



UCL Academic Manual

2015-16

Chapter 5 is UCL's regulatory framework for the assessment and examination of Postgraduate Research students at UCL. The chapter defines UCL's *threshold* academic standards. Students should also refer to their programme handbooks and departmental/divisional literature for more detailed information about their specific programme and guidance on the regulations applicable

UCL IOE Assessment Regulations for Students

UCL IOE MPhil/ PhD Regulations 2014-15 (Continuing Students)

UCL IOE Doctor in Education Regulations (EdD) 2015-16 (New Students)

UCL IOE Doctor in Education Regulations (EdD) 2014-15 (Continuing Students)

UCL IOE Doctor in Educational Psychology (DEdPsy) Regulations 2015-16 (New Students)

UCL IOE Doctor in Educational Psychology (DEdPsy) Regulations 2014-15 (Continuing Students)

UCL IOE Policy and Procedures for Requests for Additional Time

1 Research Degrees Assessment: PhD/EngD/MPhil/MD(Res)

1.1 Requirements of a Thesis

1.1.1 Theses: General

1. The greater proportion of the work submitted in a thesis must have been undertaken after the registration of the student for the MPhil/PhD/EngD or MD(Res) degree.

1.1.2 Requirements of a PhD/EngD Thesis

1. A thesis for the awards of EngD or PhD degree shall be examined in accordance with the criteria prescribed by UCL and the thesis shall demonstrate that it:
 - a) is genuinely the work of the candidate;
 - b) shows a student's capacity to pursue original research in the field of study based on a good understanding of the research techniques and concepts appropriate to the discipline;
 - c) embodies the results of a research programme which may reasonably be expected of a student after three years of full-time study or the part-time equivalent, formulated and carried out by the student in consultation with the supervisors;
 - d) consists of a student's own account of their investigations, the greater proportion of which shall have been undertaken during the period of registration under supervision for the degree;
 - e) represents a distinct and significant contribution to the subject, whether through the discovery of new knowledge, the connection of previously unrelated facts, the development of new theory, or the revision of older views;
 - f) shows the exercise of critical judgement with regard to both a student's own work and that of other scholars in the field;
 - g) is an integrated whole and presents a coherent argument;
 - h) gives a critical assessment of the relevant literature, describes the method of research and its findings, includes discussion on those findings and indicates in what respects they appear to the student to advance the study of the subject; and, in so doing, demonstrates a deep and synoptic understanding of the field of study, (a student being able to place the thesis in a wider context), objectivity and the capacity for judgement in complex situations and autonomous work in that field.
 - i) is satisfactory in its literary and/or technical presentation and structure with a full bibliography and references;
 - j) takes due account of previously published work on the subject;
 - k) makes clear the sources from which information has been derived, the extent to which the work of others has been used, and the areas which are claimed as original;
 - l) contains an element which might, after any necessary revision, merit publication in a medium appropriate to the discipline (for example as a monograph or as a number of articles in learned journals);
 - m) research project.

2. A series of papers, whether published or otherwise, is not acceptable for submission as a thesis. Research work already published, or submitted for publication, at the time of submission of a thesis, either by a student alone or jointly with others, may be included in the thesis. The published papers themselves may not be included in the body of a thesis but may be adapted to form an integral part of a thesis and thereby make a relevant contribution to the main theme of a thesis. Publications derived from the work in a thesis may be bound as supplementary material at the back of a thesis.

1.1.3 Requirements of an MPhil Thesis

1. A thesis for the award of an MPhil degree shall be examined in accordance with the criteria prescribed by UCL and the thesis shall demonstrate that it:
 - a) is genuinely the work of the candidate;
 - b) indicates in what respects they appear to them to advance the study of the subject;
 - c) represents a contribution to the subject, either through a record of the knowledge;
 - d) takes due account of previously published work on the subject;
 - e) makes clear the sources from which information has been derived, the extent to which the work of others has been used, and the areas which are claimed as original;
 - f) is an integrated whole and presents a coherent argument;
 - g) is satisfactory as regards literary presentation;
 - h) has a full bibliography and reference.
2. A series of papers, whether published or otherwise, is not acceptable for submission as a thesis. Research work already published, or submitted for publication, at the time of submission of a thesis, either by a student alone or jointly with others, may be included in the thesis. The published papers themselves may not be included in the body of a thesis but may be adapted to form an integral part of a thesis and thereby make a relevant contribution to the main theme of a thesis. Publications derived from the work in a thesis may be bound as supplementary material at the back of a thesis.

1.1.4 Requirements of an MD(Res) Thesis

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2. The thesis shall:
 - a) demonstrate it is genuinely the work of the candidate;
 - b) consist of the candidate's own account of his/her investigations, the greater proportion of which shall have been undertaken during the period of registration under supervision for the degree;
 - c) form a distinct contribution to the knowledge of the subject and afford evidence of originality by the discovery of new facts and/or by the exercise of independent critical power;
 - d) be an integrated whole and present a coherent argument;
 - e) give a critical assessment of the relevant literature, describe the method of research and its findings, include discussion on those findings and indicate in what respects they appear to the candidate to advance the study of the subject; and, in so doing, demonstrate a deep and synoptic understanding of the field of study (the candidate being able to place the thesis in a wider context), objectivity and the capacity for judgment in complex situations and autonomous work in that field;
 - f) include a full bibliography and references;
 - g) demonstrate research skills relevant to the thesis being presented;
 - h) be of a standard to merit publication in whole or in part or in a revised form (for example, as a monograph or as a number of articles in learned journals).
3. A series of papers, whether published or otherwise, is not acceptable for submission as a thesis. Research work

Further guidance

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a text or texts, normally in the field of literature, the above word limits may not apply.

4. Students registered for Professional Doctorate awards should refer to the specific programme regulations for their thesis word lengths and other elements of their programmes that are examined as part of the doctorate.

1.1.7 Format of a Thesis

1. The thesis should be submitted in the format determined by UCL at the time of submission.

Further guidance

1. Further information and guidance is available on the [Thesis Formatting webpages](#) and on the [Research Degree Examination Entry webpages](#). Some

graduate concerned, may have certain parts excised from them. Applications to restrict access to a thesis should be made via the Library.

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the [Research Degree Examination Entry webpages](#) and on the [Thesis Formatting webpages](#).

3. Further information on the thesis submission for Practice-Led programmes is available from the [Thesis Formatting webpages](#).

1.2.3 Dispatch of Theses to Examiners

1. A thesis will be sent, via the Student Centre, to both examiners at least four weeks in advance of an oral examination.
2. Direct submission of theses to examiners by students, supervisors or departments/ divisions is not permitted.

Further guidance

1. All theses will be submitted to UCL via the [Student Centre](#). Theses will be sent to both examiners by the Student Centre. Supervisors and students should note that theses will only be sent to examiners who have been formally appointed by UCL and only after the Examination Entry Form has been submitted in accordance with the Examination Entry Guidelines on the [Research Degree Examination Entry webpages](#).
2. Supervisors and students for examination should ensure that all examination entry requirements have been met in good time before a planned oral examination takes place.
3. Oral Examinations cannot proceed if the requirements for the examination entry, including the formal appointment of examiners, have not taken place in accordance with UCL regulations. The outcome of any examination conducted in such an instance would be void.

1.3 Appointment of Examiners

1.3.1 The Appointment of Examiners for Research Degrees

1. Two examiners will be appointed for each candidate in accordance with the UCL Procedures for the Appointment of Examiners (see [Research Degrees Guidance webpages](#) for more

2. An examiner shall not have acted as either Principal or Subsidiary Supervisor of the thesis to be examined, nor have been involved in any way with the candidate or project to be examined, including the MPhil to PhD upgrade process.
3. In the case of a student who is a member of the academic staff of UCL, no examiner may be appointed who is internal to UCL. In this case, all examiners must be external to UCL.
4. It is desirable that no examiner, either internal or external, should be appointed on more than three consecutive occasions for the same supervisor. Generally, supervisors and departments are asked to avoid repeatedly nominating the student, within a short time frame.
 - a) External Examiners:

Normally, an individual external examiner should not be appointed more than once during a given year by members of the same UCL department¹.
 - b) Internal Examiners:

Normally, an individual internal examiner should not be appointed more than five times during a given three year period by members of the same UCL department.
5. N.B. The appointment criteria for examiners for the University of London MPhil/PhD are different to those for the UCL degree. Candidates for the University of London degree will normally have two examiners appointed, one of whom will be external to the University of London; the other will be internal to the University of London and preferably from a different College to that of the candidate and supervisor. Further guidelines for the appointment of examiners and nomination forms are available on [Research Degrees Guidance webpages](#).

1.3.2 The Appointment of Additional Examiners

1. Exceptionally a third examiner, who must be external to UCL, may be appointed with the approval of UCL.
 1. Exceptionally a third examiner may be appointed with the approval of the UCL Research Degrees Committee. A third examiner will be appointed in cases where, between them, the two examiners do not feel they have a sufficient level of expertise to examine the thesis.
 2. A third examiner may also be appointed where there is a dispute between two examiners about the result of an examination which they cannot resolve between themselves.

¹ Department
Division
Population Health Studies.

Department
Faculty of Medical Sciences, Brain Sciences and
Faculty of Life Sciences

3. In accordance with UCL regulations, the third examiner must be external to UCL.
4. In the case of the University of London MPhil/PhD, the third examiner must be external to the University of London.
5. The third examiner will, however, be nominated and appointed through usual UCL procedures and using the Examiner Nomination Form on the [Research Degrees Guidance webpages](#).

1.4 Conduct of the Research Degree Examination

1. The examiners shall prepare independent preliminary reports on the thesis, conduct an oral examination and submit a final, joint report to UCL.
2. otherwise on his/her entry form, to attend the oral examination as an observer. The oral examination will otherwise be conducted in private.
3. The oral examination should be held at UCL.

Further guidance

1. The examiners shall prepare independent preliminary reports on the thesis to assist in conducting the oral examination. Copies of the preliminary reports for MPhil, PhD and EngD students should be submitted to the UCL [Student Centre](#) together with the final, joint report. The preliminary and joint reports will be released to students.
2. Examiner report forms and procedural information are available from the [Research Degrees Guidance webpages](#).
3. Each final, joint report by the examiners shall indicate whether the thesis meets the requirements specified in Section 1.1 as appropriate and shall include a statement on the examiners' judgement of the student's performance.

Chair of the Research Degrees Committee via Assessment and Student Records.

7. For further guidance on the conduct of an oral examination, students and staff should also refer to the UCL Doctoral School Code of Practice for Graduate Research Degrees.

1.5 Outcomes of the Oral Examination

1.5.1 Outcomes of the Oral Examination: PhD/EngD Degrees

1. Students for a PhD/EngD degree must submit a thesis and be examined orally. The following options are open to examiners in determining the result of an examination for the PhD/EngD degrees:
 - a) If the thesis fulfils the criteria (set out in 1.1.2) and the student satisfies the examiners in all other parts of the examination, the examiners will report that the student has satisfied them in the examination and the award of the PhD degree should be made or, in the case of the EngD, the student has passed the research component of the award.
 - b) If the thesis otherwise satisfies the criteria (set out in 1.1.2) but requires minor amendments, and if the student

- f) The examiners may determine that the student has not satisfied them in the examination and no award will be made.
 - g) The examiners shall not, save in very exceptional circumstances, make any of the above decisions without submitting the student to an oral examination on at least one occasion.
2. In the case of a thesis for the PhD that is referred for 18 months, examiners may determine that the re-examined thesis, if it still does not meet the necessary criteria for the PhD degree, may be re-submitted for the MPhil degree.

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Further guidance

1. Staff and students should also refer to the Code of Practice for Graduate Research Degrees for further guidance on the examination of research degree students.

1.6 Research Misconduct

1.6.1 Research Misconduct: Initiation of Proceedings

1. All cases of suspected research misconduct, including plagiarism, shall be investigated in accordance with the UCL Procedures for Investigating and Resolving Allegations of Misconduct in Academic Research.

Further guidance

- i) Cases of suspected research misconduct shall be investigated by following the procedures outlined in Sections 1.6.2 and 1.6.3 below. Procedures for Investigating and Resolving Allegations of Misconduct in Academic Research are available from the Research Governance website.

1.6.2 Extent of Misconduct: Action Open to a Department/Division

1. The following instances of research misconduct may be dealt with by the department/division concerned:
 - i) A first instance of plagiarism in the early stages of the programme of study.
 - ii) A first instance of misrepresentation of results in the early stages of the programme of study.

Further guidance

1. The following instances of research misconduct may be dealt with by the department concerned:
 - a) A first instance of plagiarism in the early stages of the programme of study (prior to upgrading to MPhil/PhD on the PhD programme, or at the end of the first year of study on the MPhil programme), including suspected collusion but not including suspected use of a fellow student's or other
 - b) A first instance of plagiarism (including suspected collusion but not including suspected use of a fellow student without that student's knowledge and consent) in the later stages of the programme of study (after upgrade to MPhil/PhD on the PhD programme) in which no more than 30% (approximately) of the work in question can be demonstrated

- e) Any instance of piracy or fraud, as defined in the UCL Procedures for Investigating and Resolving Allegations of Misconduct in Academic Research.
 - f) Any instance of any kind of research misconduct which appears in published work, whether or not the work appears before or after the examination for MPhil/PhD.
 - g) Submission of a thesis after the student has been warned not to submit it because of an allegation of research misconduct.
2. Procedures for Investigating and Resolving Allegations of Misconduct in Academic Research are available from the Research Governance website.

1.6.4 Research Misconduct Discovered after Successful Completion of an Examination

- 1. UCL has the right to rescind an award if research misconduct is discovered after the examination of a thesis.

1.7 Student Complaints Procedure 2.2.

- 1. There is no right of appeal against an academic decision. There is a Student Complaints Procedure in place. Students can lodge a case under this procedure in the circumstances specified.
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2 Professional Doctorate Assessment

2.1 Taught Element

2.1.1 Successful Completion of a Professional Doctorate Programme

1. In order to complete successfully a professional doctorate programme at UCL, students must complete all specified taught components of their degree programme, as follows:
 - a) For the coursework and/or practicum components, a threshold for completion will be set by the programme and be clearly publicised to students.
 - b) In the event that any threshold set is not reached, the result for the

2.1.2 Unseen Examinations

1. An unseen examination component is deemed complete if a student has submitted an answer that can be academically assessed. The mark awarded, however, might be zero. If a student makes little or no attempt at the
2. A taught component is complete when a student has been declared complete on

2. A summative coursework element that constitutes more than 40% of a module must be submitted and assessed on an anonymous basis where possible.
3. Once marks have been finalised for an element of summative coursework, for example by agreement between first and second markers, anonymity may be lifted to facilitate feedback to students.
4. Anonymity may not be practical when assessing laboratory work, oral examinations, exhibitions, marking clinical work with patients, portfolios of work, dissertations/ research theses and group work etc.
5. Anonymity is not required for an element of summative assessment that constitutes 40% or less of a module.
6. Consideration by Boards of Examiners of all summative assessed marks, progression decisions and awards must be conducted anonymously.

Further guidance

1. In this context a coursework element is either part of or the entire coursework component for a taught module. For example, one essay weighed at 40% of a taught module is one element and therefore makes up the entire 40% coursework component for that module, the remainder being other component(s) weighted at 60%. However, as another example, 10 individual weekly problem sheets weighted at 40% of a taught module are 10 elements of the 40% coursework component of that module the remainder being other component(s) weighted at 60%.
2. Reports listing names and candidate numbers will be available via Portico to designated departmental/divisional staff in the first term.
3. The student SRN may be used as an anonymous identifier when departments/divisions wish to reserve use of candidate numbers for unseen written examinations.
4. Since students benefit from feedback on their coursework, anonymity is not required when the coursework element constitutes 40% or less of the assessment for a taught module.
5. Anonymity is required when a703.42 Tm[Ae 524.52 53.2(oTm[)]TJETQ42.6 216.1

decision.

would be counted in any average and it would be treated as an attempt: the overall result for the module would be recorded by Assessment and Student Records as absent or incomplete, as appropriate).

2.2.6 No Attempt or Minimal Attempt at Assessment

1. Students who do not attempt a paper or other form of assessment, or who make an attempt that is academically un-assessable, will be awarded a mark of zero.

2.2.7 Re-Entry to Assessment

1. Students who obtain a mark below the condoned mark range will be required to re-enter that examination at the next normal occasion.
2. The mark achieved will apply even if this is lower than the original mark.

2.2.8 Number of Permitted Attempts

1. Students who, at their first entry, do not successfully complete an examination may re-

excised from them. Applications to restrict access to a thesis should be made via the Student Centre.

2.4 Examination Entry

2.4.1 Thesis Submission Form

1. Prior to the time of submission of a thesis for examination, a thesis submission form must be submitted to the home department.
 - i) Information about the submission of the form, and when submission is required, should be available from the home department/division.
 - ii) The form, which requires a short description of the content of the thesis in about 300 words, must be submitted to the Departmental/Divisional Postgraduate Committee to assist in the nomination of suitable examiners.

2.4.2 Thesis Submission

1. Students, prior to ETQ(n)-3(ts,)6(p)-5(ri)5(46x3ti*nBT/F1 12 Tf1 0 0 1 558.12 532.

accordance with UCL regulations. The outcome of any examination conducted

2. The task of the annual review and confirmation of external examiners continuing appointment is conducted via Portico (the Student Record Management Database).
- 3.

4. External examiners shall be asked at the time of appointment or continuation in appointment to declare any interest in or connection with any student on the programme for which they are acting as examiner whether that interest or connection is personal or professional. If such an interest or connection exists, the examiner in question should not normally be appointed.
5. After serving for a period of four consecutive years (or five years if an extension to service was approved), an examiner is not eligible for re-appointment for a period of two further years. The period of service is defined as the period of service as an external examiner at UCL and not as the period of service as external examiner to a particular Board of Examiners.
6. After serving for a period of not more than four normally consecutive years, or, in exceptional circumstances, for such limited extension of this period as UCL Research Degrees Committee may determine, the examiner shall not be eligible for re-appointment to any external examiner appointment for a professional doctorate at UCL (including an external examiner appointment at UCL in a related subject area) until after a lapse of two further years. The period of service shall be defined as the period of service as an external examiner at UCL, not as the period of service as external examiner to a particular Board of Examiners.

2.5.5 Additional Criteria for the Appointment of Examiners for the Thesis Component

1. The thesis submitted as part of the professional doctorate will be examined by at least two examiners. One of these will be an external examiner appointed in accordance with the procedure identified at Sections 2.5.1 to 2.5.4, and the other shall be a member of the academic staff of UCL.

Further guidance

1. For each student, two faculty-approved examiners shall be appointed by the appropriate Postgraduate Departmental/Divisional Committee.
2. It is expected that external examiners for each thesis will normally be selected for their specialist knowledge of the field rather than knowledge of the precise area of research study.
3. Nominated examiners should not have acted as either a Principal or Subsidiary Supervisor of the thesis to be examined, nor have been involved in any collaborative academic or professional work with the student on the project to be examined. In addition, examiners should not be nominated if there is a close personal relationship between themselves and either the student or supervisors, or if there is an apparent conflict of interest of any kind.
4. Reciprocal examination arrangements are not permitted: staff from equivalent programmes should not be appointed as external examiners if a member of staff in the home department/division is currently serving as an external examiner in that programme. However exceptions may on occasion be unavoidable, for

example, in the case of subjects taught only in a very small number of institutions or subjects with an unusually high number of specialisms.

5. Examiners will not normally examine more than five theses in a single cohort.

2.6 Conduct of the Oral Examination

2.6.1 Format of the Oral Examination

1. The oral examination will usually consider the student portfolio, including the outcomes of practicum assignments and assessments, related coursework and the research dissertation.
2. All oral examinations shall be conducted in the English Language.
3. If an oral examination is prescribed for the assessment of an element, all students enrolled on the element are expected to be examined accordingly.

award, and is not therefore eligible for the award of a professional doctorate.

- f) The examiners shall not, save in very exceptional circumstances, make any of the above decisions without submitting the student to an oral examination on at least one occasion.
- g) The award of a professional doctorate is conditional upon students passing all specified elements of their programme of study.

Further guidance

1. Students should refer to individual programme regulations for guidance on deadlines for resubmission of the thesis, which may be shorter than the maximum periods identified here.
2. Some professional doctorate programmes have an exit award other than a professional doctorate. Where this is the case, and examiners consider that a student has not met the requirements of a professional doctorate, they may recommend that the Board of Examiners confers this alternative exit award.

2.7 Research Misconduct

1. All cases of suspected research misconduct, including plagiarism, shall be investigated in accordance with the UCL Procedures for Investigating and Resolving Allegations of Misconduct in Academic Research.
2. Cases of suspected research misconduct shall be investigated by following the procedures outlined in 6.33()8(th)S(e)]Tct ns o f. s o.1()8(a)-3(n)-3()-3(e)-2(.)8()17

are not the main findings or among the main findings on which the argument of the thesis rests;

- e) A first instance of misrepresentation of results in the early stages of the programme of study (in the first year of study);
- f) A first instance of misrepresentation of results in the later stages of the programme of study which is judged to have been owing to error, misunderstanding or other extenuating circumstances.

2.7.2 Extent of Misconduct: Action Open to UCL

1. The following instances of research misconduct shall be referred to the Registrar:
 - a) Any instance of plagiarism, except those covered in 2.7.1;
 - b) Any repeated instance of plagiarism;
 - c) Any instance of misrepresentation;
 - d) Any instance of piracy or fraud;
 - e) Any instance of any kind of research misconduct which appears in published work;
 - f) Submission of a thesis for examination by a student when an allegation of research misconduct has been made.

Further Guidance

1. The following instances of research misconduct must be referred for action by UCL:
 - a) Any instance of plagiarism (including suspected collusion) other than a first instance falling under 2.7.1 above in which approximately 30% of the work

- g) Submission of a thesis after the student has been warned not to submit it because of an allegation of research misconduct;
- h) Where collusion between two or more students is established, all students concerned will be penalised.

2.7.3 Research Misconduct Discovered after Successful Completion of Thesis Examination

1. UCL has the right to rescind an award if research misconduct is discovered after the examination of a thesis.

2.7.4 Appeal against the Action Taken in the Event of Research Misconduct

1. Students cannot contest a decision on academic grounds. Students can only contest a decision on specific grounds as set out in Chapter 1, Section 12: Student Complaints Procedure.

2.8 Student Complaints Procedure

1. Students cannot contest the decision of a Board of Examiners on academic grounds. Students can only contest the decision of a Board of Examiners on specific grounds as set out in Chapter 1, Sec1 106.7 578.5 Tm Tm Tm Tf1 0 0 1