

Guidelines on the PhD by publication

1. These guidelines on arrangements for the PhD by Publication have been drawn up by the University's Committee on Postgraduate Research Studies. They draw upon similar arrangements in place at a considerable number of other UK Higher Education Institutions. It is the intention in all aspects of these arrangements that, where appropriate, the procedures relating to the PhD by Publication mirror those already in place for the 'traditional' PhD in the University, so ensuring equivalence of standards.

Eligibility criteria for admission

2. The criteria in relation to eligibility for admission to a PhD by Publication shall be as follows:
 - (a) Eligibility for admission will be restricted to members of staff employed by the University;
 - (b) Full-time and Part-time staff will be eligible to submit for the *prima facie* stage if they have been employed by the University for at least two years and have completed their probationary period;
 - (c) The *prima facie* stage (see section 3) will provide a 'pre-admission' element to the PhD by Publication;
 - (d) The maximum period of registration following the *prima facie* stage will be two years. It is expected that candidates will be able to submit after one year;
 - (e) Should a candidate registered for a PhD by Publication leave the University before submission, they will continue to receive appropriate support but will be liable for a fee (see section 8).

The prima facie stage

3. Candidates for a PhD by Publication will be required to undergo a preliminary stage to applying and being examined for a PhD by Publication. This initial *prima facie* stage will be a 'pre-admission' element, with the objective of making a preliminary judgement as to the quality and coherence of the publications to be submitted for assessment for a PhD by Publication, and consequently the likelihood of a submission which will meet the criteria for an award.

In order to 'activate' this *prima facie* stage, candidates should write to the Dean of Postgraduate Research Studies who will, in collaboration with the

relevant School Director of PGR Studies, make arrangements for the consideration of the *prima facie* stage.

Candidates will be expected to include the following in a submission for the *prima facie* stage:

- (a) a small number of coherent examples of published work (perhaps three or four), to allow a panel (see below) to consider whether the candidate is likely to be able to make a successful final submission for a PhD by Publication. Examples of such publications are shown in section 5(c). In addition, the candidate should also provide a detailed list of publications, with a brief summary of those publications or any other items which are likely to be included in the final submission for the PhD by Publication, even if not yet published;
- (b) a critical summary of the publications selected in (a) above. This summary should be approximately 3000 words in length and should seek to contextualise the selected publications, demonstrate their coherence and identify the contribution to the advancement of knowledge of the research which they represent. It should also indicate the methodology adopted in the research.

The *prima facie* stage will be considered by a panel comprising:

- a member external to the University;
- the School Director of PGR Studies;
- the potential supervisor(s); and
- a further, independent, member of staff in the relevant discipline,

The School Director of PGR Studies will seek approval from the Dean of PGR Studies for the nominated panel members.

The Panel will consider

- (a) the quality and coherence of the publications to be submitted for assessment for a PhD by Publication; and
- (b) the likelihood of a submission which will meet the criteria for an award

The *prima facie* stage will mirror the 'confirmation of registration' process. The panel will meet to make a decision, although the external member may be asked to provide a written report or statement. Where practical, then candidate will meet with the panel in person. The following decisions will be open to the panel:

- (a) To recommend that a candidate be eligible for admission to a PhD by Publication;

- (b) To recommend that a candidate not be eligible for admission to a PhD by Publication;
- (c) To recommend that a candidate not be eligible for admission to a PhD by Publication at that time but to advise the candidate on the nature of publications which might, at a future date, lead to passing the *prima facie* stage.
- (d) The School Director of PGR Studies will inform the Examinations Office and the Dean of PGR Studies of the outcome.

Candidates passing the *prima facie* stage, and therefore eligible for admission to a PhD by Publication, will be required to complete a University Postgraduate Application Form.

Candidates who do not pass the *prima facie* stage will have the right of appeal. They should lodge such an appeal with the Dean of PGR Studies within four weeks of receiving this decision. The appeal will be considered by a panel comprising the Director of Research of the candidate's Faculty (or of a cognate Faculty where the candidate comes from the Dean's home School), a senior member of the Academic Staff of the candidate's Faculty having some knowledge of the discipline concerned, and a senior member of the Academic Staff drawn from another Faculty (where the relevant Faculty Director of Research has been drawn from another Faculty, it will not be appropriate for this second member of the Academic Staff also to be drawn from another Faculty). These members of Academic Staff should have experience of supervising research students and of the *prima facie* stage or equivalent process. The Appeal Committee may either Reject or Uphold the appeal. The decision of the Appeal Committee will be final. Candidates would have the right to 're-apply' to the *prima facie* stage but not within a three year period from the date of the Panel's decision. They may only re-submit for the *prima facie* stage on one further occasion.

Supervision

- 4. Candidates for a PhD by Publication will require support and guidance on writing the overarching document which will critically appraise the publications to be submitted. In relation to such supervision:
 - (a) The supervisor appointed will be a member of staff experienced in the supervision of doctoral research and not a new supervisor. Where it is not possible to appoint an experienced 'local' supervisor who is an expert in the relevant field, an external supervisor will be appointed. In such a situation, an internal 'first' supervisor will be appointed from the general subject area;
 - (b) The role of the supervisor will be to:
 - (i) guide the candidate in the selection of publications for inclusion in the submission;

- (ii) guide the candidate as to whether further publications are needed;
- (iii) support and advise on the development of the critical supporting document;
- (iv) guide the candidate in relation to the coherence of the body of work to be submitted;
- (v) advise the candidate in relation to any research training requirements.

Submission

5. The submission for a PhD by Publication will take the following form:
- (a) It should involve a series of publications (see point (c) below) and also a supporting and overarching document, which draws the publications together and critically appraises them;
 - (b) The publications and the supporting document should be of a standard equivalent to that of a 'traditional' PhD in the relevant academic area and should demonstrate the candidate's original contribution to knowledge;
 - (c) The number of publications will depend on both the academic area and the type of publication included in the submission, but the submission should normally comprise between three and ten publications. Such publications may include papers, chapters, monographs, books, scholarly editions of a text, technical reports, creative work in relevant areas, or other artefacts. Electronic publications may be included but candidates should provide evidence that they will continue to be publicly available for the foreseeable future in their present form and that they are of demonstrable quality and impact;
 - (d) The overarching critical document should set the published work in the context of existing literature and should evaluate the contribution that the research in the submitted publications makes to the advancement of the research area. It should stress the coherence of these publications, linking them to the methodology adopted;
 - (e) This overarching critical document should be approximately 10,000 words in length;
 - (f) For submissions in the areas of Film, Theatre and Television, Fine Art or Typography & Graphic Communication, the 'published' work should be equivalent to that of a 'traditional' PhD;
 - (g) Where a candidate includes jointly-authored publications in their submission, they should declare the extent to which the publication is their work and this should normally be certified by all authors concerned. This statement should be bound with the other submitted materials (see section 5i below);

- (h) The supporting critical document should include a section relating to the candidate's research methodology. Candidates should also be advised by their supervisor and / or the School Director of PGR Studies as to whether they need to undergo an element of research training (see section 4), possibly through Accreditation of Prior (Experiential) Learning;
- (i) As with thesis submissions for a 'traditional' PhD, the overarching document and the relevant publications may be submitted in hard binding, 'perfect' binding or comb binding, but not in any other form of temporary binding or as loose-leaf. Where a thesis has been submitted in "perfect" binding the candidate must submit two copies in hard binding (one for the University Library and the other for the School) before or immediately after the Senate has approved the award of the degree but before the candidate is permitted to graduate (a third copy may be hard bound for the candidate's retention if he or she wishes).¹

Currency of publications and location restrictions

- 6. Any submission for a PhD by Publication will involve a coherent body of publications, with appropriate currency. This will be ensured as follows:
 - (a) A submission for a PhD by Publication should involve publications normally published within the 10 years previous to the date of submission;
 - (b) Publications included in the submission for a PhD by Publication should not have been used in the submission for another research degree; and
 - (c) Normally, the majority of the publications should have been published, but it will be possible to include some publications which are in press or which have been accepted for publication.

Publications included in the submission will not be restricted to those published whilst the candidate was a member of staff at the University of Reading.

Assessment

- 7. Assessment for the PhD by publication will follow equivalent criteria and be of an equivalent nature to that for the 'traditional' PhD, as detailed in the University's *Code of Practice on Research Students*:

¹ For candidates commencing their PhD studies on or after October 2012, it will be a requirement that they deposit an electronic copy - in the approved electronic format - of the final version of their thesis, in CentAUR, the University's institutional repository for research publications and equivalent research outputs.

http://www.reading.ac.uk/web/FILES/qualitysupport/cop_resstudents.pdf

The examination will include a *viva voce* examination, with arrangements equivalent to those already in place for a 'PhD by thesis'. However, in order to add validity and rigour to the award, this will normally be carried out by two External Examiners with a member of the academic staff of the University acting as the Chair. At least one of these examiners should normally have experience of assessing candidates for a PhD by publication.

The role of the Chair will include arranging the examination, ensuring that the examination is conducted in accordance with the University's procedures, co-ordinating the submission of the Examiners' reports, and liaising with the candidate.

In examining the candidate's submission, the 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 critical appraisal;
- (d) evaluate the rigour with which the candidate has contextualised and analysed his/her publications in the critical appraisal;
- (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.

The following results will be available to the examiners:

- (i) The degree be awarded;
- (ii) The degree be awarded subject to amendments to the supporting and overarching document.

The required amendments should be communicated to the candidate via the Chair and are to be completed within three months of formal notification of the result by the Examinations Office. The amendments will be checked by the Examiners (or by the Chair if so authorised by the External Examiners) and, if satisfactory, the degree will be awarded;

- (iii) The candidate be required to make major amendments to the supporting and overarching document and/or submit alternate or additional publications normally within one year and the result be deferred until the amended submission has been received.

The candidate will be asked to make amendments to the supporting and overarching document and/or submit alternate or additional publications within a period of twelve months from formal notification by the Examinations Office. On submission, a further *viva voce* examination will be held. (The expectation would be that, where alternate or additional publications are required, the publications would normally already have been published, have been accepted for publication, or would be in an advanced state of preparation);

- (iv) The degree not be awarded. Candidates will be permitted to present themselves for re-examination on one further occasion which will not be less than one term and not more than nine terms following the term in which the Examiners' reports on the thesis are approved by the Senate. Candidates will be advised on the exact dates after the result has been ratified by the Senate.

The Examiners will not be able to award a degree of MPhil.

Candidates will have the right of appeal to the Standing Committee on Examination Results.

Fees

8. The fee payable for a PhD by Publication will be as follows:
- (a) full-time members of staff will receive a full fee-waiver;
 - (b) part-time members of staff on a contract amounting to a minimum of 0.5 FTE will receive a partial, pro-rata, fee-waiver on the full-time home postgraduate research fee;
 - (c) where a member of staff leaves before submission, they will be required to pay a fee amounting to one-third of the Full-time Home fee each year or part of year for the remaining period of their registration;
 - (d) the Re-examination fees for a PhD, by Publication will be equivalent to that of the Re-examination fee for a 'traditional' PhD. This shall be stated in the University *Calendar*.

Professor Dianne Berry,
Dean of Postgraduate Research Studies
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