that work on tour, will not be acceptable in *lieu* of a live performance at a designated venue unless the medium of video and DVD, the contingencies of touring, or the absence of locality, are factored into the research topic.
5. A permanent record of the practical component should be deposited with the written thesis in the University repository. It is to be expected that whatever the practical outcomes of the PhD inquiry, they will be the subject of exhaustive analysis within the written thesis. In addition, any outcome that is a component of the PhD assessment and viva (e.g. where a unique event or assemblage of works is presented to the examiners) it should be sensitively and comprehensively documented and stored, either physically or electronically, with the written thesis.
6. Just as the examiners can, according to the rules of the University, require the candidate to amend or revise a written thesis in part or in whole as a condition of an award, they can also require the candidate to amend or revise the practical component in part or in whole. This can only be done on the condition that they are not satisfied that any shortcomings in the practical submission can be compensated or accounted for in the written thesis. In such a case, the examiners should, wherever possible, set a cost-effective practical assignment that addresses their concerns rather than demand a revision of the original practical work in its entirety.
7. The written thesis must be of a quality commensurate with the usual standards set for MPhil or PhD but need not be of the same length. The thesis should contextualise, theorise and evaluate the project, and make clear how the practical work itself contributes to, or indeed may constitute the discourse, and any new understandings. The written PhD thesis should not normally exceed 40000 words. This count includes footnotes but excludes the references list and any appendices. Any images should be fully referenced using an appropriate referencing

system and should also exist as a separate Image List in the document following the references list.

8. Entry requirements for candidates who wish to pursue a research degree with a practical component within the university are as follows:
  - a) all candidates are required to hold at least a good second class degree of a recognised institution or comparable institution or qualifications regarded by the University as equivalent;
  - b) candidates should provide clear supporting evidence of experience and competence in a field of practice directly relevant to their proposed topic of study. While this experience may not necessarily have been gained within the professional sphere, candidates will be expected to demonstrate that they have achieved, or have the potential to achieve a "professional standard" of practice.
9. If the candidate is employed by the University as a member of staff, a second external examiner will be appointed.

***Alternative format*** (see *PhD by Alternative Format Brief Guide*)

10. The delegated body within the Graduate School shall maintain and publish guidelines on the alternative format(s) judged appropriate to the discipline, for the information of students, supervisors and examiners.
  - a) a candidate is encouraged to seek advice within their institute that the alternative format is the most appropriate for the research project and that they can take full advantage of the alternative format;
  - b) supervising institutes are encouraged to seek, where practicable, the advice of the External Examiner(s) with respect to the alternative format proposed; and,
  - c) the guidelines shall form the basis of agreement between the student, supervisor and Dean of Institute (or their nominee) on the alternative format to be employed in the submission.
11. The thesis shall include original, researched materials, of which a significant proportion shall be derived from original research undertaken after the date of first registration.

Notes: materials may be:

  - a) already published; and/or
  - b) accepted for publication; and/or
  - c) submitted for publication in externally refereed contexts such as journals, conference proceedings and on-line sites, and may include materials, which are solely and/or partly authored by the candidate.

*It is not a requirement that the materials be published or accepted or submitted for publication, prior to the submission of the thesis for examination.*

12. Examiners shall satisfy themselves that the thesis as a whole meets the criteria for award of the degree, as outlined above.

Notes: examiners:

  - a) may wish to pay particular attention to satisfying themselves that of any multi-authored materials included, a significant proportion is the work principally of the candidate; and
  - b) are reminded of the freedom to specify additional tests as part of the examination.

## ***PhD by Published Work*** (see *PhD by Published Work Brief Guide*)

### ***Award criteria***

13. To be awarded a PhD by Published Work a candidate must show that their work makes a significant contribution to knowledge in a particular field. The publications must also provide evidence of the capacity of the candidate to pursue further research, representing a coherent contribution to research in a given field and demonstrating a depth of scholarship and originality comparable with that required in a PhD thesis. The material submitted shall be sufficiently extensive as to provide convincing evidence that the research constitutes a substantial contribution to knowledge or scholarship.

### ***Admissions criteria***

14. Candidates for the degree of PhD by submission of published work must be:
  - a) members or past members of staff at University of Cumbria, or
  - b) alumni of University of Cumbria
15. In order to be eligible for consideration, alumni must be graduates of at least five years' standing and have already obtained a Masters degree or show evidence of having received research training or equivalent experience.
16. In exceptional circumstances, other candidates may also be considered.

### ***Applications and registration***

17. Applications may be made at any time. A letter of application should be accompanied by:
  - a. a list of the publications to be submitted: these may include refereed articles, authored chapters, authored books, and edited works. They may not include course readers, internally published material or unpublished seminar/conference papers; and
  - b. a supporting paper: this should summarise each publication submitted, outline their interrelationship, give a critical review of the current state of knowledge and research in the applicant's field and indicate how their work has contributed to the field. It should also comment on the standing of any journals and the reception of the publications as indicated by citations and reviews.
18. The candidate's application shall first be considered by the Head of the Graduate School, in consultation with the Dean of the appropriate Institute. If the application is accepted, the applicant will then be registered to submit for the degree of PhD by Published Work, and an internal adviser will be appointed by the Graduate School to assist the candidate. A minimum period of three months and a maximum period of twelve months are allowed before submission.

### ***Examination***

19. Candidates shall submit for examination:
  - a) an electronic copy, in published form, of each item forming part of the work on which the application for the degree by published work is based. Hyperlinks to books should be provided where possible. Permission to include work in manuscript, but which has been accepted for publication, may be granted;

- b) an electronic copy of the supporting paper, modified, if necessary after consultation with the adviser. A frontispiece, giving the author's name, the name of the degree and year of submission, shall be included;
  - c) a statement as to what part if any of the material has been submitted for a degree or other qualification in this or any other University or other institution, explaining the reason for its inclusion and, if joint work is submitted, what part of it is the candidate's contribution.
- 20. The body with delegated authority from Academic Board on behalf of the Committee of the Academic Board on the nomination of the institute concerned shall appoint a panel of examiners consisting of one internal and two External Examiners. The internal examiner will not have been appointed as adviser to the candidate. An oral examination will be held for the degree, but this requirement may be waived with the approval of the body with delegated authority from Academic Board provided that all the examiners are in agreement.
- 21. The examiners shall make one of the following recommendations:
  - a) that the degree of PhD by published work be awarded;
  - b) that the degree be awarded subject to specified revisions of the supporting paper and/or evidence selected; or
  - c) that the degree be not awarded.
- 22. The examiners may not recommend the award of a lower degree.
- 23. A candidate whose work has been found unacceptable for the award of the degree may be permitted to resubmit only after completing re-registration; this would be no earlier than two years after the original submission.
- 24. The body with delegated authority from Academic Board on behalf of the Committee of the Academic Board considers examiners' reports and recommendations, and a decision is given to the candidate within one month of the oral examination.