

# GUIDELINES ON PHD BY PUBLISHED WORKS

These guidelines have been drawn up by the University's Committee on Postgraduate Research Studies. They draw on similar arrangements in place at a number of other UK Higher Education Institutions. The degree of PhD by Published Works is intended for candidates who have developed their knowledge and independent research skills to doctoral level and who have a body of publications produced during the course of their careers either within or outside academia. Although the criteria for admission, registration periods, and format of thesis differ, the expected quality of outputs, and the candidate's understanding of the wider field of knowledge, is equivalent to that for the more traditional PhD by thesis.

## Eligibility criteria for admission

Candidates must either be:

- (i) Members of University staff, holding a Bachelor's honours degree, who should have been employed by the University for a minimum of two years and have completed their probationary period; or
- (ii) Graduates of at least three years standing, holding a Bachelor's honours degree from any University recognised by Reading as being of an acceptable standard. Exceptionally, this requirement may be waived where there is an acceptable body of professional work;
- (iii) Candidates must have an appropriate number of and quality of publications which form a coherent body of research, which is judged to be timely and current, and which demonstrates the use of appropriate research methodology. These publications will normally have been published (or accepted for publication) within the past 10 years and not have been used as part of a submission for another research degree. The work must demonstrate a depth of scholarship, criticality and originality comparable with that required in a traditional PhD;
- (iv) For the purpose of this document, the term 'Published Works' or 'Publications' is used to reflect a variety of research outputs, including:
  - a) Papers or articles in refereed journals, which are published or 'in press'
  - b) Substantial or sole contribution to a book
  - c) Chapters in books
  - d) Papers presented to conferences which are available in the published proceedings of the conference
  - e) Published data sets, granted patents, or creative artefacts
  - f) Exhibitions or performances of which a permanent record has been made.

## **Guidelines on PhD by Published Works**

The work to be submitted would normally have been subject to external peer review and be available and accessible in the public domain.

## **Registration**

- (i) Candidates are normally expected to study on a part-time basis;
- (ii) The minimum registration period is 12 months and the maximum registration period is 24 months;
- (iii) Candidates would need to make a case to the Dean of Postgraduate Research Studies in order for these periods to be amended.

## **Application process**

Pre-admission Phase: Candidates are advised to contact the Director of Postgraduate Research Studies in the relevant academic School / Department to make an informal enquiry in the first instance. If it is deemed that the amount and nature of the published work could potentially form the basis of a PhD submission, and that the School / Department could provide the necessary supervision, then the candidate would be asked to submit copies of the outputs, together with a statement (of no more than 500 words) outlining the key research questions and how these are addressed by the research presented in the outputs. The submitted documentation would be assessed by the School / Department Director of Postgraduate Research Studies and at least one other member of academic staff. The candidate will be advised of the outcome of this assessment, by the Director, normally within six weeks of submission of the work.

Formal application: If the outcome of the assessment is positive, candidates will be required to submit a formal application, clearly marked as being for a PhD by Published Works, through the postgraduate on-line application system.

## **Composition of PhD submission**

The submitted work should include:

- (i) An Abstract and declaration of authorship
- (ii) A number of publications that together demonstrate evidence of an amount of research which is at a standard of academic quality deemed to be appropriate for the award of a Doctorate;
- (iii) In the case of jointly authored work, the candidate must provide proof of having made a substantive contribution to the output.
- (iv) A contextual chapter (up to 10,000 words) which provides a critical overview and synthesis of the outputs and their contribution to the discipline;
- (v) The overall maximum word length of the submitted work is 90,000 words;
- (vi) Where the submitted work is not in the form of articles, book chapters or monograph, there might be some agreed variation to points (ii) and (iii).

## **Supervision**

Once enrolled, candidates for the PhD by Published Works will require support and guidance on writing the overarching contextual chapter. In relation to such supervision:

- (i) The supervisor must have the necessary supervisory experience (i.e. they should have previously supervised at least one PhD student to successful completion within their maximum registration period) in the relevant area;
- (ii) The role of the supervisor will be to:
  - a) Guide the candidate in the final selection of outputs to be included in the submission;
  - b) Support and advise on the development of the overarching contextual chapter;
  - c) Advise the candidate on any necessary research training requirements;
  - d) Advise and support the candidate on preparation for the viva and in undertaking any amendments to the work following the initial examination.

## **Examination process**

- (i) Candidates will need to inform the Higher Degree Examinations Officer in the Graduate School of his or her intention to submit at least three months prior to the planned submission date;
- (ii) The formatting and binding of the work should be the same as required for the traditional PhD by thesis, as set out in the Rules for the Submission of Theses for Higher Degrees;
- (iii) Two copies of the thesis will need to be submitted to the Higher Degrees Examinations Officer in the Graduate School;
- (iv) Examiners will be appointed in the same way as for traditional PhD by thesis, with two external examiners and an independent chair being appointed for candidates who are members of staff of the University;
- (v) The examination process, criteria for assessment, and potential outcomes are the same as those for the PhD by thesis, as set out in the Code of Practice on Research Students.

In particular, examiners will be asked to:

- a) evaluate the intellectual merit of the candidate's submitted published work;
- b) establish if a satisfactory case is made for coherence between the publications;
- c) assess the contribution to knowledge represented by the publications and made apparent in the contextual chapter;
- d) evaluate the rigour with which the candidate has contextualised and analysed his / her publications in the contextual chapter;
- e) evaluate the appropriateness of the methods employed in the research and the correctness of their application;
- f) assess the candidate's contribution to the research embodied in multi-authored works and establish the candidate's ownership of the published work;
- g) establish the candidate's appreciation of the state of historical and current knowledge within the candidate's research area.

**Guidelines on PhD by Published Works**

Examiners will not have the option of considering candidates for award of the degree of MPhil to candidates whose work does not meet the criteria for the award of PhD.

Candidates who are dissatisfied with the outcome of their viva will have the right of Appeal to the Standing Committee on Examination Results.

**Fees**

The fee charged would be at the same rate as for candidates studying for traditional PhD by Thesis on a part-time basis.

Professor Dianne Berry

Dean of Postgraduate Research Studies

April 2016.

