



RESEARCH DEGREE REGULATIONS 2026/27

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Research Degree Regulations 2026/27

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Research Degree Courses

1. Courses of Study

(1) The University offers courses of study leading to the award of the following Research Degrees of the University of London:

- (a) Master of Arts by Research
- (b) Master of Science by Research
- (c) Master of Philosophy (MPhil)
- (d) Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

And the following course for staff members only which leads to the award of a Research Degree of Royal Holloway and Bedford New College:

- (e) Doctor of Philosophy by Prior Publication (PhD)
- (2) Courses of study leading to the award of an MPhil and PhD will be determined for each student individually and will consist primarily of research, which is presented in the form of a thesis and assessed by oral examination.
- (3) A student may be required as part of a course of study leading to the award of a Research Degree to undertake one or more taught modules., either as part of the same degree course or forming part of another degree course. In such cases, the student will also be subject to any academic regulations that apply to taught modules.
- (4) The University reserves the right to vary the content and delivery of courses, to discontinue, merge, or combine courses, and to introduce new courses if such action is reasonably considered to be necessary by the University. Such change may occur either before or after admission.
- (5) Students will be informed, as soon as is practicable, of any substantial changes which might affect their course of study.
- (6) Students will be able to take modules appropriate to the course for which they are registered, however, modules are subject to change or withdrawal by the University.

2. Period of study

(1) In calculating the period of study for an individual student:

- (a) account will be taken of whether the student is studying on a full-time or part-time basis or has changed their mode of study;
- (b) any part of the course of study from which the student has been granted exemption under the provisions of Section 4 of these regulations will be included;
- (c) any period(s) of time for which the student has been granted a formal interruption of studies under the provisions of Section 9 of these regulations will be excluded.

- (2) The part-time mode of study intensity is set at 50% of the corresponding full-time equivalent programme.
- (3) Full-time students are not normally permitted to change to part-time study after the end of the second year of the MPhil or PhD course.
- (4) The period of study for an MPhil or PhD Degree will be a minimum of two calendar years of full-time study, or four years of part-time study. Other courses may have their own specified periods of study.
- (5) Students must submit the thesis for examination within the following periods of study, otherwise their registration with the University may be discontinued.
 - (a) For courses of study leading to the award of MPhil, the thesis must be submitted within three years of full-time study, or six years of part-time study.
 - (b) For courses of study leading to the award of PhD, the thesis must be submitted within four years of full-time study, or eight years of part-time study. Where a student is in receipt of Research Council funding with a deadline that precedes that of the University, the former will take precedence.

Arrangements For Admission, Registration and Enrolment

3. Admission to a research degree course

- (1) To be eligible for admission to a Research Degree course an applicant must:
 - (a) be at least 16 years of age on the start date of the course of study;
 - (b) meet, or be exempted from, the General Entrance Requirements set out in the University;
 - (c) demonstrate proficiency in spoken and written English to the satisfaction of the University before commencing the course of study;
 - (d) meet, or be exempted from, additional entrance requirements where prescribed for individual courses.
- (2) In assessing an applicant who does not hold the required qualifications for admission, the University will seek alternative evidence that they can study at the required level. This may include prior education experience, including professional competencies and proficiency in spoken and written English required for admission to the course of study. The University may set qualifying assessments where it is not satisfied that prior learning has been verified through reliable and valid assessment.
- (3) An applicant will only be admitted to a course of study which the University has judged to be sufficiently different from that already completed, except where such studies are to be counted as part of the applicant's course of study at the University under the provisions of exemptions in Section 4.
- (4) Applicants will be asked to provide details of any disability or Specific Learning Difficulty so that the University can advise them provisionally on the level of support available. Information provided for this purpose will play no part in assessing an application for admission to the University.
- (5) Applicants for admission to doctoral courses leading to the award of a professional qualification or membership of a professional body will be required to declare unspent and/or spent convictions as specified in the relevant course documentation. The decision on whether to accept an applicant will be based firstly on academic requirements, and secondly on the risk posed to staff and students. Applicants admitted to such courses who have failed to disclose criminal convictions and/or who fail to disclose criminal convictions which arise during their course will be subject to disciplinary action.
- (6) A contract is formed between the University and the applicant as soon as the offer of admission to the University has been accepted. Acceptance of an offer is expressly subject to the terms of this contract, which include the requirement that students will comply with the conditions of enrolment with the University. In the case of collaborative arrangements, there may also be a contract between the partner institution and the applicant.
- (7) An applicant will normally be expected to start their course of study at standard points in the academic year.

4. Exemption from part of the MPhil and PhD courses of study

- (1) An applicant who has followed a course of postgraduate research of at least twelve months of full-time study, or 24 months of part-time study at another institution may be considered for exemption from part of an MPhil or PhD course at the University. A student who started a Masters by Research with the University and wishes to transfer to an MPhil or PhD course may be considered for exemption from part of an MPhil or PhD course at the University.
- (2) Applicants for courses of study leading to the degree of MPhil may be exempted from up to the first twelve months of full-time study, or 24 months of part-time study and will be required to complete twelve months of full-time study, or 24 months of part-time study under supervision at the University before being permitted to submit the thesis for examination.
- (3) Applicants for courses of study leading to the degree of PhD may be exempted from up to the first 24 months of full-time study, or 48 months of part-time study and will be required to complete twelve months of full-time study, or 24 months part-time study under supervision at the University before being permitted to submit the thesis for examination.
- (4) To qualify for consideration, the applicant's previous course of research:
 - (a) must be in a field and at a level appropriate to the proposed course of study at the University;
 - (b) must have been undertaken at a higher education institution of appropriate standing and be certified by a competent officer at that institution;
 - (c) must have been undertaken no longer than five years prior to the start date of the course at the University;
 - (d) must not already have been taken into account in the award of a Research Degree.
- (5) Exemption from more than twelve months of full-time study, or 24 months part-time study shall be granted only if there is sufficient evidence that the applicant has already satisfied all of the University's requirements, including those for skills development, to be upgraded to the degree of PhD (see Section 10).

5. Registration with the University

- (1) To register as a student of the University, an applicant must have been formally offered a place and have satisfied the academic and other conditions of admission.
- (2) Registration with the University is subject to the following restrictions:
 - (a) students may not be registered concurrently for more than one award within the higher education setting unless they have been admitted as a Visiting Student or as part of an institutional agreement;

- (b) students who have completed active study and are awaiting results only are permitted an overlapping period of registration, normally no longer than three months;
 - (c) Visiting Students may not register for courses which lead to an academic award.
- (3) Students who register with the University retain their registration status until they graduate, withdraw permanently or have their registration discontinued.
- (4) Students are required to give notice in writing to the Chief Student Officer (or nominee) via [the University's withdrawal process](#) before withdrawing. In cases of collaborative provision students are also required to give notice in writing to the partner institution.
- (5) A student's registration with the University may be discontinued at any time on academic grounds under the provisions of Section 11.

6. Registration on MPhil and PhD courses

- (1) A student following a course of study leading to the award of the degree of PhD shall be registered in the first instance for the degree of MPhil, except where in granting exemption from part of the course of study under the provisions of Section 4, it is determined that the student has previously satisfied the requirements to be registered for the degree of PhD.
- (2) A student wishing to upgrade their registration to the degree of PhD must successfully complete a formal upgrade review under the provisions of Section 10. The first attempt to upgrade must be undertaken within the first 18 months of full-time study, or the first 36 months of part-time study. If the student is not successful on the first attempt, they may be granted a second and final attempt before the end of the second year of full-time study, or fourth year of part-time study.
- (3) Failure to attempt the upgrade by the regulatory deadline, including either or both the first and the final attempt, will result in the student failing the upgrade attempt, unless there are severe extenuating circumstances deemed acceptable by the Chair of the Doctoral School Committee or their nominee.
- (4) A student who has upgraded their registration to the degree of PhD may opt to transfer to the degree of MPhil at any time up to the date of entry to the final examination.
- (5) At the time of a student's initial registration on an MPhil or PhD course, the Department Postgraduate Research Lead shall ensure:
- (a) that the student has been allocated a supervisor, a second supervisor and/or an adviser in accordance with the requirements of the [Code of Practice for Research Degree Students and Supervisors](#) and that the supervisory arrangements as a whole are appropriate;
 - (b) that any issues arising from commercial funding of the research, and matters of intellectual property and research ethics, have been considered and addressed appropriately;
 - (c) that any specific and material needs on the part of the student have been considered and addressed appropriately, taking account of the mode and place

of study and any disability or Specific Learning Difficulty which the student may have disclosed to the University.

- (d) that UKVI compliance stipulations take precedence over any considerations that may be supported under point (c) above.

7. Annual enrolment with the University

- (1) Students must enrol each year of study by:
 - (a) completing the online sign-up process;
 - (b) paying, or making arrangements acceptable to the University to pay, the tuition fees and any outstanding debts, as outlined in the Fees Regulations;
 - (c) providing relevant documentation to verify their identity and the right to study in the UK at the outset of the course and, where required, during their studies.
- (2) Postgraduate research students are expected to be in the UK for the duration of their studies unless they are going abroad on fieldwork or other academically approved research trips or taking a period of leave as per the Code of Practice for Research Degree Students and Supervisors.
- (3) Registration may be discontinued or an interruption enforced if any visa compliance breaches are identified by the University's UKVI compliance monitoring processes.
- (4) Students are not required to enrol if they are on an approved period of interruption from studies.
- (5) It is a condition of enrolment that students agree to abide by, and submit to, the University Statutes, Regulations and Rules, as made and amended from time to time by the Academic Board and Council.
- (6) In the case of collaborative provision, students may be subject to additional statutes and regulations both at the University and the partner institution. Failure to comply with the conditions of enrolment may result in the discontinuation of the student's registration with the University.
- (7) Enrolment gives students the right to attend classes, receive tuition or supervision and have access to relevant University facilities.
- (8) The standard enrolment points are September, January and April each academic year. The University, or partner institution in the case of collaborative provision, reserves the right to decline to enrol a student who arrives after the advertised dates without prior approval and in the absence of medical or other good cause deemed acceptable by the Chief Student Officer.
- (9) The amount of paid work undertaken by a student enrolled with the University on a full-time basis shall not exceed twenty hours per week. No student may undertake paid work which may conflict with their responsibilities as a student of the University.
- (10) Where full-time students are enrolled on writing-up status, they are expected to undertake periods of study at an average of 21 hours per week for at least 24 weeks. This only applies to students in their first year of writing-up, and only to those who were previously enrolled on a full-time basis.

- (11) For those students in receipt of UKRI or Industry linked funding, funder stipulations for the writing up year will take precedence over the university regulations.

8. Remote Studies

- (1) The expectation is that postgraduate research students live within reasonable commuting distance of the university's London or Egham campus, or the normal place of research in the UK as set by the supervisor, research area or funding body, unless on a period of interruption, annual leave, or conducting fieldwork or other academically approved research trips.
- (2) Any arrangement to live outside of the above stipulations is considered remote study.
- (3) Postgraduate researchers will be permitted to study remotely for short periods of time throughout their programme of studies up to a maximum of 90 days per academic year, so long as this does not impact their ability to fully engage with their postgraduate programme and wider expectations of engagement as set in the [Code of Practice](#). These 90 days can be taken consecutively or spread across the academic year as agreed with the supervisor, and are pro-rata for part time students.
- (4) It is expected that any key in person or online Faculty/departmental inductions, events and training courses are attended when considering short-term remote study arrangements.
- (5) A student may only be permitted to study remotely for over 90 days in the academic year, whether consecutively or otherwise, with the permission of the Chair of the Doctoral School Committee or their nominee on the grounds of material long-term medical, financial or other very serious extenuating personal circumstances, and with the recommendation of the student's Faculty Dean or an authorised deputy.
- (6) Remote study limitations do not apply in the writing up year and arrangements should be discussed and agreed with the supervisor.
- (7) Remote study for international students will be restricted by UKVI visa stipulations, including in the writing up year, and will take precedence over University regulations.
- (8) Remote study for UKRI funded or Industry funded students may be restricted by the Terms and Conditions of the funding body, including in the writing up year, and will take precedence over university regulations.
- (9) Undertaking remote studies will not impact completion timelines or key deadlines as set at the start of the programme.
- (10) These regulations should be read in conjunction with the Remote Studies Guidance.

9. Interruption of studies

- (1) The period of study shall normally be continuous.
- (2) The Chief Student Officer or their nominee may permit a student to interrupt their studies for up to 24 months on financial, medical or personal grounds on the recommendation of the student's Head(s) of Department or an authorised deputy. Any period of interruption taken for the reason of maternity/paternity /adoption leave does not count against the 24 months limit.
- (3) The University may enforce a period of interruption or extend a period of interruption of studies taken if the correct right to study or return to study documentation has not been submitted, acquired or provided during the period of study.
- (4) The University will not normally approve a period of interruption of studies during the writing up year. Interruptions at this stage will only normally be permitted for placements, maternity/paternity/adoption leave or long-term and very serious extenuating circumstances that prevent the student from undertaking any research at all.
- (5) A student may only interrupt their studies for more than 24 months, whether consecutively or otherwise, with the permission of the Chair of the Doctoral School Committee or their nominee.
- (6) Students who have interrupted their studies remain registered students of the University and subject to University regulations, but, with the exception of cases of maternity/paternity/ adoption leave, do not have the right to attend classes, use University facilities, or receive tuition or supervision other than occasional access to tutors by arrangement. Exceptions may also be made to support recovery in cases of interruptions due to mental health and wellbeing.
- (7) Registration periods for international students may be dictated or restricted by visa regulations.

Assessment of Academic Progress During the MPhil and PhD Courses

10. Reviews of academic progress

- (1) Each student's academic progress will be formally reviewed at least once every twelve months, unless the student has interrupted their studies, in which case a review will take place not more than two months after the student has formally resumed their studies.
- (2) The purpose of the reviews will be:
 - (a) to consider the student's academic progress in relation to the objectives and standards which have been set;
 - (b) to confirm satisfactory completion of, or exemption from, the requirements for research training and development which apply for the period under review;
 - (c) to assess the amount of research completed and the extent of work outstanding;
 - (d) to determine new objectives and training requirements, and a schedule of work, which will help to ensure timely submission of work for the final examination.
- (3) Where the student is being considered for upgrading to the degree of PhD, the review will assess whether the student has reached an appropriate standard and has in prospect an adequate project of research to justify the upgrade.
- (4) Each department or school will determine and publish at the beginning of each academic year its own procedures, requirements and criteria for the reviews, including those for upgrading to the degree of PhD, subject to the minimum requirements set out in these regulations. Where a student has supervisors in more than one department or school, the principal supervisor will be responsible for determining the procedures, requirements and criteria which will apply and for notifying the student at the beginning of their course of study.
- (5) As a minimum, each annual review will be conducted with at least one member of the supervisory team present plus one member of staff who is independent of the supervisory team. Where the student is undertaking a review for the purpose of upgrading their degree to PhD, the panel will include a minimum of three members, with at least one member of the supervisory team and one member of staff who is independent of the supervisory team in attendance.
- (6) Reviews may be conducted face-to-face or online.

Reviews will include the following components:

- (a) the consideration of a brief report, written by the student, which summarises the progress which has been made during the period under review and the extent to which objectives have been met, and sets out a draft schedule of future work;
- (b) a face to face or online meeting between the panel members and the student;

- (c) where the student is being considered for upgrade from MPhil to PhD, a substantial piece or portfolio of work, which must include written work but may also include other forms of work which are appropriate to the project of research.
- (7) All work submitted for review must consist of the student's own work, with the part played by the student in any work done jointly with the supervisor(s) and/or fellow researchers clearly stated by the student and certified by the supervisor(s). The presentation of another person's work in any quantity or form without adequately identifying it and citing its source in a way which is consistent with good scholarly practice in the discipline and commensurate with the level of professional conduct expected from the student will be considered under the [Regulations on Academic Misconduct](#).
- (8) The student will be sent a written invitation to the review meeting, stating the material that the student is required to submit and the deadline by which it must be submitted.
- (9) The student may ask the panel to consider any circumstances which may have affected their academic performance. Such requests must be made in writing in accordance with the [Assessments Guidance for Students](#). Requests must be submitted within the deadline set by the faculty for the submission of material for the review, except where the circumstances only relate to the student's performance at their meeting with the panel, in which case the student must inform the panel of their circumstances at the beginning of the meeting and then submit the written request and supporting evidence not more than seven days later.
- (10) If it is decided that the student has not made satisfactory progress, or if there is concern that the student will not reach the required standard and/or be in a position to submit the thesis within an appropriate timeframe, the panel will recommend a course of action and provide the student with written guidance on the reasons for their concerns and what would need to be done by the student in order to address them.
- (11) The panel will record the outcome of the review and its recommendations using the relevant form issued by the Chief Student Officer. A copy of the form will be kept on file in the Doctoral School together with copies of the materials submitted by the student and any other documents which have contributed to the panel's decision. A copy of the form will also be given to the student.
- (12) If the purpose of the review is to consider the student for upgrading to the degree of PhD, the student will also be sent formal notification by the Chief Student Officer of the outcome, its implications for the student's registration at the University and, if appropriate, the right to appeal against the decision.
- (13) The outcomes of all reviews will be considered by the Faculty Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee. If the panel has identified concerns about the student's progress, the Committee will consider the panel's recommendations and may decide to hold a further formal review and/or to invite the Faculty Dean or nominee to issue the student with a formal warning

Discontinuation of Registration on Research Degrees

11. Discontinuation of registration on research degrees

- (1) Where a student's record of attendance, academic performance or progress is unsatisfactory, the Faculty Dean or nominee may recommend to the Associate Pro Vice Chancellor (Postgraduate Research) or nominee that the student's registration should be discontinued. If the Faculty Dean or nominee is a member of the student's supervisory team, it may be appropriate for a different member of staff to be involved in making such a recommendation and in monitoring the student's progress. For students holding a Student Route Visa, the University has obligations placed on it to report non-attendance to UK Visas and Immigration and may discontinue registration without following the formal warning process.
- (2) Before making a recommendation to the Associate Pro Vice Chancellor (Postgraduate Research) or nominee that a student's registration should be discontinued, Student Administration will issue the student with two formal warnings on behalf of the Faculty Dean or nominee. Each formal warning shall state the reason(s) for the warning, the nature of any requirement made of the student to demonstrate improvement and the period of time within which this is to be done in order for the student to avoid their registration being discontinued. The second letter of formal warning shall state the fact that it is the final warning.
- (3) Normally four weeks will elapse between the first and second formal warnings to give adequate time for the student to demonstrate a satisfactory level of improvement.
- (4) At each warning the student will be offered the opportunity to submit a written response and/or to meet with the Faculty Dean or nominee to discuss the grounds for the warning. The student may be accompanied at the meeting by another student or member of staff of the University. On provision of satisfactory and adequately documented explanation for the student's record of attendance, academic performance or progress Student Administration may set the warning aside. This decision will be confirmed to the student in writing. Formal warnings which have not been set aside will remain active for the duration of the student's course of study, including any course transfers.
- (5) If after the second letter of formal warning there is insufficient improvement, the Faculty Dean or nominee may recommend that the student's registration should be discontinued. Student Administration will present the case to the Associate Pro Vice Chancellor (Postgraduate Research) or nominee, who will make a final decision based on the circumstances.
- (6) The Chief Student Officer or nominee will write to each student whose registration has been discontinued informing them of the decision with reasons, of the right to appeal and the appeals procedure.

Final Examination for the Degree of MPhil or PhD

12. Entry or re-entry to the final examination

- (1) Each student must submit to the Doctoral School their formal entry or re-entry to the final examination at least two months before submitting the thesis, using the form issued for this purpose by the Chief Student Officer.
- (2) If a student does not submit the thesis within eighteen months of submitting the entry form, their entry to the final examination will be cancelled.
- (3) Students will be examined in accordance with the regulations in force at the time they submitted their formal entry or re-entry for the examination.

13. Appointment of examiners for MPhil and PhD courses of study

- (1) The examiners for the thesis will be nominated in the first instance by the student's principal supervisor. To ensure that examiners are sufficiently independent, supervisors should avoid repeatedly nominating the same individual and should not enter into reciprocal examining arrangements. The supervisor may contact potential nominees informally to establish whether they would be willing and able to act as examiners.
- (2) The supervisor's nominations will be considered in the first instance by the Department Postgraduate Research Lead in consultation with a range of discipline specialists, and a record of the process will be kept in the department or school. Where the student is registered in more than one department, discipline specialists from the other department(s) will also be consulted. The Department Postgraduate Research Lead may seek advice on individual nominations from senior academics in the University or elsewhere.
- (3) If the nominations are deemed to be acceptable, they will be approved by the Department Postgraduate Research Lead and reported to the Faculty Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee at the time of the student's formal entry or re-entry to the examination using the form issued for this purpose by the Chief Student Officer. Where necessary the Department Postgraduate Research Lead will seek the advice of the Faculty Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee and/ or the Chair of the Doctoral School Committee, before approving a nomination.
- (4) Two examiners, or exceptionally three if the Department Postgraduate Research Lead determines that the scope of the thesis is such that it cannot be examined adequately by two individuals, will be appointed to act jointly for each student as follows:
 - (a) at least one of the examiners will be external to the University when the nomination is made, meaning that they must not have been a member of staff, a visiting lecturer, a visiting professor or emeritus professor at Royal Holloway for a period of at least three years.
 - (b) one examiner will normally be a member of staff, a visiting lecturer, a visiting professor or emeritus professor at Royal Holloway when the nomination is made, or will have held such a position within the last three years. If no suitable

individual is available from the University a second examiner who is part of the University of London may be appointed following provision of reasonable justification which is approved by the Department Postgraduate Research Lead. Where an examiner is appointed from the staff at Royal Holloway, the individual must be genuinely independent of the student's course of study.

- (c) Where the thesis to be examined has been submitted by a member of University academic staff (e.g. lecturer, senior lecturer, reader, Professor) or a member of professional service staff who holds a substantive post in the institution both examiners should be external to Royal Holloway.
- (5) The aim of the appointment process is to appoint examiners who will be able, and be seen to be able, to make a fair and independent assessment of the student and their thesis and to ensure the good standing of University of London Research Degrees through the consistent application of appropriate academic standards. To this end:
- (a) the examiners will be of sufficient authority in the discipline to command the respect of the wider academic community and familiar with current standards and procedures of Research Degrees in the UK;
 - (b) the examiners will be experts in the field of the thesis; whilst it is accepted that each examiner individually may not have expertise in all parts of the precise topic, the examiners together should be able to cover all aspects of the work to be presented by the student;
 - (c) the examiners will be able to make an independent assessment of the student and will not therefore have played an active role previously in assessing the student's academic progress on the course of study or have had any other involvement with the student or supervisor which might reasonably lead to an allegation of bias, although it is acknowledged that while internal examiners may have had contact with supervisors, independence of internal examiners should be sought as far as feasibly possible;
 - (d) at least one of the examiners will, wherever practicable, have had experience in examining for a Research Degree of the University of London.
- (6) Following their formal appointment by the Doctoral School Committee, each examiner will have the appointment confirmed in writing and will be provided with details of the University's rules, regulations, and guidelines for the assessment of Research Degrees by the Doctoral School.

14. Requirements of the MPhil and PhD theses

- (1) The thesis must not exceed the following word limits:
 - (a) PhD-100,000 words
 - (b) MPhil-60,000 words
- (2) In the fields of practice-based research where the student has undertaken research in which practice forms a core methodology and mode of enquiry, the PhD submission may include a body of creative work devised specifically for the degree together with a body of critical/theoretical writing. Both elements will show coherence, originality and intellectual rigour, illustrating knowledge and understanding of relevant

practice and critical debates in the field. Taken together, they should demonstrate an original contribution to knowledge. The relationship between the creative and critical/theoretical components will vary depending on the specific project, but will be examined as an integrated whole. The precise balance between the creative and critical elements of the thesis will be decided between the student and the supervisory team. However, the following is a suggested breakdown:

- (a) a substantial body of creative work;
 - (b) between 10,000-60,000 words of critical/theoretical writing.
- (3) If an exhibition, live performance or other non-textual creative work is to be submitted as part of the PhD, it will be appropriately documented and retainable record of these creative practices will be submitted in a form which has been approved by the supervisory tea
 - (4) The thesis will comprise no more than 60,000 words for the degree of MPhil, and of not more than 100,000 words for the degree of PhD. In the case of creative writing the thesis may run to 150,000 words in total depending on the nature of the creative written work to be submitted.
 - (5) These regulations should be read in conjunction with discipline-specific guidance provided by the department.
 - (6) The word counts include references, footnotes and endnotes, but exclude the bibliography and any appendices, which should only include material which the examiners are not required to read in order adequately to examine the thesis, but to which they may refer if they wish.
 - (7) The thesis must be complete and in a finished state. Examiners reserve the right to decline to examine a thesis which, in their judgement, is incomplete or unfinished. This would include a thesis where a complete chapter or chapters are missing, or where parts of the thesis are written in note form.
 - (8) The scope of the thesis will be what might reasonably be expected after two or, at most, three years of full-time study for the degree of MPhil, and after three or, at most, four years of full-time study for the degree of PhD.
 - (9) The thesis will consist of the student's own account of their investigations, with the part played by the student in any work done jointly with the supervisor(s) and/or fellow researchers clearly stated by the student and certified by the supervisor(s). The presentation of another person's work in any quantity or form without adequately identifying it and citing its source in a way which is consistent with good scholarly practice in the discipline and commensurate with the level of professional conduct expected from the student will be considered under the [Regulations on Academic Misconduct](#).
 - (10) The greater proportion of the work which is recorded in the thesis must have been undertaken after the student's initial registration for the Research Degree course at the University, subject to the provisions of Section 4 of these regulations, and shall not have been submitted previously for a degree or comparable award of the University of London or any other university or institution. Any work which has been incorporated in the thesis and has been submitted previously in this way must be clearly indicated.

(11) The thesis for the degree of MPhil will be a record either of original work or of an ordered and critical exposition of existing knowledge and will provide evidence that the field has been surveyed thoroughly; whereas the thesis for the degree of PhD will form a distinct contribution to the knowledge of the subject and will afford evidence of originality by the discovery of new facts and/or by the exercise of independent critical power.

(12) The thesis must be presented in accordance with one of the following formats

Table 1

Format 1	The thesis will be an integrated whole and present a coherent argument. Research work already published, or submitted for publication, at the time of submission of the thesis, either by the student alone or jointly with others, may be integrated into the body of the thesis in a suitably adapted form. Any publications derived from the work in the thesis may also be bound as supplementary material at the back of the thesis.
Format 2	Students wishing to present a thesis in a format other than a monograph, for example, as papers (including book chapters, journal articles, or conference proceedings), may do so with the permission of their supervisor. This must normally be confirmed at the time of the upgrade review. The thesis should include the following: (i) A short introduction which provides the context of the research, the rationale for the investigation, and the strategy employed during the research at the start of the thesis. (ii) A detailed methodology section which describes the methods employed during the research with a detailed critical analysis of those methods, making reference to the main thesis content derived from those methods. This should be a maximum of 8,000 words. (iii) Research project work (may be submitted as papers). (iv) A critical evaluation of the work presented in the thesis. This should be a maximum of 15,000 words. (v) A summary and conclusion which draws together the various outcomes of the work into a coherent synthesis and indicates directions for future work.
Format 3	Where students throughout their studies have produced significant work alongside their research project that contributed to their learning and skills development, then the following alternative thesis format may be presented: (i) A short introduction which provides the context of the research, the rationale for the investigation, and the strategy employed during the research at the start of the thesis. (ii) Detailed sections that demonstrate learning and skills development, which may include (but are not limited to):

	(a) Project management (b) Data management plan (c) Engagement with knowledge exchange (d) Engagement with industry (e) Engagement with open science including data deposit in a public repository (f) Challenge led work (iii) Research project work (may be submitted as papers, see Format 2 above), including a critical evaluation of the research work as whole. (iv) A summary and conclusion that draws together, with the critical evaluation, the various sections and outcomes of the work into a coherent synthesis and indicates directions for future work.
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(13) The thesis will give a critical assessment of the relevant literature, describe the method of research used and its findings and include a discussion on those findings. For the degree of PhD, the thesis will additionally indicate in what respects the findings appear to the student to advance the study of the subject and, in so doing, demonstrate objectivity, the capacity for judgement in complex situations and autonomous work in the field of study, and a deep and synoptic understanding of that field, the student being able to place the thesis in a wider context.

(14) The thesis for the degree of PhD will demonstrate research skills relevant to the thesis and 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.

15. Language of the MPhil and PhD theses

(1) The written part of the thesis will be in English.

(2) Students in the field of Modern Foreign Languages and Literatures, may apply for permission on an exceptional basis to write the thesis in the language of study. Successful applications must meet all or substantially all of the following criteria:

- (a) the language of the thesis must be the same as the main language of study;
- (b) the thesis must involve a high degree of reference to samples from, or texts written in the language of study;
- (c) the critical or other professional discourse of the subject must be substantially grounded in the language of study;
- (d) publication in the language of study must be perceived as being beneficial to the subject and in the best interests of the student.

- (3) Applications based on deficiencies in the student's command of English, or the fact that the student is not a native speaker of English, or the fact that the candidate is a native speaker of the language of study, shall not be approved.
- (4) Applications must be submitted in writing by the student to the Doctoral School at an early stage in the student's studies, or before initial registration for the course of study, and must be supported in writing by the student's supervisor(s). Applications will be considered by the Associate Pro Vice Chancellor (Postgraduate Research) on behalf of the Doctoral School Committee. The student shall be notified in writing of the decision the reasons for the decision.
- (5) If the application is approved, the student will be required to include in the thesis an additional submission of between 10,000 and 20,000 words, which will be written in English with a satisfactory standard of literary presentation and summarise the main arguments of the thesis. The summary shall not be included in the word count for the thesis.

16. Submission of the MPhil and PhD Theses

- (1) An electronic copy of the thesis must be submitted by the student to the Doctoral School, except in cases where agreement is in place for a restriction of access for reasons of confidentiality, commercial sensitivity or patents where, instead, two hard copies of the thesis must be submitted by the student to the Doctoral School. In such cases, the student may be required to submit a third copy of the thesis in the event that a third examiner is appointed at any stage in the examination process.
- (2) Failure to submit by the submission deadline will normally result in the student failing the degree without the option to present the thesis for a second time, unless there are severe extenuating circumstances which are deemed acceptable by the Doctoral School Committee.
- (3) All components of the thesis must be presented for examination in a final form and in the case of hard copies bound in accordance with the [Instructions and Notes on Submission](#).
- (4) The decision to submit a thesis in any particular format rests with the student alone.
- (5) The student's thesis must comply with the specific word count set for the programme. If the word count is in excess of the parameters set, then the thesis may not be examined and may be referred for resubmission.

17. Conduct of the MPhil and PhD final examination

- (1) The final examination for the MPhil and PhD Degree will be based on a thesis submitted by the student and an oral examination, which in all cases will be conducted in English.
- (2) Each oral examination must have an independent chair and be recorded. The recording will be kept by the Doctoral School for a period of 6 months from either the date the student is awarded or the date their studies are discontinued, after which time the recording will be destroyed. The recording will only be listened to in the event of an academic appeal or complaint, and only by those involved with investigating the appeal or complaint.

- (3) The independent chair's role will be to act as an observer and to ensure that the procedures are followed. They will not be directly involved with examining the thesis. The independent chair will
- (a) be a member of the academic staff, but not the Faculty Dean, who has had no involvement with the student's course of study;
 - (b) have had experience of conducting at least two Research Degree viva voce examinations as an examiner;
 - (c) have had experience of supervising at least one Research Degree student through to completion;
 - (d) be familiar with the Research Degree regulations.
- (4) All matters relating to the final examination must be treated as confidential. Examiners are not permitted to divulge the content of previously unpublished material contained in a student's thesis until such time as the thesis has been placed in the public domain and any restrictions on access to the thesis are removed.
- (5) Before engaging in any pre-viva discussion, holding the oral examination, or before preparing a joint report in those cases where the student is to be re-examined without holding an oral examination, each examiner will write an independent, preliminary report on the thesis. The preliminary reports will be submitted to the Doctoral School, prior to the examination, but will not be made available to the student.
- (6) Where an examiner deems the thesis to be incomplete, such that it will not be examined, the examiner(s) will not write a report but will instead write a brief statement giving the reason for their decision. This statement will be submitted to the Doctoral School and will be made available to the student. This first, unexamined submission of the thesis for examination will be counted as a first submission.
- (7) The oral examination can be held either online or in person during working hours. If it is in person, it will be held at the University or in one of the buildings owned by the University of London in central London, unless both the student and the University agree that it is expedient to hold the oral examination elsewhere.
- (8) The viva will normally be held within three months from the submission of the thesis.
- (9) One member of the supervisory team may attend the oral examination as an observer unless the student indicates at the time of their formal entry or re-entry to the final examination that no members of the team should be in attendance at the oral examination. The supervisor will not participate in the examination of the student unless invited to contribute by the examiners. Otherwise, the oral examination will be held in private.
- (10) The student must bring to the oral examination a copy of their thesis paginated in the same way as the copies submitted to the University. This may be an electronic copy.
- (11) After any oral examination, a joint final report shall be prepared by the examiners for submission to the Doctoral School Committee. The joint final report will be released to the student.
- (12) Students with any disability or Specific Learning Difficulty may ask for reasonable adjustments to be made to the conduct of the final examination under the provisions

of the [Regulations on Access Arrangements for Assessment](#). Such requests should be submitted to the Doctoral School at the time of the student's formal entry or re-entry to the final examination where possible and no later than two weeks before the date of the oral examination.

- (13) Where a student feels that their academic performance on the date of the oral examination may be substantially affected by unexpected medical or other personal circumstances, the student should inform the examiners of their situation no later than the start of the oral examination so that they can make a decision on whether or not to proceed. The examiners may require the student to submit evidence of their condition to the Doctoral School within seven days.
- (14) Where a student fails to attend the oral examination, this will normally result in the student failing the degree unless there are severe extenuating circumstances which are deemed acceptable by the Doctoral School Committee.

18. Outcome of the PhD examination

- (1) The following options are available to examiners in determining the result of the PhD examination. Please note: the period allocated for any corrections should reflect the actual time required to complete them and is not determined by the student's previous mode of study.

Table 2

Award with no corrections	If the thesis fulfils the criteria set out in Section 14 and the student satisfies the examiners in all other parts of the examination, the examiners will report to the Doctoral School Committee that the student has passed.
Award subject to minor corrections	If the thesis otherwise fulfils the criteria set out in Section 14, but requires minor amendments, and the student satisfies the examiners in all other parts of the examination, the examiners may require the student to make amendments to the thesis specified by them within three months. The amended thesis shall be submitted to the examiners, or to one of their number nominated by them, for confirmation that the amendments are satisfactory.
Award subject to 9 month corrections	If the thesis otherwise fulfils the criteria set out in Section 14 but requires amendments to address errors of substance or omission, and the student satisfies the examiners in all other parts of the examination, the examiners may require the student to make amendments to the thesis specified by them within a period of up to nine months. The amended thesis shall be submitted to the examiners, or to one of their number nominated by them, for confirmation that the amendments are satisfactory, without the requirement to conduct a further viva.
Award subject to 18 month corrections	If the thesis, though inadequate, shall seem of sufficient merit to justify such action, the examiners may determine that the student be permitted to re-present their thesis in a revised form within 18 months. The examiners shall not make such a decision without first submitting the candidate to an oral examination.

Refer for re-examination	If the thesis satisfies the criteria set out in Section 14, but the student fails to satisfy the examiners at the oral examination, the examiners may determine that the student be permitted to re-present the same thesis, and submit to a further oral examination within a period specified by them and not exceeding 18 months.
Not award PhD degree but offer the award of Master of Philosophy	If, after completion of the examination, including the oral examination, the examiners determine that a student has not reached the standard required for the award of the PhD degree nor for the re-presentation of the thesis in a revised form for that degree, they shall consider whether the thesis satisfies the criteria for the award of the MPhil degree. If the thesis as it stands fulfils the criteria for the MPhil degree set out in Section 14 of these regulations and the student satisfies the examiners in all other parts of the examination, the student will be informed that they have been unsuccessful at the examination for the PhD degree, but that the examiners have indicated that the student has reached the standard required for the award of the MPhil degree. The student will be given two months to indicate whether or not they wish to be considered for the award of the MPhil degree. If the student indicates that they wish to be so considered, the examiners will report to the Doctoral School Committee that the candidate has satisfied them in the examination for the MPhil degree. If the student does not indicate within two months that they wish to be so considered, they will be informed that they have failed to satisfy the examiners for the PhD degree and that they may no longer be considered for the award of the MPhil degree.
Not award PhD degree but offer the award of Master of Philosophy subject to minor corrections	If, after completion of the examination, including the oral examination, the examiners determine that a student has not reached the standard required for the award of the PhD degree nor for the re-presentation of the thesis in a revised form for that degree, they shall consider whether the thesis does or might be able to satisfy the criteria for the award of the MPhil degree. If they so decide, the examiners shall submit a report which demonstrates either how the criteria for the MPhil degree are satisfied, or what action would need to be taken for these criteria to be satisfied. If the thesis otherwise fulfils the criteria for the MPhil degree set out in Section 14 of these regulations, but requires minor amendments, and the student satisfies the examiners in all other parts of the examination, the student will be informed that they have been unsuccessful at the examination for the PhD degree but that, with minor amendments to the thesis, they would satisfy the criteria for the award of the MPhil degree. The student will be given two months to indicate whether they wish to be considered for the award of the MPhil degree. If the student indicates that they wish to be so considered, they must then, within three months, submit the amended thesis to the examiners, or to one of their number nominated by them, for confirmation that the amendments are satisfactory. If the amendments are satisfactory, the examiners will report to the Doctoral School Committee that the candidate has satisfied them in the examination for the MPhil degree. If the amendments are not satisfactory, the examiners will either give the student a further three months in which to make the amendments or determine that the student has not satisfied them in the examination. If

	the student does not indicate within two months that they wish to be so considered, they will be informed that they have failed to satisfy the examiners for the PhD degree and that they may no longer be considered for the award of the MPhil degree
Not award the PhD degree but invite the student to revise and resubmit the thesis for examination for the degree of Master of Philosophy	If, after completion of the examination, including the oral examination, the examiners determine that a student has not reached the standard required for the award of the PhD degree nor for the re-presentation of the thesis in a revised form for that degree, they shall consider whether the thesis does or might be able to satisfy the criteria for the award of the MPhil degree. If they so decide, the examiners shall submit a report which demonstrates either how the criteria for the MPhil degree are satisfied, or what action would need to be taken in order for these criteria to be satisfied. If the thesis, though inadequate, shall seem of sufficient merit to justify such action, the examiners may determine that the student be permitted to enter the examination for the MPhil degree and re-present their thesis in a revised form within twelve months. The examiners may, at their discretion, exempt from a further oral examination a student who, under this regulation, has been permitted to re-present the thesis in a revised form. If the revised thesis is satisfactory, the examiners will report to the Doctoral School Committee that the candidate has satisfied them in the examination for the MPhil degree. If the revised thesis otherwise fulfils the criteria for the MPhil degree set out in Section 14, but requires minor amendments, the student will be given three months to submit the amended thesis to the examiners, or to one of their number nominated by them, for confirmation that the amendments are satisfactory. If the revised thesis is not satisfactory, the examiners shall determine that the student has not satisfied them in the examination.
Fail and no resubmission permitted	The examiners may determine and report to the Doctoral School Committee that the student has not satisfied them in the examination. The examiners shall not, however, save in very exceptional circumstances, make such a decision without submitting the student to an oral examination. A student who fails to satisfy the examiners will not be permitted to re-enter for the examination.

Outcome of PhD Re-examination

(2) The following outcomes are available in determining the result of a re-examined PhD thesis.

Table 3

Outcomes available where initial decision was to give minor corrections	- The amendments are satisfactory, the examiners will report to the Doctoral School Committee that the student has passed. - The amendments are not satisfactory, the examiners may either give the student a further three months in which to make the amendments, or determine that the student has not passed.
Outcomes available where initial decision was to give 9 month corrections	- The amendments are satisfactory, the examiners will report to the Doctoral School Committee that the student has passed. - The amendments are not satisfactory, the examiners will either give the student a further three months in which to make the amendments, or determine that the student has not satisfied them in the examination.
Outcomes available where initial decision was to give 18 months corrections	- The revised thesis is satisfactory, the examiners will report to the Doctoral School Committee that the candidate has passed. - The revised thesis is not satisfactory, the examiners may require the student to make minor amendments specified by them within three months - The revised thesis is not satisfactory but as presented satisfies the criteria for the award of the MPhil. - The revised thesis is not satisfactory and the student should make minor amendments in order to satisfy the criteria for the award of MPhil . - The revised thesis has not satisfied the criteria for the degree of PhD or MPhil and may no longer be considered for an award. The examiners may, at their discretion, exempt from a further oral examination a student who has been permitted to re-present the thesis in a revised form.
Outcomes available where initial decision was to refer for a further oral examination	- The student has met the requirements. The examiners will report to the Doctoral School Committee that the candidate has satisfied them in the examination for the PhD degree. - The student has not satisfied the requirements but as presented satisfies the criteria for the award of the MPhil. - The student has not satisfied the criteria for the degree of PhD or MPhil and may no longer be considered for an award.

Outcomes of an Incomplete Thesis

- (3) Where the examiners have required the student to submit a finished thesis as the original one was not examined by reason of being incomplete, the completed thesis shall be submitted to the examiners within three months of the original decision. In such a case the candidate must undergo an oral examination.
- (4) The following outcomes are available in determining the result of an incomplete thesis.

Table 4

Award with no corrections	If the thesis fulfils the criteria set out in Section 14 and the student satisfies the examiners in all other parts of the examination, the examiners will report to the Doctoral School Committee that the student has passed
Award subject to minor corrections	If the thesis otherwise fulfils the criteria set out in Section 14, but requires minor amendments, and the student satisfies the examiners in all other parts of the examination, the examiners may require the student to make amendments to the thesis specified by them within three months. The amended thesis shall be submitted to the examiners, or to one of their number nominated by them, for confirmation that the amendments are satisfactory.
Award subject to 9-month corrections	If the thesis otherwise fulfils the criteria set out in Section 14, but requires amendments to address errors of substance or omission, and the student satisfies the examiners in all other parts of the examination, the examiners may require the student to make amendments to the thesis specified by them within a period of up to nine months.
Not award PhD degree but offer the award of Master of Philosophy	If, after completion of the examination, including the oral examination, the examiners determine that a student has not reached the standard required for the award of the PhD degree nor for the re-presentation of the thesis in a revised form for that degree, they shall consider whether the thesis satisfies the criteria for the award of the MPhil degree. If the thesis as it stands fulfils the criteria for the MPhil degree set out in Section 14 of these regulations and the student satisfies the examiners in all other parts of the examination, the student will be informed that they have been unsuccessful at the examination for the PhD degree, but that the examiners have indicated that the student has reached the standard required for the award of the MPhil degree. The student will be given two months to indicate whether or not they wish to be considered for the award of the MPhil degree. If the student indicates that they wish to be so considered, the examiners will report to the Doctoral School Committee that the candidate has satisfied them in the examination for the MPhil degree. If the student does not indicate within two months that they wish to be so considered, they will be informed that they have failed to satisfy the examiners for the PhD degree and that they may no longer be considered for the award of the MPhil degree.

Fail and no resubmission permitted	The examiners may determine and report to the Doctoral School Committee that the student has not satisfied them in the examination. The examiners shall not, however, save in very exceptional circumstances, make such a decision without submitting the student to an oral examination. A student who fails to satisfy the examiners will not be permitted to re-enter for the examination.
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- (5) If the examiners are unable to reach agreement, their reports shall be referred to the Chair of the Doctoral School Committee, which shall determine the action to be taken. This will normally involve the appointment of an independent third or fourth examiner who will be external to the University as well as the institutions in which the original examiners are members of staff.
- (6) In all cases where the outcome requires re-submission of the thesis and/or a further form of examination students must submit the thesis by the deadline and/or undertake the examination on the date(s) set. Failure to do so will normally result in the student failing the degree, unless there are severe extenuating circumstances which are deemed acceptable by the Doctoral School Committee.

19. Outcome of the MPhil examination

- (1) The following options are available to examiners in determining the result of the MPhil examination. Please note: the period allocated for any corrections should reflect the actual time required to complete them and is not determined by the student's previous mode of study.

Table 5

Award with no corrections	If the thesis fulfils the criteria for the MPhil degree set out in Section 14 of these regulations and the student satisfies the examiners in all other parts of the examination, the examiners will report to the Doctoral School Committee that the candidate has satisfied them in the examination for the MPhil degree.
Award subject to minor corrections in 3 months	If the thesis otherwise fulfils the criteria for the MPhil degree set out in Section 14 of these regulations, but requires minor amendments, and the student satisfies the examiners in all other parts of the examination, the examiners may require the student to make amendments to the thesis specified by them within three months. The amended thesis shall be submitted to the examiners, or to one of their number nominated by them, for confirmation that the amendments are satisfactory.
Award subject to 9 month corrections	If the thesis otherwise fulfils the criteria for the MPhil degree set out in Section 14 of these regulations, but requires amendments to address errors of substance or omission, and the student satisfies the examiners in all other parts of the examination, the examiners may require the student to make amendments to the thesis specified by them within a period of up to nine months. The amended thesis shall be submitted to the examiners, or to one of their number nominated by them, for confirmation that the amendments are satisfactory, without the requirement to conduct a further viva.
Represent thesis within 12 months	If the thesis, though inadequate, shall seem of sufficient merit to justify such action, the examiners may determine that the student be permitted to re-present their thesis in a revised form within twelve months. The examiners

	shall not make such a decision without first submitting the candidate to an oral examination. The examiners may at their discretion exempt from a further oral examination a student who under this regulation has been permitted to re-present the thesis in a revised form.
Refer for re-examination	If the thesis satisfies the criteria for the MPhil degree set out in Section 14 of these regulations, but the student fails to satisfy the examiners at the practical or written examination, the examiners may determine that the student be exempted on re-entry from presentation of the thesis and be permitted to submit to a further practical or written examination within a period specified by them and not exceeding twelve months. The examiners may at their discretion exempt the student from taking a further oral examination.
Refer for re-examination	If the thesis satisfies the criteria for the MPhil degree set out in Section 14 of these regulations, but the student fails to satisfy the examiners at the oral examination, the examiners may determine that the student be permitted to re-present the same thesis, and submit to a further oral examination within a period specified by them and not exceeding twelve months.
Fail and no resubmission permitted	The examiners may determine and report to the Doctoral School Committee that the student has not satisfied them in the examination. The examiners shall not, however, save in very exceptional circumstances, make such a decision without submitting the student to an oral examination. A student who fails to satisfy the examiners will not be permitted to re-enter for the examination.

Outcomes of MPhil Re-examination

- (2) The following outcomes are available in determining the result of a re-examined MPhil thesis.

Table 6

Outcomes available where initial decision was to give minor corrections in 3 months	- The amendments are satisfactory, the examiners will report to the Doctoral School Committee that the candidate has satisfied them in the examination for the MPhil degree. - The amendments are not satisfactory, the examiners will either give the student a further three months in which to make the amendments, or determine that the student has not satisfied them in the examination.
Outcomes available where initial decision was to give 9 month corrections	- The amendments are satisfactory, the examiners will report to the Doctoral School Committee that the candidate has satisfied them in the examination for the MPhil degree. - The amendments are not satisfactory, the examiners will either give the student a further three months in which to make the amendments or determine that the student has not satisfied them in the examination.
Outcomes available where initial decision was to refer for a further oral examination	- The student has met the requirements. The examiners will report to the Doctoral School Committee that the candidate has satisfied them in the examination for the MPhil degree. - The student has not satisfied the criteria for the degree of MPhil and may no longer be considered for an award.

- (3) If the examiners are unable to reach agreement, their reports shall be referred to the Chair of the Doctoral School Committee who shall determine the action to be taken.
- (4) In all cases where the outcome requires re-submission of the thesis and/or a further form of examination students must submit the thesis by the deadline and/or undertake the examination on the date(s) set. Failure to do so will normally result in the student failing the degree, unless there are severe extenuating circumstances which are deemed acceptable by the Doctoral School Committee.

20. Aegrotat awards

- (1) In exceptional circumstances, where a student is prevented in the event of death, illness or other substantial cause from completing their thesis, the Doctoral School Committee may consider a student for the award of an Aegrotat degree.
- (2) To be considered for an Aegrotat degree the following conditions must be met:
 - (a) the student must have upgraded to the degree of PhD.
 - (b) the examiners must be satisfied that the student would be unlikely to meet the requirements in future.
 - (c) the examiners must be satisfied that there is sufficient evidence of the student's ability at the appropriate level to qualify for the award of the PhD degree.
- (3) An Aegrotat degree will only be considered for the PhD programme.

21. Notification of results

- (1) Final results will be issued to students by the Chief Student Officer after they have been considered and approved by the Doctoral School Committee.
- (2) The degree of MPhil or PhD shall not be awarded until one electronic copy of the final, post-viva, corrected version of the thesis has been submitted for storage in the institutional repository and lodged with the Doctoral School.
- (3) A diploma under the seal of the University of London shall be subsequently delivered to each candidate who has been awarded a degree. The diploma for the degree will bear the names of the student in the form in which they appear in the records of the University at the date of issue. Formal notification or confirmation of results will not be given to students deemed to have tuition or tuition-related debt to the University.

22. Availability of MPhil and PhD theses

- (1) Electronic copies of successful theses shall be placed, after award, in the Institutional Repository to be publicly available.
- (2) Restriction of access to the electronic version of the thesis for a minimum period of two years can be specified by the student without any formal justification or approval. Students wishing to impose access restrictions for any period longer than two years must submit a formal written request to the Doctoral School. This can be submitted at

the time of the student's entry for the examination, or, within eighteen months following the successful viva and must be supported in writing by the student's supervisor(s) or Faculty Dean, if the supervisor has left the University. The request will be considered by the Department Postgraduate Research Lead.

- (3) Where documentary evidence of commercial funding and/or commercial sensitivity is provided, restriction of access to the electronic version of the thesis for a period longer than two, with a maximum of five, years can be specified by the student at the point of submission. This request must be approved by the supervisor(s). Students or supervisors requesting access restrictions for any period longer than five years must submit a formal written request to the Doctoral School. This can be submitted at the time of the student's entry for the examination, or, within eighteen months following the successful viva and must be supported in writing by the student's supervisor(s) or Faculty Dean, if the supervisor has left the University. The request will be considered by the Department Postgraduate Research Lead.
- (4) The student shall be notified in writing of the decision of the Department Postgraduate Research Lead, the reasons for the decision and, if appropriate, the right to appeal against the decision by writing to the Department Postgraduate Research Lead within two weeks of notification.

23. Masters by Research Courses

- (1) Students will normally be required to have a second class undergraduate honours degree to qualify for the course.
- (2) Courses may be offered as a period of one year full-time study or two years of part-time study.
- (3) The award of MA or MSc will comprise a dissertation leading to the assessment of at least 1,800 notional learning hours at FHEQ level 7.
- (4) Some courses may include a taught component which must be passed. Students taking these courses are required to satisfactorily pass the taught component in order to qualify for the award. Students who fail the taught component will not normally be offered the opportunity to resit this component and will therefore fail the course.
- (5) The dissertation will be a maximum of 40,000 words.
- (6) The word count includes references, footnotes and endnotes, but excludes the bibliography and any appendices, which should only include material which the examiners are not required to read in order adequately to examine the thesis, but to which they may refer if they wish.
- (7) The dissertation shall:
 - (a) synthesise knowledge from the subject or discipline and apply it to a suitable research problem, hypotheses or research questions;
 - (b) provide a critical discussion of relevant major theories, debates and concepts;
 - (c) demonstrate the capacity to design and carry out an independent research project using appropriate research methods and utilizing suitable skills and techniques;

- (d) undertake a clear analysis of the results of the project, and show informed and critical use of theories and concepts to interrogate these results;
- (e) provide a reasoned and coherent account of the main findings and their significance;
- (f) display good presentation and referencing skills.

(8) In the fields of practice-based research, the dissertation will:

- (a) comprise a minimum of 10,000 words and a maximum of 20,000 words to be submitted alongside a body of creative work devised specifically for the degree.
- (b) both elements will show coherence, originality and intellectual rigour, illustrating knowledge and understanding of relevant practice and critical debates in the field. Taken together, they should demonstrate an original contribution to knowledge.
- (c) the relationship between the creative and critical/theoretical components will vary depending on the specific project. The exact balance between the textual/non-textual creative work and dissertation of the thesis will be decided between the student and supervisor and discussed at the outset of the project; though in all cases the dissertation must be a minimum of 10,000 words and a maximum of 20,000 words.
- (d) Live practice work will be appropriately documented, and a retainable record of the performance(s) or other creative practices will be submitted in a manner approved by the supervisory team.
- (e) These regulations should be read in conjunction with discipline-specific guidance provided by the department.

(9) An oral examination may be conducted at the discretion of the examiners. The oral examination will normally be held within three months of the date of submission of the dissertation. The oral examination will be subject to the examination requirements set out in Section 17 (1) to (11) of the Research Degree Regulations.

24. Outcome of the Masters by Research

(1) Outcomes of the first Masters by Research examination. Please note: the period allocated for any corrections should reflect the actual time required to complete them and is not determined by the student's previous mode of study.

Table 7

Award with no corrections	If the dissertation fulfils the criteria for the Masters by Research degree as set out in Section 23 and the student has passed the taught component of the course (if applicable), the examiners will report to the Doctoral School Committee that the candidate has satisfied them in the examination for the Masters by Research degree.
Award subject to minor corrections	If the dissertation otherwise fulfils the criteria for the Masters by Research degree as set out in Section 23 but requires minor amendments, and the student has passed the taught component of the course (if applicable), the examiners may require the student to make amendments to the dissertation

	specified by them within six weeks. The amended dissertation shall be submitted to the examiners, or to one of their number nominated by them, for confirmation that the amendments are satisfactory.
Represent dissertation in 6 months	If the dissertation, though inadequate, shall seem of sufficient merit to justify such action, the examiners may determine that the student be permitted to re-present their dissertation in a revised form for a second and final time within six months. This option is not available to examiners re-examining a dissertation. The examiners shall not make such a decision without first submitting the candidate to an oral examination. The resubmitted dissertation shall be submitted to both examiners.
Fail to submit the dissertation	The examiners may determine that the candidate has not satisfied them in the examination, that the degree should not be awarded and that the student should not be permitted to re-present their dissertation in a revised form for examination. The examiners shall not, however, save in exceptional circumstances, make such a decision without submitting the candidate to an oral examination.

(4) Outcomes of the Masters by Research re-examination.

Outcomes available where initial decision was to give minor corrections	The examiners will report to the Doctoral School Committee that the student has satisfied them in the examination for the Masters by Research degree. The examiners may require the student to make amendments to the dissertation specified by them within six weeks. The amended dissertation shall be submitted to the examiners, or to one of their number nominated by them, for confirmation that the amendments are satisfactory. The examiners will report to the Doctoral School Committee that the candidate has not satisfied them in the examination for the Masters by Research degree and may no longer be considered for an award.
Outcomes available where the initial decision was to represent dissertation in 6 months	The examiners will report to the Doctoral School Committee that the student has satisfied them in the examination for the Masters by Research degree. The examiners may require the student to make amendments to the dissertation specified by them within six weeks. The amended dissertation shall be submitted to the examiners, or to one of their number nominated by them, for confirmation that the amendments are satisfactory. The examiners will report to the Doctoral School Committee that the candidate has not satisfied them in the examination for the Masters by Research degree and may no longer be considered for an award.

- (5) External examiners for the Masters by Research dissertation will be nominated in line with Section 13 (1) of the Research Degree Regulations. However, in some circumstances the same examiner may be nominated on more than one occasion where it is not practical to find a suitable alternative examiner.

Appeals For Masters by Research, MPhil and PhD Candidates

25. Appeals against the outcomes of formal reviews, other required assessments, refusal to examine an incomplete thesis and the final examination

- (1) The University's appeals process against the outcome of a formal review for upgrading to the degree of PhD, a refusal to examine the thesis on the grounds that it was incomplete or unfinished, or the outcome of the final examination includes two stages as outlined below:
 - (a) a formal stage;
 - (b) a review stage.
- (2) A student may appeal only on one or more of the following grounds:
 - (a) that the student's performance in the assessment was substantially affected by circumstances of which the examiners had not been made aware and which the student could not with reasonable diligence have disclosed before the outcome had been determined;
 - (b) that there were procedural irregularities in the conduct of the assessment, or administrative errors, which might cause reasonable doubt as to whether the outcome would have been the same if the irregularities or errors had not occurred;
 - (c) that there is evidence of bias on the part of one or more of the examiners such that the outcome should not be allowed to stand.

A student cannot appeal against academic judgement.
- (3) Appeals must be submitted in writing by the student to the University within 15 working days of the date on which the student was formally notified of the outcome of the Doctoral School Committee.
- (4) The Chief Student Officer or their nominee may reject or dismiss any appeal which in their opinion:
 - (a) is not submitted by the deadline without compelling reason for the delay;
 - (b) does not fall within the remit of these regulations;
 - (c) fails to present reasonable grounds;
 - (d) fails to provide sufficient information or evidence in support of the student's claims;
 - (e) is frivolous or malicious. In such cases, the student may be liable for disciplinary action under the Student Conduct Regulations.

If the appeal is dismissed, a Completion of Procedures letter will be issued confirming that the internal appeals procedure of the University has been completed and of the

student's right to request that the University's decision be reviewed by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education.

- (5) Following investigation of the appeal by an investigating officer the student will be notified of one of the following outcomes of the formal stage, together with reasons for the decision:
- (a) the appeal is not upheld, and the original outcome of the Doctoral School Committee shall stand;
 - (b) the appeal is upheld, and the original examiners will be asked to reconsider their decision, the outcome of which shall be final;
 - (c) the appeal is upheld, and the original assessment will be set aside, and arrangements made for another assessment to be conducted, the outcome of which shall be final. The investigating officer in consultation with the Executive Director of the Student Journey or their nominee may make stipulations about the conduct of the assessment.
 - (d) The student will also be notified of their right to request a review of the decision, and the deadline to do so.

Review stage

- (6) Following completion of the formal stage, the student may request a review of the decision. The review will be carried out by the Head of Legal Services or their nominee.
- (7) A review request must be submitted in writing to the University within 10 working days of the date on which the student was formally notified of the outcome at the formal stage.
- (8) A review of the appeal decision may be requested only on one or more of the following grounds:
- (a) fresh evidence can be presented which could not with reasonable diligence have been submitted with the initial appeal and which might cause reasonable doubt as to the fairness of that decision;
 - (b) there is evidence of a failure to follow the procedures set out in these regulations which might cause reasonable doubt as to the fairness of the decision;
 - (c) the decision was perverse given the evidence which was available at the time.

Consideration of an appeal at the formal stage must have been completed before a student can request a review.

- (9) The Head of Legal Services or their nominee may reject or dismiss any request for review which in their opinion:
- (a) Is not submitted by the deadline given in paragraph (7) above, without compelling reason for the delay;
 - (b) does not fall within the remit of these regulations;
 - (c) fails to present reasonable grounds;

- (d) fails to provide sufficient evidence in support of the student's claims.
- (10) The review request will be considered by the Head of Legal Services or their nominee, who has not been involved in the investigation at the formal stage of the appeals process, and they will determine one of the following courses of action:
 - (a) dismiss the request for a review;
 - (b) refer the matter back to the formal stage for reconsideration;
 - (c) refer the case to a Review Panel for consideration.
- (11) If a Review Panel is required, the student will be informed of the arrangements and an Officer from Legal Services will act as Secretary to the Panel. The Review Panel will comprise of:
 - (a) a Pro Vice Chancellor, who has not considered the appeal, or their nominee as Chair
 - (b) two members of academic staff, with experience of doctoral supervision to completion from the Faculty in which the student is studying.
- (12) The Head of Legal Services or their nominee will issue a Completion of Procedures letter informing the student of their decision or the decision of the Review Panel. The letter will explain the reasons for the decision and the student's right to request that the decision be reviewed by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education.

26. Appeals against the discontinuation of registration

- (1) A student may appeal against a decision to discontinue their registration on one or both of the following grounds:
 - (a) that there is evidence of a failure to follow the procedures set out in Section 11 of these regulations which might cause reasonable doubt as to the fairness of the decision to discontinue the student's registration;
 - (b) that fresh evidence can be presented which the student could not with reasonable diligence have disclosed before the decision to discontinue their registration was made and which might cause reasonable doubt as to the fairness of that decision.
- (2) Appeals must be submitted in writing by the student to the University within 15 working days of the date on which the student was formally notified of the decision to discontinue their registration.
- (3) The Chief Student Officer or their nominee may dismiss any appeal which in their opinion
 - (a) is not submitted by the deadline given in paragraph (1) above without compelling reason for the delay;
 - (b) does not fall within the remit of these regulations;
 - (c) fails to present reasonable grounds;

- (d) fails to provide sufficient information or evidence in support of the student's claims.
- (4) If the appeal is dismissed a Completion of Procedures letter will be issued confirming that the internal appeals procedure of the University has been completed and of the student's right to request that the University's decision be reviewed by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education.
- (5) Appeals which are not dismissed under the provisions of Section 25(4) will be investigated in the first instance by an investigating officer from Student Administration and the findings will be presented in writing to a Pro-Vice-Chancellor or their nominee who will determine one of the following courses of action:
 - (a) to reinstate the student's registration in full subject to any conditions which they may wish to impose;
 - (b) to confirm the decision to discontinue the student's registration;
 - (c) to convene an Appeals Committee to investigate the matter further through a formal hearing.
- (6) If an Appeals Committee is required, the Investigating Officer will inform the student of the arrangements and act as Secretary to the Committee. The Appeals Committee will comprise:
 - (a) a Pro Vice Chancellor or their nominee as Chair
 - (b) an Associate Dean (Research and Knowledge Exchange) in which the student has studied (or their nominee).
 - (c) two other members of academic staff from the Faculty in which the student has studied, but not from the student's department(s).
 - (d) a member of the Students' Union
- (7) The Chief Student Officer or their nominee will issue a Completion of Procedures letter informing the student in writing of the decision of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor or the Appeals Committee. The letter will explain the reasons for the decision and the student's right to request that the decision be reviewed by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education.

Appendix 1: Regulations Governing the Doctor in Philosophy by Prior Publication

Award

- (1) The PhD by Prior Publication course leads to an award of Royal Holloway and Bedford New College.

Eligibility

- (1) In order to be eligible for admission the candidate must be an established member of the academic staff, senior teaching fellow, or teaching fellow, who has been in post for at least two years.

Admission

- (1) A member of staff wishing to apply for the award must first seek approval from the Department Postgraduate Research Lead who will establish if there is the appropriate expertise within the department's academic body to supervise the candidate and seek the agreement of the relevant supervisor.
- (2) If appropriate expertise is available in the school, the candidate should complete the online application form, available on the [Doctoral School website](#), and submit a 1000-1,500 words statement, or equivalent in the case of some performing and creative arts disciplines, accompanied by the relevant evidence (normally a list of the publications the candidate intends to submit) to the Doctoral School and pay the fee for application assessment. Once the fee has been paid, the application will be forwarded to the Department Postgraduate Research Lead in order to be assessed for acceptance on to the course. In order for admission to be granted, the submission must provide prima facie evidence that:
 - (a) there is a coherent body of work;
 - (b) there is evidence of a significant contribution made to the field;
 - (c) the extent of the work is equivalent to that expected of a standard Doctor of Philosophy.
- (3) The assessment for admission to the course will be carried out by the member(s) of staff who will be the supervisor(s) for the candidate. The recommendation for admission to the course will be subject to approval of the Department Postgraduate Research Lead. External expertise may be sought, if considered necessary, to provide advice to the supervisor and Department Postgraduate Research Lead on whether the submission contains the prima facie evidence required in paragraph 2 (a-c) above.
- (4) If the application is rejected, a candidate may not put forward a new application until a period of 24 months has elapsed since the original application.

Registration

- (1) If admission is granted, a supervisor will be appointed and the candidate will be registered for the course.
- (2) The submission must normally be made within twelve months of registration.
- (3) The candidate must pay the appropriate fee to the University.

Supervision

- (1) The role of the supervisor is:
 - (a) to provide guidance on the coherence and quality of the candidate's published work to be submitted for examination;
 - (b) to advise on the preparation of the supporting critical appraisal;
 - (c) to provide guidance on the preparation for the oral examination.
- (2) The supervisor will normally arrange up to six supervisory meetings per year.

Requirements of the PhD by Prior Publication Submission

- (1) The candidate must submit:
 - (a) a portfolio of peer-verified outputs which are in the public domain and/or published research, subject to paragraph (3) below, which must constitute a substantial and coherent body of work that is comparable to the extent of work required of a standard Doctor of Philosophy course;
 - (b) a critical appraisal of 15,000 – 30,000 words in length which must:
 - (i) explain how the outputs form a coherent body of work;
 - (ii) demonstrate methodological and conceptual rigour;
 - (iii) articulate the contribution to the field;
 - (iv) for co-authored work, identify the individual contribution made by the candidate.
- (2) For performing and creative arts submissions, the criteria included in Section 14 of the above Research Degree Regulations should be followed in relation to the nature of the submission apart from the requirements for submission which are set out in paragraph 1 above of these regulations. Further guidance will be provided by the supervisory team. These regulations should be read in conjunction with discipline-specific guidance provided by the department.
- (3) If the outputs are not immediately demonstrable as publishable, as in the case of some performing and creative arts disciplines, additional external peer scrutiny may be required.
- (4) The total submission, including the critical appraisal, should not normally exceed 130,000 words or the equivalent.
- (5) No work submitted for the award of a degree at the University or any other degree-awarding body should be included in the submission.

Examination Entry

- (1) Each candidate must submit to the Doctoral School their formal entry to the final examination at least two months before submitting the critical appraisal and portfolio, in accordance with the [guidance issued by the Doctoral School](#).
- (2) If the candidate does not submit the critical appraisal and portfolio within 6 months of submitting the entry form, their entry to the final examination will be cancelled.

Appointment of examiners

- (1) Two examiners, or exceptionally three if the Department Postgraduate Research Lead determines that the scope of the critical appraisal and portfolio is such that it cannot be examined adequately by two individuals, will be appointed from outside the University of London according to the following criteria:
 - (a) the examiners will be of sufficient authority in the discipline to command the respect of the wider academic community and familiar with current standards and procedures of Research Degrees in the UK;
 - (b) the examiners will be experts in the field of the thesis; whilst it is accepted that each examiner individually may not have expertise in all parts of the precise topic, the examiners together should be able to cover all aspects of the work to be presented by the candidate;
 - (c) the examiners will be able to make an independent assessment of the candidate and will not therefore have had any other involvement with the candidate or supervisor which might reasonably lead to an allegation of bias.
- (2) The examiners for the critical appraisal and portfolio will be nominated in the first instance by the lead supervisor. In order to ensure that examiners are sufficiently independent, supervisors should avoid repeatedly nominating the same individual and should not enter into reciprocal examining arrangements. The supervisor may contact potential nominees informally in order to establish whether or not they would be willing and able to act as examiners.
- (3) The supervisor's nominations will be considered in the first instance by the Department Postgraduate Research Lead in consultation with a range of discipline specialists, and a record of the process will be kept in the department or school. Where the student is registered in more than one department or school, discipline specialists from the other department(s) or school(s) will also be consulted. The Department Postgraduate Research Lead may seek advice on individual nominations from senior academics in the University or elsewhere.
- (4) If the nominations are deemed to be acceptable, they will be approved by the Department Postgraduate Research Lead and reported to the Faculty Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee at the time of the student's formal entry or re-entry to the examination using the form issued for this purpose by the Chief Student Officer. Where necessary the Department Postgraduate Research Lead will seek the advice of the Faculty Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee and/ or the Chair of the Doctoral School Committee, before approving a nomination.

Submission of PhD by Prior Publication

- (1) Two copies of the critical appraisal and portfolio must be submitted by the candidate to the Doctoral School. The candidate may be required to submit a third copy of the critical appraisal and portfolio in the event that a third examiner is appointed at any stage in the examination process. The thesis must be submitted within the maximum period of registration (see Section 4 (2)). Failure to submit within the required period will normally result in the candidate failing the degree without the option to submit for a second time, unless there are severe extenuating circumstances which are deemed acceptable by the Doctoral School Committee.
- (2) All components of the thesis must be presented for examination in accordance with the [Instructions and Notes on Submission](#).
- (3) A candidate may apply for permission to present the critical appraisal and portfolio in an alternative format where there is a demonstrable need. Applications must be submitted in writing by the candidate to [the Doctoral School](#), no later than the time of the candidate's entry to the examination and must be supported in writing by the candidate's supervisor(s). Applications will be considered by the Associate Pro Vice Chancellor (Postgraduate Research) on behalf of the Doctoral School Committee. The candidate will be notified in writing of the decision of the Associate Pro Vice Chancellor (Postgraduate Research), the reasons for the decision and, if appropriate, the right to request within two weeks of notification that the decision be reviewed by the Associate Pro Vice Chancellor (Postgraduate Research) or their nominee.
- (4) The final examination will be based on the critical appraisal and portfolio submitted by the candidate and an oral examination, which in all cases will be conducted in English.
- (5) Before holding the oral examination, each examiner will write an independent, preliminary report on the submission. The preliminary reports will be submitted to the Doctoral School prior to the examination but will not normally be made available to the candidate.
- (6) The oral examination can be held either online or in person. If it is in person, it will be held at the University or in one of the buildings owned by the University of London in central London, unless both the candidate and the University agree that it is expedient to hold the oral examination elsewhere. The viva will normally be held within three months from the submission of the critical appraisal and portfolio.
- (7) The lead supervisor will be invited to attend the oral examination as an observer, unless the candidate indicates otherwise at the time of their formal entry to the final examination. The supervisor will not participate in the examination of the candidate unless invited to contribute by the examiners. Otherwise, the oral examination will be held in private.
- (8) The candidate must bring to the oral examination a copy of their submission paginated in the same way as the copies submitted to the University. This may be an electronic copy.
- (9) After any oral examination, a joint final report shall be prepared by the examiners for submission to the Doctoral School Committee. The joint final report will be released routinely to candidates for their personal information.

- (10) Candidates with any disability or Specific Learning Difficulty may ask for reasonable adjustments to be made to the conduct of the final examination under the provisions of the [Regulations on Access Arrangements for Assessment](#). Such requests should be submitted to the Doctoral School at the time of the candidate's formal entry to the final examination where possible and not later than two weeks before the date of the oral examination.
- (11) Where a candidate feels that their academic performance on the date of the oral examination may be substantially affected by unexpected medical or other personal circumstances, the candidate should inform the examiners of their situation no later than the start of the oral examination so that they can make a decision on whether or not to proceed. The examiners may require the candidate to submit evidence of their condition to the Doctoral School within seven days.
- (12) An outcome will be awarded in line with Section 18 of the Research Degree Regulations.

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