UNIVERSITY OF PORTSMOUTH

Academic Regulation

REGULATIONS FOR RESEARCH DEGREES

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Summary

What is this document about?

The research regulations are detailed academic rules that explain what a student must do to obtain their research degree and the support that they are entitled to.

Who is this for?

This document will be of most interest to new and existing research students, supervisors and research degree examiners. It will be of interest to the UK Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), and it may also be of interest to the wider public.

How does the University check this is followed?

The University of Portsmouth has a committee structure in place to check that the policies in this document are followed. The relevant committees for research regulations are the University Research Degrees Committee, Graduate School Management Board and the Faculty Research Degrees Committees.

Who can you contact if you have any queries about this document?

If you have questions about this document, please contact the Academic Registry at academicregistry@port.ac.uk

Accessibility Statement

The Regulations for Research Degrees are designed to be accessible to all students. If you have any special needs that mean you are unable to use the Regulation in the way set out in this document, please contact us at academicregistry@port.ac.uk to discuss how the process can be adjusted to fit your needs and to receive this Regulation in alternative formats.

1. Awards

The regulations outlined in this document apply to the awards of research degrees listed below. The Awards of the University of Portsmouth policy provides specific information on modes of study, part-time and full-time study.

1.1. Master of Philosophy (MPhil)

The degree of Master of Philosophy is awarded to a research degree student who has provided evidence of knowledge and understanding of the background literature and research methods appropriate to the discipline, independent critical judgement and a contribution to the appropriate field of knowledge. The award requires a research degree student to satisfactorily complete research

training; to investigate and evaluate or critically study an appropriate topic; if applicable, to meet any requirements of any taught component of the course; and to present a satisfactory thesis.

1.2. Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

The degree of Doctor of Philosophy is awarded to a research degree student who has provided evidence of knowledge and understanding of the background literature and research methods appropriate to the discipline, independent critical judgement, a significant contribution to the appropriate field of knowledge and originality. The award requires a research degree student to satisfactorily complete research training; to investigate and evaluate or critically study an appropriate topic resulting in a significant contribution to knowledge; if applicable, to meet any requirements of any taught component of the course; and to present a satisfactory thesis.

1.2.1 Pathway 1: PhD

The pathway is based on an independent research project conducted under supervision, which makes an original contribution to knowledge.

1.2.2 Pathway 2: PhD by Publication

On this pathway, a candidate prepares a thesis on the basis of a portfolio of interconnected published research outputs contextualised by a coherent narrative, demonstrating an original contribution to knowledge. The outputs must be published/accepted for publication, exhibited or performed prior to registration on the programme. Such outputs may include papers, chapters, monographs, books, scholarly editions of a text, technical reports, creative work in relevant areas, or other artefacts.

1.3. Doctor of Medicine (MD)

The degree of Doctor of Medicine is awarded to a research degree student who has provided evidence of knowledge and understanding of the background literature and research methods appropriate to the discipline, independent critical judgement, a significant contribution to the appropriate field of knowledge and originality. The award requires a research degree student to satisfactorily complete research training; to investigate and evaluate or critically study a medically relevant topic resulting in a significant contribution to knowledge; if applicable, to meet any requirements of any taught component of the course; and to present a satisfactory thesis.

1.4. Professional Doctorate (PD)

For the award of a Professional Doctorate a candidate must successfully complete both the taught components of an approved course of study and, through a thesis

relating to an approved topic of professional research and development, provide evidence of knowledge and understanding of the background literature and research methods in a relevant topic, independent critical judgement and an original contribution to the advancement of professional knowledge and practice in the appropriate professional activity.

The Regulations for Research Degrees apply exclusively to the research phase of Professional Doctorate programmes. Annex 7 of the Curriculum Framework Specification sets out the University-wide curricula and management requirements for the taught phase of Professional Doctorate (PD) courses.

2. General

2.1. Fees

2.1.1. During their period of registration, students, or their sponsors, must pay theprescribed registration, tuition and other fees on or before commencing the course and annually during the course, including for any extension periods, periods of referral or periods of re-examination. Failure to pay fees shall result in the withdrawal of University services and, if not resolved, students shall be excluded from the University.

2.2. Language of Assessment

2.2.1. All assessments, including the thesis, should be written and defended in English. For PhD by Publication see the PhD by Publication Guidance document.

2.3. Notification to Students

2.3.1. Any course or regulatory information shall be deemed to have been received by a student if:

a) it is delivered by hand to a student in person or to the latest address notified to the University as their local or home address, and the person delivering it has certified a copy of the document to that effect; or

b) it is located on the University website, and the students are informed of the URL address; or

c) it is sent to the student's University e-mail address (i.e. @myport.ac.uk email address).

3. Admission

3.1. English Language Qualification

3.1.1. For applicants whose first language is not English, it is necessary to demonstrate the requisite level of English Language competency in line with the requirements of the specific research degree subject area. This can be provided in accordance with the University's English Language Requirements.

3.2. Admission criteria

3.2.1. To register for a Research Degree, an applicant must hold at least one of the following:

a) an appropriate first class or upper second-class honours degree of any United Kingdom university or a recognised equivalent non-UK degree of the same standard; OR

b) an appropriate Master's degree of any United Kingdom university or a recognised equivalent non-UK degree of the same standard; OR

c) qualifications and/or appropriate professional training and experience which, in the opinion of the relevant Faculty Research Degrees Committee, are acceptable to the University as equivalent to a or b above;

d) where the applicant seeks to register for the award of MD, the first degree must be in Medicine, Surgery, Dental Surgery or equivalent; and the applicant must be experienced in, researching in, or practicing within, clinical professions;

e) an applicant wishing to be considered for the award of PhD by Publication must hold a degree meeting the requirements as outlined in a or b, of at least five years' standing.

3.3. Admissions Procedure

3.3.1. The admissions procedure for postgraduate research applicants requires the submission of an online postgraduate application form.

3.3.2. Postgraduate application forms are processed by the relevant Admissions section, which will:

a) respond to the application by sending whatever information is necessary to proceed with the admissions process, together with any other relevant information;

b) ensure that all information required by the Director of Postgraduate Research (DDPGR) and First Supervisor to make a departmental decision regarding admission is received. This required information comprises:

(i) a completed postgraduate application form;

(ii) where appropriate an outline of a research proposal (or project code) or, in the case of an application for a PhD by Publication, a title for the proposed PhD and a statement of not more than one thousand words setting out the candidate's view of the nature and significance of the work submitted;

(iii) photocopies of degree certificates and transcripts;

(iv) if applicable, English Language Certification;

(v) a personal statement;

(vi) details of two referees or two references (including at least one academic reference);

(vii) a copy of an up-to-date curriculum vitae.

c) In the case of an application for a PhD by publication, it further includes:

(viii) a listing of the work published/accepted for publication, exhibited or performed on which the application is based;

(ix) a statement of the extent of the candidate's contribution to any of the submitted work which involves joint authorship or other types of collaboration; and

(x) a statement that no parts of the submission have been submitted for another academic award.

3.3.3. An admissions panel of at least two academic staff, normally the potential First Supervisor and either the Director of Postgraduate Research (DDPGR)or Chair of Faculty Research Degrees Committee, will evaluate the postgraduate application form, the qualifications of the applicant (including English language qualification where appropriate), the research training requirements and the supervisory requirement and decide whether the application is acceptable and the applicant should be interviewed.

3.3.4. Where the research proposal is not predefined, additionally, evaluation of the research proposal should include the following:

a) availability of facilities and resources to undertake the project;

b) research training requirements;

c) ethical considerations;

d) identifying whether a collaborative arrangement, such as involving partner organisations in the delivery of the PGR student experience or delivery through other flexible means, is required.

3.3.5. An interview must always take place and involve the applicant, potential First Supervisor and at least one other person. The interview should be held in person or by video conference. At least two members of the interview panel must have been formally trained in the selection and admission of research students.

3.3.6. The interview should:

a) confirm the applicant has the correct qualifications, including an English language qualification where appropriate;

b) discuss the research proposal, or, in the case of an application for a PhD by Publication, the proposed statement setting out the candidate's view of the nature and significance of the work submitted;

c) discuss the research ethics requirement for the project;

d) where appropriate, discuss any special considerations, including speciality requirements relating to the research and additional support needs;

e) check that the applicant is aware of the demands of a research degree, particularly those regarding completion dates;

f) outline the work commitment, particularly the working hours and leave entitlement where appropriate;

g) ensure the applicant is made aware that leave and interruptions must be approved;

h) discuss and agree on the requirement for research training and ensure the applicant is aware of the requirement to undertake research training;

i) confirm the financing of the research, including, if applicable, bench costs and additional research requirements;

j) outline the postgraduate research student entitlements and what they are, including resources, library rights, support for fieldwork and conference attendance;

k) make clear the postgraduate research student's right to publish prior to submission of the thesis.

3.3.7. The interview will result in either rejection of the proposal or acceptance of a proposal on the basis of reasoned academic judgement. Acceptance may be stated subject to conditions.

3.4. Approval Process

3.4.1. Should the interview process result in acceptance of the proposal, formal approval is required by the Head of Department and the Faculty Research Degrees Committee. The potential First Supervisor will submit a formal recommendation to admit the applicant as a postgraduate research student to the Chair of the relevant Faculty Research Degrees Committee. The recommendation will include the following supporting evidence:

a) postgraduate application form;

b) final research proposal;

c) references;

d) agreed training programme;

e) a copy of the approval document if the proposal will involve a collaborative arrangement, such as involving other partner organisations in the delivery of the PGR student experience as outlined in 3.7.1;

f) agreement of other resources required;

g) interview checklist.

3.4.2. If an application is acceptable, the applicant will be informed about what is being offered and any conditions required, as well as the responsibilities of a postgraduate research student at the University.

3.4.3. All research projects must undergo ethical review. All applicants will be directed to the Ethics Policy of the University and relevant committees to identify the appropriate Ethics review requirement for their research.

3.5. Staff Registration

3.5.1. Members of staff of the University are permitted to register for a research degree. To ensure that the proposed programme of work can be completed within the designated timescale, the amount of time the applicant can devote to the research must be agreed with the line manager (usually the Head of the Department or equivalent) before registration.

3.6. Dual Registration

3.6.1. The Faculty Research Degrees Committee will permit another course of study only if it is satisfied that dual registration would not detract from the programme of research and would not lead to dual qualifications for the same work.

3.6.2. A student registered for a research degree at the University of Portsmouth will normally be permitted to register concurrently for a dual award with another university only if it has been approved through the Partnership Approval Process.

3.6.3 Further information is provided in the Academic Partnerships Policy.

3.7. Study External to the University

3.7.1. The University Research Degrees committee may permit a student to conduct part or all of the course of study and research elsewhere than in the University, provided that it is in the interests of the student and/or the programme of research and that both the facilities for research and the supervisory arrangements at the external location are satisfactory. This will be dealt with through a Collaborative Research Degree Partnership. Such students are expected to spend an agreed period of time conducting research and study at the University of Portsmouth. In the case of collaborative partnership arrangements, the University Research Degrees Committee provides a framework and oversight of these arrangements as detailed in the Framework for Collaborative Postgraduate Research Provision with the aim of having a proportionate consideration of the PG research student experience, their

research environment, research support/infrastructure and the level of risk in those activities they conduct with a partner.

3.7.2. Normally, research degree students registered in a Distance Learning mode of the research degree programme are not required to visit the campus at any stage of their registration.

4. Disabled Students

4.1. A disabled person is legally defined as someone who has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial, long-term adverse impact upon his or her ability to carry out day-to-day activities. Within the specific University context, 'day-to-day activities' are taken to include those normally encountered by a student accessing the learning, assessment and other services offered by the University.

4.2. The Head, or nominee, of Disability Advice is responsible for advising the Head of Department or School and the Faculty Director of Postgraduate Research of any reasonable adjustments that should be made to ensure that a disabled student can undertake study and assessments without being placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to non-disabled students by virtue of a physical or mental condition.

4.3. Such advice will be determined on a case-by-case basis and takes account of any supporting information known to Disability Advice. The exact nature of any reasonable adjustments shall be determined by the specific needs of the student but may involve adjustments to:

a) Mode of participation in research training events and activities;

b) Arrangements for undertaking research work related to the PG research project;

c) Periodic reviews, discussion and completion of thesis, final examination or other final work.

4.4. It is the responsibility of the student to notify the University of any condition in a timely fashion to ensure that the appropriate adjustments can be considered in relation to the key tasks necessary for the completion of the research, major and/or annual review submission, and/or final thesis submission. Such notification must normally be substantiated by the provision of supporting information and reviewed by ASDAC before adjustments will be implemented.

4.5. The exact nature of the adjustments arrived at under 4.3 above will be agreed and confirmed with the student by Disability Advice.

4.6. Exceptionally, the Head of Department may consider that reasonable adjustments to assessments cannot be made because:

a) There is only one reliable assessment method;

b) There are explicit assessment criteria based on particular outcomes that are core to the research.

In such cases, the Head of Department must consult with the Head of Disability Advice and the Academic Registrar and, if confirmed, consider the options of changing the research topic or withdrawing through discussion with the individual student concerned.

5. Registration

5.1. Registration Period

5.1.1. The period of registration for research degrees is detailed in the Awards of the University of Portsmouth. Unless an extension has been granted, the thesis must be submitted within the approved period of registration.

5.1.2 To register for the research phase of the Professional Doctorate, the student must have successfully completed all of the taught phase of the Professional Doctorate and be actively engaged in a profession relevant to the Professional Doctorate they seek to obtain. The Board of Examiners, following the successful completion of the taught phase, shall inform the student that they can progress to the research phase to indicate to the student that they now fall under the regulations for Professional Doctorates and not the Examination and Assessment Regulations.

5.2. Mode of Study

5.2.1. The mode of study for students registered on a PhD by Publication programme is part-time only.

5.2.2. The mode of study for any research degree not listed in 5.2.1. can be either fulltime or part-time. With the approval of the Faculty Research Degrees Committee, registered students may switch between modes of study, with appropriate adjustment to the registration period. Any such adjustment will be calculated on the basis that the part-time registration period is always twice that of the full-time registration period, excluding the extension and examination period for which the same time scales apply for full-time and part-time students.

5.3. Change to the Approved Research Programme

5.3.1. Where a student wishes to make a substantial change in the academic discipline and/or expert supervision of the approved research project, the student will be required to withdraw from the programme of research. Provided the University can offer adequate expert supervision in the new area of research, the student may reapply by submitting a new application as if it was a first application.

5.3.2. Where a student wishes to transfer to an alternative research degree award, approval must be sought from the Faculty Research Degrees Committee.

5.4. Interruption of Study

5.4.1. A Faculty Research Degrees Committee may, at its discretion, permit a student to interrupt registration for up to one year and adjust the registration period accordingly. Only in exceptional circumstances would further interruption be approved. In all cases where interruption of study is considered, the grounds for exercising such discretion, or not exercising it, shall be stated and recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

5.4.2. During a period of interruption, a student pays no fee to the University, has no permission to access supervision and access to University Facilities may be limited.

5.4.3. With the approval of the Faculty Research Degrees Committee, a student may interrupt their studies for reasons of maternity, adoption, paternity or shared parental leave, up to the statutory maximum, and have their period of registration adjusted accordingly. Maternity, paternity, adoption and shared parental leave do not count towards the one-year maximum period of interruption.

5.4.4. If a student is sponsored by the University under a UKVI student visa, an interruption may lead to the University withdrawing sponsorship and the student having to return to their home country. At the end of the interruption, the student would need to apply to the University to receive a new Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) number in order to apply for a new visa to continue their studies.

5.5. Extension to Registration Period

5.5.1. A Faculty Research Degrees Committee may, at its discretion, approve an extension of registration of one year, provided the registration period has not already elapsed.

5.5.2. For Part-time PhD students who commenced their studies prior to October 2017, an extension of registration of two years is permitted, provided the registration period has not already elapsed.

5.5.3. For Part-time Professional Doctorate students who commenced their studies prior to October 2022, an extension of registration of two years is permitted, provided the registration period has not already elapsed.

5.5.4. Only in exceptional circumstances and with the recommendation of the student's First Supervisor could the Faculty Research Degrees Committee approve a further extension.

5.5.5. Separately and in addition to the above, a one-year extension will be agreed if the examiners refer a student or require a student to be re-examined.

5.5.6. If the thesis is submitted within the extension period, the date of submission will be used as the basis for re-calculating the tuition fee and making any refund in accordance with the University of Portsmouth Tuition Fee policy.

5.6. Exceeding Registration Period

5.6.1. The registration shall be terminated if a student fails to submit the thesis by the end of the registration period, recalculated as necessary following approved changes in the mode of study, interruption of study, or extension of the registration period. A thesis presented after termination of registration will not be accepted for submission without the specific consent of the University Research Degrees Committee, although submission up to 6 weeks (i.e. up to 42 days) after the expiry date of the period of registration (recalculated as necessary following approved changes in the mode of study, interruption of study, or extension of registration period) may be approved by the Research Degrees (Academic Services) (Academic Registry).

5.7. Termination of Registration

5.7.1. A student's registration shall terminate on fulfilment of one of the following conditions:

a) all submission criteria for the research degree have been met;

b) a decision that the student's programme of research is discontinued;

c) a decision that no award will be recommended;

d) the time limit set for referral or resubmission, including any extensions, has elapsed;

e) the student has reached the end of the period of registration defined in the Awards of the University of Portsmouth and has not submitted the work to be presented for examination;

f) the student has been excluded from the University following a procedure described in another regulation of the University;

g) the student has withdrawn from the programme of research.

6. Supervision

6.1. Number of Supervisors

6.1.1. With the exception of PhD by Publication students, a student registered for a research degree shall have at least two but not more than three supervisors. The Faculty Research Degrees Committee shall approve the supervisory team. The role of the supervisor is contained within the Research Degrees Operational Handbook.

6.1.2 In exceptional circumstances (e.g. where required as part of a collaborative Doctoral award), this may be extended to two University and two external supervisors. If this exception is made, it should be agreed to by the Head of the Department and the Director of Postgraduate Research (DDPGR).

6.1.3. Students being registered for a PhD by Publication programme shall have a minimum of one and a maximum of two supervisors.

6.2. First Supervisor

6.2.1. As part of the appointment of the supervisor's procedure, one supervisor must be proposed and approved as the First Supervisor. The First Supervisor shall be responsible for supervising the student on a regular and frequent basis, in line with the University of Portsmouth Research Degrees Operational Handbook.

6.2.2. The First Supervisor, as defined in these regulations, should be a member of the University of Portsmouth staff.

6.2.3. Where there is an insistence that an external supervisor must be the First Supervisor as defined in these regulations, then this will be dealt with through a Collaborative Research Degree Partnership as outlined in the Framework for Collaborative Postgraduate Research Provision

6.2.4. If the First Supervisor is no longer able to supervise during the period of the student's registration, then the University, through the relevant Faculty Research Degrees Committee and Head of Department, shall make every effort to find another member of staff with the appropriate expertise to act as a replacement. If the University is unable to find another member of staff with the appropriate expertise to replace the First Supervisor, it will endeavour to facilitate a transfer for the student to another University.

6.2.5. If necessary, the Faculty Research Degrees Committee shall adjust the period of registration for a student who is affected by a change of First Supervisor.

6.3. Experience of Supervisors

6.3.1. Normally, the supervision team should have combined experience of supervising nofewer than two research degree candidates at the appropriate level to successful completion. In exceptional circumstances, agreed by the local Faculty Research Degrees Committee, this may be reduced to one completion, but it must be from either the first or second supervisor.

6.3.2. First or Second supervisor of the supervisory team should hold a doctoral award.

6.3.3. All members of a supervisory team should complete the introductory training for Postgraduate Research supervisors, provided by the Graduate School, within six months of the start of the registration of the research student. Continuing Supervisors are expected to attend the on-campus or online update for experienced supervisors training every three years.

6.4. Advisers

6.4.1. In addition, an adviser or advisers may be nominated to contribute specialised knowledge or to provide a link with an external collaborating body. Advisers are normally affiliated with an external institution.

6.5. Eligibility to act as Supervisor

6.5.1. A candidate registered for a research degree, other than for PhD by Publication, may not act as a supervisor to another research degree student.

6.5.2. There should be no conflict of interest, as defined in the Declaration of Interests Policy between the candidate and members of the supervisory team. In the case of a conflict of interest, the supervisory arrangement shall be reviewed by the Head of Department.

6.5.3. Supervisors must not be in a family, romantic or sexual relationship with their supervisees or with other members of the supervisory team.

6.5.4. Where the candidate is a permanent member of staff at the University of Portsmouth, their line manager should not be the first supervisor.

6.5.5. The number of research degree students supervised should not normally exceed six full-time equivalent or ten individual research degree students at any one time for each member of the supervisory team.

7. Major Review

7.1. Application Procedure

7.1.1. A PhD (other than PhD by Publication) or MD student must submit for a major review within 12 months of their initial registration for full-time study or within 24 months for part-time study.

7.1.2. An MPhil student may apply for a major review, should they wish to upgrade the programme to a PhD pathway, within the time limits stated in 7.1.1.

7.1.3. Professional Doctorate students are not required to undertake a Major Review as the transition between the Taught and Research phase is considered equivalent. Professional Doctorate students will participate in the Annual Review process specified by the Faculty Research Degrees Committee as set out in Section 8.

7.1.4. A PhD student who fails to submit for major review within the time lists set out at 7.1.1 will be transferred to an MPhil award and can no longer submit for a PhD. An MD student who fails to submit for major review within the time limits set out in 7.1.1 will be excluded from the course. An MPhil student who fails to submit within the time limits set out in 7.1.1 will lose the opportunity for a Major Review.

7.1.5. The submission will include:

a) a short review of previous work by others in the area of study;

b) a review and discussion of the planned work and the methods to be used;

c) a brief discussion of any work completed and any results obtained;

d) a resource plan and timetable for the remaining work;

e) a statement identifying the original contribution to knowledge which the final stage to PhD or MD will make;

f) a statement of the formal training completed;

g) confirmation, where applicable, as to whether ethical review has been sought.

7.1.6. The student must electronically submit the application to Research Degrees (Academic Services)

7.1.7. The First Supervisor must electronically submit a supervisor statement to Research Degrees (Academic Services).

7.2. Major Review Assessment Procedure

7.2.1. The purpose of the assessment procedure is to assess whether the student has the capability to complete satisfactorily, within the prescribed time limits, a PhD or MD thesis.

7.2.2. An assessment panel will consider the application and make the decision at a Review Meeting.

7.2.3. The Faculty Research Degrees Committee shall approve the appointment of two assessors, who shall be members of academic staff of the University of Portsmouth with appropriate experience of supervision of Research Degrees and/or expertise in a relevant subject area, who will act as members of an assessment panel to determine whether a student registered upon a programme of research has the capability to complete satisfactorily a PhD or MD thesis. Membership of an assessment panel shall be:

a) one independent assessor nominated by the student's supervisors;

b) a second independent assessor, who would usually act as the Chair of the Review panel, nominated by the appropriate Faculty Research Degrees Committee;

c) the First Supervisor.

7.2.4 Where the candidate is a permanent member of staff at the University of Portsmouth, their line manager should not be a member of the Major review panel.

7.2.5. Members of the panel will receive the application and decide at the review meeting either:

a) unanimously, that the student does have the capability to complete satisfactorily a PhD or MD thesis; or

b) that the panel could not agree unanimously that the student has the capability to satisfactorily complete a PhD or MD thesis and that a Final Review Meeting will need to be held to determine the outcome of the application.

7.2.6. If the panel could not agree unanimously that the student has the capability to satisfactorily complete a PhD or MD thesis, the Chair of the Review panel shall recommend a Final Review Meeting of the panel to determine the outcome of the application. The student will submit further work as specified by the panel within an agreed deadline of up to 2 months after receipt of the Final Review notice. The Chair of the Review panel shall inform the student in writing of the time, date and venue of the meeting. The student is expected to attend the meeting and may ask questions of any other person present. All members of the panel must be present.

7.2.7. The panel at the Final Review Meeting shall reach a decision, which must be supported by a majority of the panel and will be one of the following:

a) that the student may continue their registration; or

b) that the student may change their MPhil registration to a PhD registration with any appropriate increase of the permitted registration period; or

c) that further supporting evidence is necessary - in which case the recommendation must make clear:

i. the nature of this evidence

ii. the deadline for its submission to Research Degrees (Academic Services) which member(s) of the panel will determine whether or not the further supporting evidence is sufficient

d) that the student must change their PhD registration to an MPhil registration with any appropriate decrease of the registration period; or

e) that the student's programme of research is discontinued forthwith.

7.2.8. At the conclusion of the meeting, the Chair of the Panel will informally convey the decision to the student with an outline of the reasons for it.

7.2.9. The Chair of the Panel will convey the decision in writing, accompanied by a brief rationale, to Research Degrees (Academic Services), who will formally notify the student. That notification shall include the decision, the brief rationale and the student's right of appeal.

7.2.10. The student has the right to appeal against the decision; see Section 12.

8. Annual Review

8.1. Application Procedure

8.1.1. Until they submit their thesis, all students, except PhD by Publication students, must submit for an Annual Review in every academic year that they do not apply for a Major Review.

8.1.2. Where a student fails to submit for an Annual Review, they will be considered for exclusion from the course.

8.1.3. At initial registration, and again at the start of each academic year, the Faculty Research Degrees Committee will inform all research students in their Faculty of the format of the Annual Review and any evidence that students must submit.

8.1.4. The student must electronically submit the application to Research Degrees (Academic Services)

8.2. Annual Review Assessment Procedure

8.2.1. The purpose of the assessment procedure is to assess whether the student is actively engaged in the research programme and making satisfactory progress.

8.2.2. An assessment panel will consider the application and make the decision at an Annual Review meeting.

8.2.3. Faculty Research Degrees Committee shall approve the appointment of assessors, who shall be members of academic staff of the University of Portsmouth with appropriate experience of supervision of Research Degrees and/or expertise in a relevant subject area.

8.2.4. The assessment panel consists of at least two members of academic staff approved by the Faculty Research Degrees Committee. At least one panel member must be independent of the supervisory team. Faculty-specific arrangements may be approved by the local Faculty Research Degrees Committee. The panel is normally chaired by a member of academic staff who is independent of the supervision.

8.2.5 Where the candidate is a permanent member of staff at the University of Portsmouth, their line manager should not be a member of the review panel.

8.2.6. Members of the panel will receive the application and decide after meeting with the student either:

a) unanimously, that the student can continue with their programme (either with or without recommendations); or

b) that the panel could not agree unanimously that the student could progress and that a Final Review Meeting will need to be held to determine the outcome of the application.

8.2.7. If the panel could not agree unanimously that the student is actively engaged in the research programme and making satisfactory progress, the Chair of the Review panel shall recommend a Final Review Meeting of the panel to determine the outcome of the application. The student will submit further work as specified by the panel within an agreed deadline of up to 2 months after receipt of the Final Review notice. The Chair of the Review panel shall inform the student in writing of the time, date and venue of the meeting. The student shall attend the meeting and may ask questions of any other person present. All members of the panel must be present. Should there be an even number on the assessment panel, a further independent assessor will be appointed by the Faculty Research Degrees Committee.

8.2.8. The panel at the Final Review Meeting shall reach a decision, which must be supported by a majority of the panel and will be one of the following:

a) that the student may continue their registration; or

b) that further supporting evidence is necessary - in which case the recommendation must make clear:

(i) the nature of this evidence

(ii) the deadline for its submission to Research Degrees (Academic Services)

(iii) which member(s) of the panel will determine whether or not the further supporting evidence is sufficient; or

(iv) that the student must change their PhD registration to a MPhil registration with any appropriate decrease of the registration period; or

(v) that the student's programme of research is discontinued forthwith.

8.2.9. At the conclusion of the meeting, the Chair of the Panel will informally convey the decision to the student with an outline of the reasons for it.

8.2.10. The Chair of the Panel will convey the decision in writing, accompanied by a brief rationale, to Research Degrees (Academic Services), who will formally notify the student. That notification shall include the decision, the brief rationale and the student's right of appeal.

8.2.11. The student has the right to appeal against the decision; see Section 12.

9. Interim Examination

9.1. General

9.1.1. Where, in the judgement of the supervisory team, a student appears to be making unsatisfactory progress a formal assessment will be made so that the student may provide evidence that their work is of sufficient merit to be allowed to continue. In such cases, the supervisory team must report the cause for their

concern, the reason for one of the regular annual review points not being adequate, and the proposed form of the assessment to the appropriate Faculty Research Degrees Committee. That Committee will decide whether to arrange an Interim Examination, and if so, will approve the form it will take, specify the arrangements for it, and state the membership of any panel including nomination of the Chair.

9.2. Informing the Student

9.2.1. On written request from the First Supervisor, Research Degrees (Academic Services) shall inform the student in writing that they are to take a formal assessment. The request to Research Degrees (Academic Services) must include details of the arrangements for the assessment, especially timescales, the form of the assessment, what is required of the student, and the membership of the panel. The information will be conveyed to the student by Research Degrees (Academic Services).

9.2.2 It will also explicitly state that, if the Interim Examination Assessment Panel judges the standard to be unsatisfactory, the programme of research will terminate. In order to allow the student sufficient time to prepare for the assessment, the Interim Examination shall take place at least 10 working days after the date on which Research Degrees (Academic Services) sends the meeting notice to the student.

9.3. Panel Membership

9.3.1. The Assessment Panel will comprise no fewer than two members of the academic staff of the University and will include, if possible, the independent assessor nominated by the Faculty Research Degrees Committee who acted as an assessor during the student's Major Review or Annual Review, as appropriate to the nature of the Interim Examination

9.4. Decision

9.4.1. At the conclusion of the Interim Examination, the Assessment Panel will decide one of the following:

a) the student may continue the programme for the award of a research degree;

b) the student's programme of research is discontinued forthwith.

9.4.2. At the conclusion of the meeting, the Chair of the Panel will informally convey the decision to the student with an outline of the reasons for it. The Chair of the Panel will convey the decision in writing, accompanied by a brief rationale, to Research Degrees (Academic Services), who will formally notify the student. That notification shall include the decision, the brief rationale and the student's right of appeal. Research Degrees (Academic Services) shall send a copy of the notification to the Faculty Research Degrees Committee.

10. Presentation of the Thesis

10.1. Submission

10.1.1. A candidate for the award of a research degree shall submit an electronic copy of the thesis or, in the case of a PhD by Publication, the commentary, to the Research Degrees (Academic Services), along with any other materials to be submitted.

10.1.2. Submission of the thesis in accordance with these regulations means that the candidate or their sponsors shall not have to pay any further tuition fees other than those already due unless the candidate is referred or required to be re-examined.

10.2. Content and Length

10.2.1. The thesis shall be presented in English; see also 2.2.1. The maximum length of the thesis should not exceed the following word limits:

- MPhil 40,000 words
- MD 40,000 words
- PhD 80,000 words
- Professional Doctorate 50,000 words
- PhD by Publication 10,000 words (Commentary) - see further information in Section 10.2.5

10.2.2 A Faculty may prescribe a lower or higher maximum number of words in a particular subject area which must be agreed by the University Research Degrees Committee prior to submission of the thesis.

The following lower limits have been agreed:

- MPhil Biology, Pharmacy and Biomedical Science, Mathematics: 20,000 words
- PhD Biology, Pharmacy and Biomedical Science, Mathematics: 40,000 words

10.2.3. Where a thesis includes material presented in other than written form, e.g. film, video, photographic records, etc, the written component of the thesis should normally lie within the following range.

- MPhil 15,000 - 20,000 words
- PhD 30,000 - 40,000 words

When a thesis incorporates Creative Writing, the above ranges apply to the commentary but not to the creative artefact component.

10.2.3. The thesis shall acknowledge published or other sources of material consulted (including an appropriate reference list) and the nature and extent of any other

assistance received during the programme of research. Any reference list submitted does not count towards the maximum length of the thesis.

10.2.4. Where the thesis exhibits creative work and a written component, a permanent record should be submitted.

10.2.5. Submission for the award of a PhD by Publication shall consist of:

a) an abstract summarising the research contribution in approximately 300 words;

b) a commentary of between 5000 and 10000 words putting the work into context and identifying its suitability for the award of a PhD; this commentary should provide details of where, by what means and under what conditions the research and related scholarly activity were undertaken. Exceptionally, and in agreement with the local Faculty Research Degrees Committee, where the submission wholly or mainly consists of nontext-based materials, (e.g. artwork, performance pieces, etc.), a longer commentary of up to 25,000 words may be submitted to allow greater clarity and depth of explanation about the significance of the work;

c) a statement that the work has not been submitted for any other qualification;

d) in the case that publications or other material that are jointly authored are submitted, a clear indication of the candidate's own contribution in each case;

e) a set of all publications or other materials on which the submission is based, ordered appropriately;

f) an appropriate listing of the publications/artefacts, etc. in (e) above; and

g) a reference list stating relevant publications/artefacts considered in the commentary.

10.2.6 On submission of the thesis for examination the PGRS must complete the Research Ethics Review Checklist and include this as an Annex within the thesis.

10.3. Collaboration

10.3.1. Where a candidate's research programme is part of a collaborative group project, the thesis shall indicate clearly the candidate's individual contribution and the nature and extent of the collaboration.

10.4. Format

10.4.1. An abstract of approximately 300 words shall be included in the thesis and should provide a synopsis of the thesis, stating the nature and scope of the work undertaken and the contribution made to the knowledge of the subject area under investigation.

Further guidance is provided in the Research Degrees Operational Handbook.

10.4.2. Alternatively, to a traditional doctoral thesis (monograph-style), the thesis may be prepared in the format of a Compilation-*Style Thesis*. The Compilation Style Thesis Guidance should be referred to for further information.

10.5. Final Text

10.5.1. Following the oral examination (*viva voce*) and the recommendation of the examiners for an award, the candidate shall provide one electronic copy of the corrected and approved thesis. This copy will be stored in and be the property of the University Library.

10.5.2. Where the content of the thesis at final submission includes exhibited creative work and a written component, these should be submitted as a permanent record in a form that can be held in the University Library.

10.6. Copyright and IPR

10.6.1. All students registering at the University agree to abide by University of Portsmouth Regulations as they apply to their research degree registration. Students should read the Copyright policy and Intellectual Property (IP) Policy. Additional guidance can be sought from the First Supervisor.

10.6.2. Students should familiarise themselves with any implications on any potential intellectual property rights (arising from the policies stated in 10.6.1) of publication or otherwise bringing into the public domain their work before intellectual property protection is considered since this may adversely impact the ability to secure intellectual property rights.

10.6.3. With the appropriate permissions, the candidate shall be free to publish material in advance of submitting the thesis, but reference should be included in the thesis.

10.6.4. If a student is sponsored by the University or an external sponsor, any intellectual property rights in the work which they generate may be owned by the University or such sponsor. This does not impact the student's right to be recognised as a creator of the IP.

10.7. Confidentiality

10.7.1. Students have an obligation to maintain the confidentiality of any confidential information which may be disclosed to them as a result of their research. Guidance shall be sought from the University Ethics Policy.

10.7.2. The Faculty Research Degrees Committee may approve an application for a thesis to be made confidential. The application should be completed before the thesis is submitted for examination. Approval would normally only be given to enable a patent to be lodged or to protect commercially or politically sensitive material. The maximum period of confidentiality will be two years from the date of submission, but in exceptional circumstances, the University Research Degrees Committee may approve a longer period. Where confidentiality is approved, Research Degrees

(Academic Services) shall retain the final thesis throughout the approved period of restriction, after which it will be stored in the University library in accordance with regulation 10.5.1.

11. Examination Arrangements

11.1. General

11.1.1. Examination for the award of a Research Degree shall have two stages.

a) submission of the thesis and its independent preliminary assessment by each of the approved examiners;

b) an oral examination (viva voce) of the candidate by the examiners, which may be preceded by a presentation. The presentation preceding the oral examination (viva voce) is compulsory for Professional Doctorate candidates.

11.1.2. Following the second stage, the examiners shall submit their recommendation in respect of the candidate to Academic Registry.

11.1.3 The authority to grant academic awards of the University rests with the Academic Council. If the recommendation is that the University confer an award, then the signature of the Academic Registrar on the Examiners' Report Form shall be deemed to represent, in his or her capacity as Secretary of Academic Council, the conferment of that award.

11.2. Candidate's Responsibilities

11.2.1. The candidate shall ensure that the thesis is submitted to Research Degrees (Academic Services) within the approved period of registration.

11.2.2. Submission of the thesis is at the discretion of the candidate.

11.2.3. The candidate shall confirm that the thesis has not been and is not being submitted for any other comparable academic award.

11.2.4. The candidate shall contact Research Degrees (Academic Services), if they wish to request the appointment of an Independent Chair.

11.2.5. The candidate shall confirm that the thesis is their own work.

11.2.6. The candidate must ensure that all tuition fees due have been paid.

11.2.7. The candidate shall provide confirmation, where applicable, that ethical approval has been granted.

11.3. Appointment of Examiners

11.3.1. Examiners shall be appointed by the relevant Faculty Research Degrees Committee on the basis of nomination by the First Supervisor; nominations should be made approximately 6 months before the candidate is due to submit the thesis.

11.3.2. A candidate shall be examined by at least two and not more than three examiners, of whom at least one shall be an internal examiner and one an external examiner.

11.3.3. If the candidate submits for the award of a PhD by Publication, three examiners shall be appointed, of whom one shall be an internal examiner and two external examiners.

11.3.4. If the candidate is a permanent member of staff of the University or an affiliated or associated institution, three examiners shall be appointed, of whom one shall be an internal examiner and two external examiners.

11.3.5. Examiners shall have appropriate subject, research and/or professional expertise in the general area of the candidate's research topic, and one external examiner shall normally have experience as a specialist in the topic to be examined.

11.3.6. Where the candidate is a permanent member of staff at the University of Portsmouth, their line manager should not be appointed as the internal examiner.

11.3.7. An internal examiner:

a) shall be a member of staff of the University or of an affiliated or associated institution or the candidate's collaborating establishment;

b) should not have examined another thesis supervised by the candidate's First Supervisor during the previous two years;

c) should not have published with, sought finance with, delivered a joint conference paper with, or have any other ongoing or completed collaborations with the candidate;

d) must not have been a supervisor for the candidate during the period of the candidate's registration;

e) shall declare any potential conflict of interest not included in 11.3.7 a) to d).

11.3.8. In some exceptional circumstances, the Faculty Director of Postgraduate Research may waive 11.3.7.b, 11.3.7.c and 11.3.7.e, but an Independent Chair must be appointed in accordance with 11.6. The Faculty Director of Postgraduate Research must report to the Faculty Research Degrees Committee the particular circumstances that justified such exceptional approval.

11.3.9. At least one external examiner shall have experience in examining research degree candidates at the appropriate level. In exceptional circumstances, the Faculty Director of Postgraduate Research may waive this where the internal examiner has experience of examining research degree candidates at the appropriate level, but an Independent Chair must be appointed in accordance with 11.6. The Faculty Director of Postgraduate Research must report to the Faculty Research Degrees Committee the particular circumstances that justified such exceptional approval.

11.3.10. At least one examiner must have experience in examining a research degree in the UK. In exceptional circumstances, the Faculty Director of Postgraduate Research may waive this requirement, but an Independent Chair must be appointed in

accordance with 11.6. The Faculty Director of Postgraduate Research must report to the Faculty Research Degrees Committee the particular circumstances that justified such exceptional approval.

11.3.11. External examiners:

a) shall be independent of the University and any affiliated or associated institution or collaborating establishment;

b) shall not have acted previously as the candidate's supervisor;

c) should not have published with, sought finance with, delivered a joint conference paper with, or have any other ongoing or completed collaborations with the candidate;

d) should not have examined another thesis supervised by the candidate's First Supervisor during the previous two years;

e) should not have been a member of the staff of the University of Portsmouth during the candidate's period of study;

f) must not have been published with the supervisory team within the previous five years;

g) must not be from the same institution, where more than one examiner is required;

h) must not have held a position of Honorary, Adjunct, Emeritus or Visiting Professor with the University at any time during the candidate's period of study;

i) shall declare any potential conflict of interest not included in 11.3.10 a) to h).

11.3.12. In some exceptional circumstances, the Faculty Director of Postgraduate Research may waive 11.3.11.d, 11.3.11.f and 11.3.11.i but an Independent Chair must be appointed in accordance with 11.6. The Faculty Director of Postgraduate Research must report to the Faculty Research Degrees Committee the particular circumstances that justified such exceptional approval.

11.3.13. No candidate currently registered for a research degree shall act as an examiner.

11.4. Preliminary Assessment and Referral

11.4.1. Each approved examiner shall provide an initial assessment of the candidate's work.

11.4.2. This assessment shall be forwarded to Research Degrees (Academic Services) at least 10 working days before the date set for the formal oral examination (viva voce).

11.4.3. If the required assessments are not received by Research Degrees (Academic Services) by the due date, then the formal oral examination (viva voce) may be postponed on the authority of the Academic Registrar or their representative.

11.4.4. Where the examiners agree that the work is unsatisfactory and that no useful purpose would be served by conducting the formal oral examination (viva voce), they shall agree to a referral for the candidate.

11.4.5. In the event of a referral being agreed upon, the examiners must agree and provide a clear and explicit written summary of the shortcomings of the original work and the required additional work on the thesis. This shall form part of the conditions of referral communicated to the candidate by Research Degrees (Academic Services).

11.4.6. A referred candidate must re-register and pay a repeat fee.

11.4.7. The period of referral will last 12 months, although the candidate can submit earlier. If the referred candidate fails to submit within the referral period, then the candidate will be failed and their registration regarded as terminated. Their period of registration shall be extended for 12 months from the date of the referral communicated to the candidate by Research Degrees Team (Academic Services).

11.4.8. If the examiners after assessing the thesis submitted in satisfaction of the referral requirement remain of the view that the thesis is unsatisfactory and that no useful purpose would be served by conducting the formal oral examination (viva voce), they shall fail the candidate and the candidate's registration will be regarded as terminated.

11.4.9. In the event that the examiners cannot agree a decision, after the initial assessment of either the original thesis or the thesis submitted in satisfaction of the referral requirement, then the matter shall be referred to the Chair of the relevant Faculty Research Degrees Committee who shall, with the support of the Research Degrees Team (Academic Services), attempt to assist the examiners in reaching a consensus decision. If no consensus can be reached within a reasonable period of time, then new examiners shall be appointed in accordance with Regulation 11.3 above. The newly appointed examiners will carry out an initial assessment of the thesis without reference to the views of the previously appointed examiners.

11.5. Examination

11.5.1. The examiners approved by the University shall examine the candidate orally on the subject of the thesis and on the field of knowledge or learning within which the thesis falls.

11.5.2. For submissions to the award of the PhD by Publication, examiners approved by the University shall examine the candidate orally to determine whether:

a) the work submitted demonstrates that the programme of research and study is at least comparable with that undertaken by a research degree candidate for the award of PhD;

b) the candidate has personally made a systematic study in the chosen topic and has demonstrated originality and the exercise of independent critical powers.

11.5.3. The First Supervisor shall arrange for the examination to take place in the University or virtually at a time mutually acceptable to the examiners. In exceptional

circumstances and with the prior agreement of the examiners, the University Research Degrees Committee may allow the examination to be held elsewhere. Such a decision and the reasons for it shall be recorded in the minutes.

11.5.4. Any or all supervisors may be permitted to attend the examination with the agreement of the candidate. The supervisor(s) will take no part in the examination.

11.6. Independent Chair

11.6.1. The candidate may request the appointment of an Independent Chair.

11.6.2. The University will also appoint an Independent Chair should any of the following circumstances exist:

a) if an external examiner does not have experience examining research degree candidates at the appropriate level, in accordance with 11.3.8;

b) if the candidate has submitted the thesis against the advice of their First Supervisor;

c) if the supervisory team or Faculty Research Degrees Committee identify concerns that require the presence of an independent authority to oversee the examination process;

d) if an internal or external examiner has examined another thesis put forward by the candidate's First Supervisor during the previous two years, in accordance with 11.3.7 and 11.3.11;

e) if an internal examiner has published with, sought external finance with, or delivered a joint conference paper with the candidate during the period of the candidate's registration, in accordance with 11.3.7;

f) if no member of the examiner panel has experience of examining a research degree in the UK, in accordance with 11.3.9;

g) if an external examiner has published with a member of the supervisory team in the past five years, in accordance with 11.3.11;

h) if the examiners fail to reach a unanimous verdict and a further examiner is appointed with a new formal examination.

i) when a student receives a pre-viva referral recommendation from the examiners.

j) when a student is subject to a second viva after a resubmission

11.6.3. Where the University appoints an Independent Chair in accordance with 11.6.2**,** Research Degrees (Academic Services) will write to the student to inform them of this and the reasons why an Independent Chair has been appointed.

11.6.4. The role of the Independent Chair is to chair and maintain a record of the examination and assist the examiners in following University procedure. The Independent Chair will not act as an examiner of the thesis.

11.6.5. The Independent Chair will be appointed by the Faculty Research Degrees Committee and will be a member of staff who:

a) is not from the candidate's research degrees subject area, and normally not from the candidate's department or school;

b) has not been involved with the candidate's research at any stage;

c) has experience of at least 2 previous research degree oral examinations (as an internal or external examiner), at least one of which should have been conducted at the University of Portsmouth;

d) has experience in the supervision of at least two research degree students to completion.

11.7. Examiners' Report and Recommendation

11.7.1. Following the oral examination (*viva voce*), the examiners shall complete a joint report, which will include one of the following recommendations agreed upon unanimously by the examiners:

a) that the degree for which the candidate submitted should be awarded;

b) that the degree for which the candidate submitted should be awarded subject to minor amendments or corrections to the work (and in this case the time-limit for the receipt of the satisfactorily amended or corrected thesis shall be 3 months). The recommendation must also be accompanied by a clear and explicit written summary of the amendments suggested.

c) The report must also identify how many and which of the examiners will signify satisfaction with the minor amendments or corrections;

d) that the degree for which the candidate submitted should be awarded subject to major amendments or corrections to the work (and in this case the time-limit for the receipt of the satisfactorily amended or corrected thesis shall be 6 months). The nature of the amendments is more substantial than minor corrections and typographical errors but are not of the extent that the learning outcomes have not been met, and the thesis does not require significant reworking. The recommendation must also be accompanied by a clear and explicit written summary of the amendments suggested. All examiners will signify satisfaction with the major amendments or corrections;

e) that the degree for which the candidate submitted should not be awarded but that the candidate should amend and re-submit the work and be reexamined once only. In this case, the recommendation must state clearly whether or not the re-examination shall be by means of a formal oral examination (viva voce). The recommendation must also be accompanied by a clear and explicit written summary of both the amendments suggested and the shortcomings of the original thesis.

f) A candidate required to re-submit the thesis for re-examination must reregister and pay the repeat fee. Their period of registration shall be

extended for 12 months from the date of the formal oral examination (*viva voce*);

g) that the degree for which the candidate submitted should not be awarded and the candidate should not be permitted to submit for re-examination;

h) in the case of a candidate who had submitted for PhD, that the degree of MPhil be awarded subject to any minor amendments or corrections to the thesis (and in this case, the time limit for the receipt of the satisfactorily amended or corrected thesis shall be 3 months). The recommendation must also be accompanied by a clear and explicit written summary of both the amendments suggested and the shortcomings of the original thesis. The report must also identify how many and which of the examiners will signify satisfaction with the minor amendments or corrections

i) in the case of a candidate who had submitted for a Professional Doctorate, where the examiners decide that the candidate has failed and will not be permitted to re-submit, the candidate will be awarded the exit award specified in the course specification document.

11.7.2. In cases where a student has submitted Minor or Major Corrections, the examiner(s) can, on receipt of the amended thesis, request the student makes one further attempt to complete the required amendments. The time limit for the further attempt is 20 working days.

11.7.3. Should the examiners be unable to unanimously agree on a decision they should follow the procedures in 11.8.

11.8. Failure to Reach Unanimous Recommendation

11.8.1. If the examiners cannot agree that the amendments have been completed Satisfactorily, the matter shall be referred to the Chair of the relevant Faculty Research Degrees Committee who, with support from Research Degrees (Academic Services), shall attempt to assist the examiners in reaching a consensus decision. If no consensus is reached, either a majority recommendation shall be upheld, provided that the majority includes at least one external examiner, or the recommendation of the external examiner shall be upheld.

11.8.2. The second oral examination (*viva voce*) will be arranged at a mutually convenient time to ensure all the examiners are in attendance. The University will uphold the majority recommendation.

11.9. Re-Examination

11.9.1. A candidate required to submit a corrected or revised thesis, but who fails to do so by the date set by the examiners shall be regarded as having failed the examination.

11.9.2. Where the examination of the thesis, whether by means of a formal oral examination (viva voce) or otherwise, is a second examination, the examiners shall complete a joint report which shall also include one of the following recommendations agreed unanimously by the examiners:

a) that the degree for which the candidate submitted should be awarded;

b) that the degree for which the candidate submitted should be awarded subject to minor amendments or corrections to the thesis (and in this case the time-limit for the receipt of the satisfactorily amended or corrected thesis shall be 3 months). The recommendation must also be accompanied by a clear and explicit written summary of the amendments suggested. The report must also identify how many and which of the examiners will signify satisfaction with the minor amendments or corrections;

c) that the degree for which the candidate submitted should be awarded subject to major amendments or corrections to the thesis (and in this case the time-limit for the receipt of the satisfactorily amended or corrected thesis shall be 6 months). The nature of the amendments is more substantial than minor corrections and typographical errors but are not of the extent that the learning outcomes have not been met, and the thesis does not require significant reworking. The recommendation must also be accompanied by a clear and explicit written summary of the amendments suggested. All examiners will signify satisfaction with the major amendments or corrections;

d) that the degree for which the candidate submitted should not be awarded and the candidate should not be permitted to submit for re-examination;

e) in the case of a candidate who had submitted for PhD, that the degree of MPhil be awarded subject to any minor amendments or corrections to the thesis (and in this case, the time limit for the receipt of the satisfactorily amended or corrected thesis shall be 3 months). The recommendation must also be accompanied by a clear and explicit written summary of both the amendments suggested and the shortcomings of the original thesis. The report must also identify how many and which of the examiners will signify satisfaction with the minor amendments or corrections.

11.9.3. Re-examination shall concentrate on the extent to which the candidate has adequately addressed the originally identified shortcomings of the thesis and how effectively the candidate has responded to the amendments suggested.

11.9.4. Should the examiners be unable to unanimously agree on a decision, they should follow the procedures below.

11.10. Failure to Agree Unanimous Recommendation After Re-examination

11.10.1. Where the examiners are not able to agree on a unanimous recommendation, they should submit individual reports and recommendations. In this event, the Chair of the relevant Faculty Research Degrees Committee, with support from Research Degrees (Academic Services), shall:

a) uphold a majority recommendation, provided that the majority includes at least one external examiner

b) uphold the recommendation of the external examiner

c) appoint an additional external examiner and require that the oral examination (viva voce) be repeated. Where an additional external examiner is appointed, the revised thesis will be submitted to the additional examiner with the examiners' report and recommendations from the first oral examination (viva voce). The revisions required from the first oral examination (viva voce) cannot be modified. The additional examiner will submit a report regarding the standard of the revisions to the resubmitted thesis and their adequacy in meeting the objectives set by the original examiners. The second oral examination (viva voce) will be arranged at a mutually convenient time to ensure all the examiners are in attendance. The University will uphold the majority recommendation.

11.11. Posthumous Awards

11.11.1. Research awards may be awarded posthumously by the University Research Degrees Committee (URDC) on the basis of a thesis completed by a candidate which is ready for submission for examination. In such cases, the URDC will seek evidence that the candidate would have been likely to have been successful had the oral examination (*viva voce*) taken place.

11.12. Award Date

11.12.1. The award date of a candidate shall be defined as one of the following:

a) the date of a successful formal oral examination (viva voce) where the decision made was that the degree should be awarded as at 11.7.1.a and

b) 11.9.2 a, where successful means a recommendation for an award being made without further amendments being required; or

c) in the case of an award being made subject to minor or major amendments, the date on which the examiners confirm that the amendments are satisfactorily completed; or

d) in the case of re-examination where the re-examination is not by means of a formal oral examination (viva voce), the date on which the examiners make the recommendation of the award.

12. Appeals

12.1. A student registered for a research degree by research may request a review of the decision of:

a) the assessment panel for their Major Review

b) the assessment panel for their Annual Review

c) the assessment panel for their Final Review Meeting

d) the assessment panel for their Interim Examination

e) the examiners of the final thesis.

12.2. The appeal shall be made in accordance with the University's approved Appeals procedure.

12.3. Review requests cannot be made on the basis of disagreement with the academic judgment of the examiners.

12.4. The only valid grounds for appeal will be:

a) that there has been a significant and material administrative error in the information received and considered by the examiners or assessment panel; or

b) that the examination was not conducted in accordance with the University's regulations for research degrees; or

c) that some other material irregularity occurred in the examination or assessment panel procedure; or

d) that the student's performance was adversely affected by illness or other good cause that related to the student's personal circumstances, that she or he had been unable, for a sound and acceptable reason related to the circumstances themselves, to divulge before the meeting of the examiners or assessment panel and which might have had a bearing on the decision.

13. Extenuating Circumstances

13.1. Extenuating Circumstances are circumstances relating to health and/or personal life which are of a sufficiently serious nature to result in a student being unable to attend a review or examination. Relevant circumstances are outlined in the

13.2 Extenuating Circumstances section of the Assessment Regulations for Undergraduate and Postgraduate Courses. and at myport. Postgraduate research students undertaking a research degree will only be able to submit extenuating circumstances for one of the following:

a) Major Review Meetings

b) Annual Review Meetings

c) Final Review Meetings

d) Interim Examinations

e) Viva voce Examinations

13.2. The First Supervisor should be contacted at the earliest opportunity and before the affected review or examination if a student wishes to raise extenuating circumstances. In the case of Major Reviews, Annual Reviews and Final Review Meetings, extenuating circumstances must be agreed with the Chair of the Review panel. In the case of Interim examinations and Viva voce examination, extenuating

circumstances must be agreed with the Faculty Director of Postgraduate Research. Should extenuating circumstances be agreed upon, the outcome will be to defer the review or examination to a future date by up to 20 working days.

13.3. Extenuating circumstances will not be taken into consideration if the review or examination has been completed.

13.4. Problems with the research programme management that have affected student performance should be remedied by following the student complaints procedure.

13.5. If a student is affected by extenuating circumstances while the review or examination is taking place, assessors or examiners should be notified immediately, and a decision will be made in conjunction with the First Supervisor as to whether to continue.

14. Useful Links

- Disability Advice

  This team provide a confidential service for all students with additional learning needs and can give you advice on academic support. They can also discuss what reasonable adjustments you may require and refer you to appropriate agencies for support.

- Appeals Procedure

  The procedure provides further insights into how to proceed with an appeal.

- Collaborative Partnerships Procedures

  This document sets out the University's policy for, and expectations of, academic partnerships that lead to an award and/or an award of credit by the University. It details the characteristics of different types of academic partnerships, the roles and responsibilities of those involved in managing and delivering partnerships and provides an overview of the different stages of the partnership lifecycle.

- Compilation Style Thesis Guidance

  This guidance has been produced to provide an agreed definition and set of expectations for the Compilation Style Thesis for the University of Portsmouth, and to facilitate the sharing of good practice about the processes and quality required to achieve a successful thesis outcome.

- Declaration of Interest Policy

  The purpose of this Policy is to provide a framework to help to ensure that staff and governors do not place themselves in a position where their professionalism, integrity, impartiality and honesty might be questioned or where the activities of the University are brought into disrepute.

- Copyright policy

  The Copyright Policy takes an overview of copyright law and sets out the requirement for users of third-party material to comply with UK copyright legislation.

- English Language Learning Support

  Language learning support provides relevant information on how to improve any level of written and spoken English.

- Ethics Policy

  This Policy provides a framework for professional practice and decision making on ethical issues as they arise in the work of the University within research, innovation, learning and teaching.

- Intellectual Property (IP) Policy

  This University policy provides a framework to promote the recognition, protection and exploitation of potentially valuable intellectual property.

- Research Degrees Guidance

  This website provides information in relation to postgraduate research degrees.

- Research Degrees Operational Handbook

  This Operational Handbook provides information and guidance on the events and circumstances that may arise during the registration of postgraduate research students (PGRS). It includes details of the business processes and support available for PGRS, postgraduate research supervisors, responsibilities of the First Supervisor and other members of the supervisory team, and guidance for managing the assessment processes.

- Student Services

  This website provides support services on study skills, managing finances, health and well-being and more.

- Student Complaints Procedure

  This document explains both our informal and formal procedures and the independent ombudsman's procedure for dealing with complaints.

- Tuition Fees

  This policy document sets out the fee-charging principles of the University of Portsmouth. It explains ways in which students can settle tuition fees, the Refund Policy and how tuition fees are recalculated arising from changes in students' circumstances. The document indicates the consequences of nonpayment of tuition fees and the appeals process that can be followed.

- Visa Advice

  This website provides relevant visa information and links to UKVI compliance information.