

# **Regulations for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

## **1 SCOPE OF THESE REGULATIONS**

- 1.1 These regulations govern the awards of degrees of Doctor of Philosophy
- 1.2 In these Regulations, unless explicitly stated otherwise, Head of School may be taken to refer also to the Chair of the NBI Graduate School Executive for candidates based in the Norwich Bioscience Institutes. The Head of School's nominee shall normally be the School Director of Postgraduate Research, and there may also be a nominated Institute Director of Postgraduate Research for candidates based in the John Innes Centre, Institute of Food Research, the Sainsbury Laboratory or the Earlham Institute.

## **2 GENERAL PRECONDITIONS TO AN AWARD**

- 2.1 A candidate for the degree must be a graduate of this University or another approved university or possess some other qualifications approved by the University.
- 2.2 A candidate must, after consultation with a teacher in the University, submit to the appropriate Head of School (or nominee):
  - (1) the proposed field of advanced study and research;
  - (2) evidence of adequate training and ability to undertake the advanced study and research;
  - (3) the name of the teacher in the University who has been consulted.
- 2.3 Before being admitted to the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of the University a candidate must:
  - (1) Be approved by the appropriate Head of School (or nominee) as a candidate for the degree;
  - (2) Engage in advanced study under the direction of teachers in the University appointed by the Head of School (or nominee) as the candidate's supervisory team;
  - (3) Undertake research in a field of study approved by the Head of School (or nominee)
  - (4) Satisfactorily present the results of the research and study in a thesis and pass such oral and other examinations as may be prescribed by these Regulations.

## **3 DURATION OF COURSE**

- 3.1 The period of advanced study and research for full-time candidates shall,
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subject to the following exceptions, be three years:

(1) The candidate may, with the permission of the appropriate Head of School (or nominee), spend not more than twelve months of the period of study at some other approved place of study or research. When the nature of the research requires that work should be undertaken elsewhere than in the University the Head of School (or nominee) may appoint an additional supervisor.

(2) In cases where the Head of School (or nominee) deems it appropriate, a candidate's period of study may be reduced by not more than twelve months. In such a case, the Head of School (or nominee) may also reduce the period within which the thesis is to be submitted, by not more than the reduction in the period of study.

(3) Permission to extend the normal period of study by up to six months may be granted by the Head of School (or nominee) on the recommendation of the candidate's supervisor. In such a case, the Head of School (or nominee) may also extend the period within which the thesis is to be submitted, by not more than the extension in the period of study. The Academic Director of Research Degree Programmes may give special permission for further extensions to the period of study on the recommendation of the Head of School (or nominee) concerned.

(4) The Head of School (or nominee) may permit the interruption of the period of study if there are special reasons for doing so. The Head of School (or nominee) shall specify the length of interruption which may not exceed twelve months. In such a case the Head of School (or nominee) may also extend the period within which the thesis is to be submitted by not more than the length of the interruption.

- 3.2 The period of study for part-time candidates shall normally be six years but this period may be reduced by not more than twenty-four months if the Head of School (or nominee) concerned is satisfied that an equivalent period has been spent under approved supervision on research relevant to the candidate's subject. In such a case, the Head of School (or nominee) may also reduce the period within which the thesis is to be submitted, by not more than the reduction in the period of study. The exceptions listed in 3.1 also apply.

## **4 PROGRESS AND PROBATION**

- 4.1. There shall be an annual review of the progress of each candidate in each year of the candidate's period of study and/or registration undertaken by the candidate and supervisory team and monitored by or on behalf of the Head of School or nominee. For students registering from 1 October 2015 onwards, during their first year of registration, the status of PhD students as doctoral candidates is probationary and their annual review includes the confirmation review of their status.

- 4.2 Confirmation review requires the involvement of an Internal Assessor who is not a member of the candidate's supervisory team. As part of confirmation review, the Internal Assessor should agree a joint recommendation with the supervisory team on the candidate's probationary status.
- 4.3 If the candidate is not making satisfactory progress at a confirmation review, they will be warned promptly in a formal letter from the Head of School or nominee that they may be asked to withdraw from the University. The candidate will be set a clear list of measurable goals to be achieved and the timescale for achieving these. They will also be required to attend a Continuation Review Meeting at which the Internal Assessor should agree a further joint recommendation with the supervisory team on the candidate's probationary status. A student not making satisfactory progress at a Continuation Review Meeting will normally be required to withdraw from the programme.
- 4.4 The supervisory team shall also report to the Head of School or nominee at any time when the candidate appears not to be making satisfactory progress, is otherwise not fulfilling the conditions that have been laid down or appears unlikely to reach the standard of the degree.
- 4.5 A candidate may, with the approval of the Head of School (or nominee), be permitted to withdraw as a candidate for the degree and be approved as a candidate for the degree of Master of Philosophy no later than twelve months prior to the end of the period of study for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The period of study already completed shall count towards the period of study required for the degree of Master of Philosophy.

## **5 SUBMISSION OF THE THESIS**

- 5.1 In the thesis and examination the candidate is required to show distinct ability to conduct original investigations, to test ideas whether the candidate's own or those of others and to understand the relationship of the theme of the investigations to a wider field of knowledge. The thesis should show evidence of adequate industry and application. The candidate is expected to take due account of previously published work on the subject, to show distinct ability in conducting original investigations and in testing ideas whether the candidate's own or those of others. The candidate is also expected to show understanding of the relationships of the special theme to a wider field of knowledge. The thesis should represent a significant contribution to the development of understanding, for example, through the discovery of new knowledge, the connection of previously unrelated facts, the development of a new theory or the revision of older views. The thesis shall not exceed 100,000 words in length. In making their judgement on the award of the degree, Examiners shall take into account that the substance and

significance of the thesis should be of a kind which might be reasonably expected of a capable and diligent student after three years of full-time (or equivalent) study.

- 5.2 In the case of the Creative and Critical Writing programme in the School of Literature, Drama and Creative Writing a substantial part of the candidate's thesis shall be an original literary text of high standard written specifically for the degree. In the remaining part of the thesis, which shall normally be between 20,000 and 50,000 words in length, and in the examination, the candidate is required to show a critical understanding of the creative process, and of the relationship between the original literary text submitted and contemporary or traditional achievements in the genre.
- 5.3 In the case of the Professional Practice programme in the School of Art, Media and American Studies, a substantial part of the thesis may be archival / curatorial, educational or creative in content. This will be represented in the thesis submission by a substantial dossier of practical work presented in an appropriate, accessible and enduring format. This will be analysed in and complemented by a written commentary, normally of between 40,000 and 50,000 words. The purpose of the commentary is to show a critical understanding of professional practice, to set the material in the dossier in a broader historical and theoretical framework, and to draw attention to its originality and utility.
- 5.4 In the case of the Musical Composition programme in the School of Music the candidate's thesis shall be in the form of a substantial portfolio of original compositions written specifically for the degree, together with an appropriate written commentary of 15,000-65,000 words in length. The compositions shall show coherence and originality in invention as well as in the treatment of musical techniques. The written commentary shall discuss the structure of each of the compositions and provide an exposition of the creative process. In the written commentary, and in the examination, the candidate is required to show a critical understanding of the relationship of the submitted compositions to contemporary musical thought.
- 5.5 In the case of the Translation Studies programme in the School of Literature, Drama and Creative Writing, part of a candidate's thesis may be a translation of high standard by the candidate, written specifically for the degree. In this case the remaining part of the thesis shall be a substantial commentary. In the commentary and in the examination the candidate is required to show a critical understanding of translation theory and its link to practice, and of its written relationship with the submitted translation. The proportion between the parts will normally be 60% for the translation and 40% for the commentary.
- 5.6 A candidate who wishes to submit a thesis shall apply to the Head of Postgraduate Research Service (or nominee). A thesis may be presented for examination at any time after the beginning of the last six months of the candidate's prescribed period of study provided that not

more than four years for full-time candidates and seven years for part-time candidates shall have elapsed from the date of approval as a candidate for the degree. The Academic Director of Research Degree Programmes may give special permission for extensions to the period within which the thesis must be presented on the recommendation of the Head of School (or nominee) concerned.

- 5.7 A candidate for the degree shall, not later than three months before the submission of the thesis and in any case no later than three months before the end of the period of advanced study and research, submit for approval to the appropriate Head of School (or nominee) the precise title of the thesis to be examined.

## **6 APPOINTMENT OF EXAMINERS**

- 6.1 The Head of the School (or nominee) shall recommend for approval by the Faculty Associate Dean of Postgraduate Research, the names of two or more examiners, at least one of whom shall be an external examiner. This recommendation shall normally be made not later than three months before the expected date of the submission of the thesis.

## **7 EXAMINATION**

- 7.1 A candidate shall be examined orally on the thesis and on subjects relevant to it. The examination shall normally be held within three months of the date of submission of the thesis. Exceptions to this shall require approval by the Academic Director of Research Degree Programmes.
- 7.2 Prior to the oral examination of the thesis the examiners shall each prepare independent preliminary reports regarding the candidate's performance.
- 7.3 In exceptional circumstances the Academic Director of Research Degree Programmes may, on sufficient grounds submitted by the examiners and on the recommendation of the Head of School (or nominee), excuse the candidate from the oral examination or agree to its replacement by a written examination.
- 7.4 The examiners having examined the candidate shall send their joint final report and recommendation to the Head of School concerned (or nominee). If the examiners do not agree in their recommendations or if for any other reason the Head of School (or nominee) needs a further opinion, the Head of School (or nominee) shall recommend to the Academic Director of Research Degree Programmes the appointment of an additional external examiner who shall conduct a further examination of the candidate.
- 7.5 The Head of School (or nominee) having considered the final report and

recommendation of the examiners shall then proceed in one of the following ways:

- (1) If the thesis and performance in the oral examination are of sufficient merit they shall recommend that the candidate be approved for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy;
- (2) If the thesis and performance in the oral examination are of sufficient merit, but that minor corrections are required, they shall recommend that the candidate be approved for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, subject to completion of minor corrections within six months;
- (3) If the thesis and performance in the oral examination are not of sufficient merit for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy but there is reasonable expectation that the thesis, if revised, could reach the standard required for the degree, the Head of School (or nominee) shall recommend either that the candidate be asked to submit a revised thesis or that the candidate be given the option either of submitting a revised thesis or of being approved for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy. A candidate who is given this option shall be allowed a period of not more than fourteen days from receipt of formal notification of the outcome of the examination to decide which of these alternatives to accept; A candidate who submits a revised thesis shall do so within one year and may be required to undergo further oral examination. A candidate shall not be allowed to submit a revised thesis on more than one occasion;
- (4) If the thesis and performance in the oral examination are not of sufficient merit for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy and the Head of School (or nominee) is not of the opinion that the candidate should be permitted to submit a revised thesis, they shall, if the thesis and performance in the oral examination are of sufficient merit for the degree of Master of Philosophy, recommend that the candidate be approved for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy (with or without corrections).
- (5) If the thesis and performance in the oral examination are not of sufficient merit to entitle the candidate to the degree of Master of Philosophy it shall recommend that no degree be awarded.

7.6 In all cases the recommendations of the Head of School (or nominee) shall be laid before the Head of Postgraduate Research Service (or nominee) who shall ensure that appropriate action is taken on behalf of the Senate.

## **8 FINAL SUBMISSION OF THESIS**

8.1 A candidate shall submit two copies of the thesis in accordance with rules approved by the Senate.

- 8.2 If a candidate is approved for the award of the degree the Head of the Postgraduate Research Service (or nominee) shall deposit one copy of the thesis in the University Library where it shall be available for consultation. The second copy shall be deposited with the School of Studies concerned. The Head of the School (or nominee), at the request of the candidate, may determine that a particular thesis shall, for a period of up to three years specified by the Head of School (or nominee), be available only to those who have the candidate's written permission to consult it.

## **9 MODIFICATIONS FOR AFFILIATED INSTITUTES**

- 9.1 Persons working within one of the following Institutes may be permitted to register as full-time candidates or part-time candidates for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy:

British Trust for Ornithology  
Broom's Barn Research Station  
Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science  
The Arable Group, Morley Business Centre  
The National Institute of Agricultural Botany  
Norfolk and Norwich University Hospitals Department of Family Medicine  
Norfolk and Norwich University Hospitals Department of Medical Physics and Bioengineering  
Norfolk and Norwich University Hospitals Institute for Medical Education  
Public Health Laboratory, Norwich  
The Sainsbury Institute for the Study of Japanese Arts and Cultures

- 9.2 Candidates registering under this regulation shall proceed to the degree in accordance with Regulations 1 to 8, subject to the modification that each candidate shall have a supervisory team consisting of at least one member of the academic staff who shall be the primary supervisor and one senior member of staff of the Institute concerned.

## **10 MODIFICATIONS FOR THE FOUR YEAR PHD PROGRAMME WITH A ROTATION YEAR**

- 10.1 Candidates located at the John Innes Centre, the Earlham Institute and The Sainsbury Laboratory may be permitted to register as full-time candidates for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy and to proceed in accordance with Regulations 1 to 8, subject to the following modifications:
- (1) The period of study, research and registration shall be four years;
  - (2) Permission to extend the normal period of study, research and registration may be granted by the Academic Director of Research Degree Programmes;

- (3) Supervision shall be conducted by a supervisory committee.
- (4) The first year of the period of study and research shall be undertaken under the direction of nominated members of the supervisory committee. It shall take the form of a rotation between different laboratories, normally three, approved by that committee;
- (5) The thesis shall be submitted before the end of the fourth year of study, research and registration;
- (6) Any candidate permitted by concession to enter a registration-only period after the conclusion of four years of study and research shall become liable immediately (without waiver) to payment of the relevant fees under Fees Regulation 11.

## **11 MODIFICATIONS FOR CANDIDATES FROM APPROVED HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS**

11.1 With the approval of the Head of the School concerned candidates from institutions offering substantial higher education provision and approved by the Postgraduate Research Executive may be permitted to register as full-time or part-time candidates for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in accordance with Regulations 1 to 8 subject to the following modifications:

- (1) The subject of their study shall be in areas where the institution has special expertise and where the University is able to call on appropriate expertise in the subject area;
- (2) The arrangements for the advanced study and research, the facilities available for the support of the advanced study and research, the training to be provided in research methodology and the detailed arrangements for supervision shall be subject to the approval of the Head of School concerned or their nominee;
- (3) The Head of School (or nominee) shall appoint a supervisory team consisting of at least one member from amongst the academic staff in the School concerned who shall be the primary supervisor and one member from the institution.

## **12 MODIFICATIONS FOR CATEGORY A CANDIDATES, INCLUDING STAFF CANDIDATES**

12.1 Candidates for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy will be designated as Category 'A' (including faculty of Schools and such other candidates as Senate shall determine) or Category 'B'. Candidates in Category 'B' shall proceed to the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in accordance with Regulations 1 to 8 above. Category 'A' candidates shall be permitted to proceed to the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in accordance with Regulations 1 to 8, subject to the following modifications.

12.2 In the case of Category 'A' candidates references to the Head of School (or nominee) in Regulations 2 (General Preconditions to an Award), 3 (Duration of Course) and 7 (Examination) shall be interpreted as references to the Academic Director of Research Degree Programmes,



or to their nominee if they have a conflict of interest. Thus the examination of any Category 'A' candidate for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy shall be conducted exclusively by external examiners appointed by the Senate on the recommendation of the Academic Director of Research Degree Programmes.

- 12.3 In the case of Category 'A' candidates, references to the Head of School in Regulation 4 (Progress and Probation) shall be interpreted as references to the Faculty Associate Dean of Postgraduate Research, or to their nominee if they have a conflict of interest.
- 12.4 In the case of Category 'A' candidates, references to the Faculty Associate Dean of Postgraduate Research in Regulation 6 (Approval of Examiners) shall be interpreted as references to Academic Director of Research Degree Programmes, or to their nominee if they have a conflict of interest.
- 12.5 The Academic Director of Research Degree Programmes shall be advised of any application from any Category 'A' candidate to continue the period of study as a candidate for the degree after ceasing to be a member of staff.