

APPROVED MAY 2015-16

THE UNIVERSITY'S ACADEMIC REGULATIONS: 2015-16

SECTION D: RESEARCH DEGREE REGULATIONS

D1 Introduction

D1.1 Section D: Research Degree Regulations sets out the specific regulations applying to this type of award. In applying this section of the University's regulatory framework, account must be taken of the regulations contained in Section A: General Regulations, which apply to all programmes of study offered by the University.

D1.2 The University's Research Degrees Framework provides advice and guidance which must be followed on the application of Section D: Research Degree Regulations. The University's Code of Practice for the Supervision of Research Degrees should also be used in conjunction with these Regulations.

D2 Definitions

D2.1 The following research degrees are considered in this section of the University's academic regulations:

- a) Master by Research (MRes);
- b) Master of Philosophy (MPhil);
- c) Doctor of Philosophy (PhD);
- d) Doctor of Philosophy by Published Works (PhD);
- e) Professional Doctorates.

D2.2 The following terms are used in these regulations:

- a) *Registration* refers to matriculating as a student of the University and formally commencing the programme of study (registering as a research student).
- b) *Approval of thesis topic and programme of study* is the process of confirming the area of study and the proposed thesis title.
- c) *Determination of target degree* is the formal process of determining what award a student will progress towards.
- d) *Progress Review* is the review of progress towards a target degree.
- e) *Viva voce examination* refers to the oral examination by which the student defends their thesis.

D2.3 Research degree provision is managed on behalf of Academic Board by Research Degrees Committee (RDC). The role and responsibilities of RDC are defined in Academic Board remits.

D.3 Research awards of the University

D3.1 In addition to meeting the requirements of Regulation D3, to receive any award of the University listed in Regulation A4.1d), a student must satisfy the requirements of Regulation A4.3.

D3.2 A **Master by Research** will be awarded to a student who has satisfied all award-specific requirements within 24 months following registration (32 months part-time) and has successfully been assessed.

D3.3 A **Master of Philosophy** will be awarded to a student who has satisfied all award-specific requirements within 36 months following registration (52 months part-time) and has successfully been assessed.

D3.4 A **Doctor of Philosophy** will be awarded to a student who has satisfied all award-specific requirements, completed within 48 months following registration (72 months part-time) and has successfully been assessed.

D3.5 A **Doctor of Philosophy by Published Works** will be awarded to a student who has satisfied all award-specific requirements within 12 months following registration and has successfully been assessed.

D3.6 A **Doctor of Philosophy (Graduate Training Assistants)** will be awarded to a student who has satisfied all award-specific requirements within 60 months following registration and has successfully been assessed.

D3.7 A **Professional Doctorate** will be awarded to a student who has satisfied all award-specific requirements within 48 months following registration and has successfully been assessed.

D4 Admissions

D4.1 The minimum entry requirement for admission to a programme of study leading to an award of the University listed in Regulation A4.1d) is possession of a first or second class honours degree of a University in the UK or a qualification regarded as equivalent to such an honours degree.

D4.2 Except with the specific permission of the University, a student for a research degree may not, during the period of their registration, be a student for another award of any university.

D4.3 In addition to meeting the requirements of regulation D4.1 admission for a PhD by Published Works is limited to members of University staff, former members of staff or Edinburgh Napier graduates. All applicants must provide evidence of a significant contribution to research and previous academic attainment.

D.5 Progression through the Award

D5.1 The periods of study dating from first matriculation for the various research degrees are:

Award	Mode of Attendance	Standard Period	Maximum Period
MRes	Full-time	12 months	24 months
	Part-time	20 months	32 months
MPhil	Full-time	24 months	36 months
	Part-time	40 months	52 months
PhD (except Graduate Training Assistants)	Full-time	36 months	48 months
	Part-time	60 months	72 months
PhD by Published Works	Part-time	n/a	12 months
PhD (Graduate Training Assistants)	Full-time	48 months	60 months
Professional Doctorates		36 months	48 months

D5.2 A student may submit the thesis for examination any time from one month before the end of the standard period and must submit before the expiry of the maximum period of registration.

D5.3 A student may apply to suspend their studies for a period of time. Such periods of suspension must be agreed with the supervisors and approved by the relevant School Research Committee (SRC). The maximum length of time that may be approved on any application is 12 months. Further periods of suspended study may be approved. The maximum amount of time that may be suspended consecutively is 24 months. Time elapsed during a period of suspension will not count as part of the period of study in Regulation D5.1. The student's situation will continue to be monitored by the relevant SRC to ensure that appropriate support is in place when study is resumed.

D5.4 Under exceptional circumstances, a student may be permitted to extend their maximum registration period. Applications must be submitted for consideration by Research Degrees Committee no later than three months before the maximum registration period (as specified in Regulation D5.1) has elapsed.

D5.5 Where a student has discontinued the research, they are required to notify Research Degrees Committee detailing the reason for withdrawal. If a student has not been in contact with their supervisors for a prolonged

period, and the supervisors have not been able to re-establish contact, the University may write to the student informing them that they will be deemed to have withdrawn unless this contact is re-established within one month.

- D5.6 Students must make satisfactory progress towards their research degree. Failure to do this may result in the termination of registration for the target degree. If the student is in receipt of an Edinburgh Napier University studentship, this will be withdrawn at the same time as registration for the degree is terminated.
- D5.7 With the exception of the DBA and the PhD by Published Works, all students register initially for a generic research degree.
- D5.8 Within the first 12 months of registration (18 months part-time) all students will have a formal review to determine or confirm the target award.

D6 Assessment

- D6.1 Students will be assessed by *viva voce* examination for all research awards except for the Master by Research.
- D6.2 Master by Research will normally be assessed by thesis only, though examiners may request a *viva voce* examination as a means of helping to determine difficult or borderline cases.
- D6.3 The Director of Studies should make an application for approval of examination arrangements at least three months before the student is expected to submit the thesis. Applications should be submitted for scrutiny by the relevant School Research Committee before going forward to Research Degrees Committee for approval.
- D6.4 The final decision to submit the thesis for examination rests with the student.
- D6.5 After the thesis has been formally submitted for examination, no further version of the thesis may be submitted prior to the *viva voce*

D6.6 At the end of the examination the examiners may recommend one of seven outcomes:

	Decision	Subsidiary Criteria
i	Pass	The student is awarded the degree unconditionally.
ii	Pass, subject to minor revision	The student is awarded the degree, subject to the completion of minor amendments.
iii	Pass, subject to major revision	The student is awarded the degree, subject to the completion of major amendments.
iv	Resubmit	The student is required to make substantial amendments to the thesis for re-examination, but not to undergo a second viva.
v	Resubmit with second viva	The student is required to make substantial amendments to the thesis for re-examination, and to undergo a second viva.
vi	Fail	The student is invited to resubmit for examination for the award of another research degree (MPhil, MRes as appropriate).
vii	Fail	The student is not permitted to submit again.

D6.7 The student will be given formal notification of the outcome of the viva, and written guidance on any amendments required to the thesis, as soon as possible after the viva. The time allowed for completion of amendments will be calculated from the date of formal notification.

D6.8 The examiners will decide whose approval is required to confirm that any amendments have been completed to their satisfaction.

D6.9 The student will have a maximum of two months to complete minor amendments; six months to complete major amendments; one year to complete substantial amendments with or without a second viva; six months to resubmit for examination for another award. These time scales apply equally to full-time and part-time students. If, in exceptional circumstances, a student requires an extension to the agreed period, he or she must make an application in writing to the Exam Panel Chair, stating the reasons for the extension, and providing supporting evidence as appropriate.

D6.10 After consideration of the amended thesis, the examiners may recommend one of three outcomes:

	Decision	Subsidiary Criteria
i	Pass	The student is awarded the degree unconditionally.
ii	Pass, subject to minor revision	The student is awarded the degree, subject to the completion of minor amendments.
iii	Fail	The student is not permitted to submit again.

In the case of outcome (ii), the student will have a maximum of two months to complete minor amendments.

D6.11 Following the submission of minor amendments as in D6.8, the examiners may recommend only (i) or (iii).

D7 Student Conduct

D7.1 Academic and non-academic misconduct by research students will be dealt with in accordance with the University's Student Conduct Regulations.

D8 Academic Appeals and Complaints

D8.1 Research students are entitled to make academic appeals in accordance with the University's Academic Appeals Regulations.

D8.2 Research students are entitled to make complaints in accordance with the University's Complaints Handling Procedure.