RESEARCH DEGREE HANDBOOK 2019/20

Every effort is made to ensure that the information given in this handbook is correct at the time of publication and that the information given accurately describes the programme offered by the University.
The online version of this handbook is the current definitive one and takes precedence in the event of any discrepancy. It is located on the Graduate School website, please visit westminster.ac.uk/graduateschool

Welcome to the Graduate School

A warm welcome from the Graduate School and well done on achieving a place to carry out your research here at Westminster.

We pride ourselves on pursuing leading, innovative research in both theory and practice, in Britain and across the world and we were pleased by the very positive outcomes of the REF2014 with 90% of our research being assessed as internationally recognised, excellent and world-leading.

We are proud too of the experience of research we make possible for our doctoral students. In the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey 2019, 79% of our students rated the overall experience of their research degree positively, and 86% were happy with their supervision.

We aim to continue to provide a distinctive, high-quality and vibrant experience for doctoral researchers, with opportunities to work within an exciting interdisciplinary research environment, attend tailor-made workshops and to benefit from personal development planning guidance designed for you to gain experience and skills which are highly relevant to academic study.

For more detail on these development opportunities, please see the separate Doctoral Researcher Development Programme (DRDP) Handbook.

Westminster is a large institution and this handbook will help guide you through the academic and administrative arrangements for your research degree study. It tells you about the services available to you, the regulations that apply to your enrolment and gives advice about what to do at key points.

The Graduate School is here to support and encourage you through your life as a doctoral researcher and we hope you take the opportunity to engage actively with our research community.

Professor Leigh Wilson
Director, Graduate School
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CONTENTS

1	**INTRODUCTION**	
1.1	Sources of advice and help for your research degree programme	**4**
	The Graduate School Registry	**4**
	Graduate School, College and School Academic Contacts	**5**
1.2	Committee structure	**7**
1.3	Quality Assurance and opportunity for feedback	**8**
2	**YOUR RESEARCH DEGREE: FROM ENROLMENT TO GRADUATION**	
2.1	Enrolment	**9**
2.2	How we contact you	**9**
2.3	Self-generated student letters	**9**
2.4	Your academic supervisors and supervisory meetings	**10**
2.5	Engagement and attendance monitoring	**11**
2.6	Tier 4 visa information	**12**
2.7	Short-term study visa	**12**
2.8	Studentships	**13**
2.9	Researcher Development -	**13**
	Doctoral Researcher Development Programme (DRDP)	**13**
	Teaching opportunities and training	**14**
2.10	Best Practice in Research: Guidance and Policies -	**14**
	Academic regulations for research degrees	**14**
	Plagiarism detection	**15**
	Research integrity	**15**
	Research ethics	**15**
	Information Compliance, Records Management and Information Security	**16**
	Open access and E-thesis	**16**
	Intellectual property and copyright	**16**
	Third party copyright	**17**
	Thesis embargo and confidentiality	**18**
	Academic research misconduct	**19**
	Rights and responsibilities	**19**
	The Student Charter	**19**
2.11	Student Wellbeing -	**20**
	General wellbeing	**20**
	Resilience workshops	**21**
2.12	Disability	**21**
2.13	Complaints and Appeals -	**21**
	Informal complaints	**21**
	Formal complaints procedure	**21**
	Academic appeals against a decision of the Graduate School Board	**21**
3	**PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT & ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE**	
3.1	The Virtual Research Environment (VRE)	**22**
3.2	Annual Progress Review (APR)	**23**
3.3	Remediation	**29**
3.4	Changes to your enrolment or personal circumstances -	**29**
	Applying for a shorter minimum period of enrolment	**29**
	Changes to thesis title, project or programme	**30**
	Changes in personal circumstances	**30**
	Mitigating Circumstances	**31**
	Suspension of Studies	**32**

	Returning from Suspension	**34**
	Maternity, Paternity, Adoption, Parental & Shared Parental Leave	**34**
	Requesting an Extension	**34**
	Requesting to Defer an Examination	**36**
	Change of mode of attendance	**36**
	Annual Leave	**37**
	Change of supervisory team	**37**
	Withdrawing from your degree	**37**
3.5	Writing up status -	**37**
	Full-Time students	**37**
	Part-Time students	**38**
3.6	Re-enrolling in a timely fashion	**39**
3.7	Submission and Examination -	**39**
	Arranging the examination panel and date	**39**
	Thesis format and submission for examination	**39**
	Preparing for your oral examination	**41**
	What happens after your examination	**41**
	Amended thesis submission following examination	**41**
	What happens after you have submitted your amended thesis	**42**
	Final thesis submission for conferment of award	**42**
	Conferment and Graduation	**43**
4	**UNIVERSITY SUPPORT SERVICES**	
	Disability Learning Support	**44**
	University of Westminster Students' Union (UWSU)	**45**
	University of Westminster PhD Society	**45**
	Library and Study Spaces	**46**
	IT Services	**46**
	Blackboard	**46**
	Academic Learning Development	**47**
	Careers and Employability Service	**47**
	Counselling	**47**
	Student Advice	**47**
	Student Accommodation	**48**
	Fieldwork and Offsite Working	**48**
	Student Health Services	**48**
	Sexual Violence and Harassment	**48**
	APPENDIX A – Specimen thesis title page, spine and cover	**50**
	APPENDIX B – Academic Appeal Process	**52**
	APPENDIX C – Masters and Doctoral Award Descriptors	**65**
	APPENDIX D – Tuition fees, fee liability and fee debt management	**68**

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Sources of advice and help for your research degree programme

The Graduate School Registry - 1st Floor Cavendish House, 101 New Cavendish Street, London, W1W 6XH

The work of the Graduate School is supported by the Graduate School Registry, which acts as the administrative hub for all doctoral researcher activity, supports all Graduate School committees and works closely with academic colleagues and other Professional Services departments. The Graduate School Registry ensures the professional and effective management of the research degree academic programme, the Doctoral Researcher Development Programme (DRDP), and the Graduate School calendar of events.

The Graduate School website (www.westminster.ac.uk/graduateschool) contains the latest information regarding news and events taking place across the institution.

We circulate a regular Graduate School Newsletter via email and regular news and updates are also posted via Twitter. Please follow us @uw_gs

A 'Research Students at the University of Westminster' Facebook group is also available to help students create better opportunities for networking and social activities. The Facebook group is now widely used by students to share ideas, answer questions about doing research at the University, find out the latest news, meet up and organise events. The group is for all research students and has become very lively in sharing important information that students need to know, and helping students connect with others who have similar interests.
Request to join the group at: https://www.facebook.com/groups/162658573826334/

Who we are:

Richard McCormack, Graduate School Manager r.mccormack@westmister.ac.uk

Lesley McDonagh, Graduate School Officer l.mcdonagh@westminster.ac.uk

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Anja Gizdavcic, Graduate School Administrator a.gizdavcic@westminster.ac.uk

To make an appointment to visit, or for general enquiries, please email graduateschool@westminster.ac.uk

Graduate School, College and School Academic Contacts

The work of the Graduate School is supported by a number of academic colleagues across the Colleges and Schools of the University:

Graduate School	
Director of the Graduate School	Professor Leigh Wilson (l.wilson@westminster.ac.uk)
Deputy Director of the Graduate School	Dr Margherita Sprio (m.sprio@westminster.ac.uk)

College of Design & Creative Industries	
College PhD Co-ordinator	Dr Anthony McNicholas (mcnichc@westminster.ac.uk)
School of Architecture & Cities	
School PhD Co-ordinator	Dr Andrew Smith (a.smith@westminster.ac.uk)
School DRDP Co-ordinator	Dr Andrew Smith (a.smith@westminster.ac.uk)
School of Computer Science & Engineering	
School PhD Co-ordinator	Dr Andrzej Tarczynski (tarczya@westminster.ac.uk)
School DRDP Co-ordinator	Dr Alexander Bolotov (a.bolotov@westminster.ac.uk)
Westminster School of Arts	
School PhD Co-ordinator	Dr Roshini Kempadoo (r.kempadoo@westminster.ac.uk)
School DRDP Co-ordinator	Dr Roshini Kempadoo (r.kempadoo@westminster.ac.uk)

Westminster School of Media & Communications	
School PhD Co-ordinator	Dr Anthony McNicholas (mcnichc@westminster.ac.uk)
School DRDP Co-ordinator	Dr Anthony McNicholas (mcnichc@westminster.ac.uk)

College of Liberal Arts & Sciences	
College PhD Co-ordinator	Dr Emanuela Volpi (e.volpi@westminster.ac.uk)
School of Humanities	
School PhD Co-ordinator	Dr Helen Glew (h.glew@westminster.ac.uk)
School DRDP Co-ordinator	Dr Andreas Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos (andreaspm@westminster.ac.uk)
School of Life Sciences	
School PhD Co-ordinator	Dr Emanuela Volpi (e.volpi@westminster.ac.uk)
School DRDP Co-ordinator	Dr Nina Porakishvili (n.porakishvili@westminster.ac.uk)
School of Social Sciences	
School PhD Co-ordinators	Dr Dan Greenwood (d.greenwood2@westminster.ac.uk) Dr Anna Doering (for Psychology Research Degrees) (a.doering@westminster.ac.uk)
School DRDP Co-ordinator	Dr Andreas Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos (andreaspm@westminster.ac.uk)
Westminster School of Law	
School PhD Co-ordinator	Dr Aurora Voiculescu (a.voiculescu@westminster.ac.uk)
School DRDP Co-ordinator	Dr Andreas Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos (andreaspm@westminster.ac.uk)

Westminster Business School	Dr Kristina Vasileva (k.vasileva@westsminter.ac.uk)
College PhD Co-ordinator	
School of Applied Management	
School PhD Co-ordinator	
School DRDP Co-ordinator	
School of Finance & Accounting	
School PhD Co-ordinator	
School DRDP Co-ordinator	
School of Management & Marketing	
School PhD Co-ordinator	
School DRDP Co-ordinator	
School of Organisations, Economy & Society	
School PhD Co-ordinator	
School DRDP Co-ordinator	

DRDP Year Leads	
Year 1	Professor Leigh Wilson (l.wilson@westminster.ac.uk)
Year 2	Dr Margherita Sprio (m.sprio@westminster.ac.uk)
Year 3	Dr Alexander Bolotov (a.bolotov@westminster.ac.uk)
Year 4	Dr Anthony McNicholas (mcnichc@westminster.ac.uk)

1.2 Committee Structure

The following University Committees are of particular relevance to you as a doctoral researcher:

Committee	Area of work
Graduate School Board (GSB)	The Graduate School Board is responsible for oversight of all doctoral programmes and the support of doctoral researcher development. The Board meets 6 times per year, and reports to the University's Academic Council. It is supported by two subcommittees, the Research Degree Progression Committee (RDPC), and the DRDP Committee (see below). Chair – Professor Leigh Wilson (l.wilson@westminster.ac.uk) Deputy Chair – Dr Margherita Sprio (m.sprio@westminster.ac.uk) Secretary – Richard McCormack (r.mccormack@westminster.ac.uk)
Research Degree Progression Committee (RDPC)	The Research Degree Progression Committee, acting on behalf of the Graduate School Board, considers the annual progress, submission of thesis and approval of examination arrangements. The Committee meets once a month to consider applications for mitigating circumstances, extension, suspension, exclusion and withdrawal. Chair – Dr Margherita Sprio (m.sprio@westminster.ac.uk) Secretary – Michael Trahair (m.trahair@westminster.ac.uk)
Research Ethics Committee	The University Research Ethics Committee and local College Research Ethics Committees receive applications for approval for research projects, including research degrees, in accordance with the University's *Code of Practice Governing the Ethical Conduct of Research* - westminster.ac.uk/research/research-framework
DRDP Committee	The Committee is responsible for the development, implementation, monitoring and review of the Doctoral Research Development Programme (DRDP), taking into

	consideration external best practice guidance. It overseas the promotion of the programme internally and externally and contributes to wider policy debate on researcher development. It supports staff involved in the delivery of the programme and actively shares best practice and opportunities for development. Chair – Dr Anthony McNicholas (mcnichc@westminster.ac.uk) Secretary – Lesley McDonagh (l.mcdonagh@westminster.ac.uk)
Graduate School External Advisory Group	The Graduate School External Advisory Group is made up of external members with sector wide experience and knowledge who discuss and review the Graduate School provision. Chair – Professor Leigh Wilson (l.wilson@westminster.ac.uk) Secretary – Richard McCormack (r.mccormack@westminster.ac.uk)
Graduate School Assembly	The Graduate School Assembly is an open forum to discuss any aspects of the Graduate School and all staff and doctoral researchers are welcome to attend. The Assembly takes place twice a year.

1.3 Quality Assurance and opportunity for feedback

The University is committed to providing opportunities for the students to put forward their views and contribute to the enhancement of their degrees. The Graduate School values the contribution made by doctoral researcher representatives (including those from the Students' Union's PhD Society) who play an active role in the Graduate School Board. Contact details of the current representatives are available from the Graduate School Registry.

Your comments and views are also sought through surveys specifically for doctoral researchers for example the bi-annual Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES), which is designed by AdvanceHE to help identify areas where improvements could be made to further enhance the experience of doctoral researchers.

For further information on the PRES please visit the AdvanceHE website here:

https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/institutions/surveys/postgraduate-research-experience-survey

2. YOUR RESEARCH DEGREE: FROM ENROLMENT TO GRADUATION

2.1 Enrolment

When you have completed your formal enrolment, you can use the Virtual Research Environment (VRE) - *section 3.1* - Library, Computing and other University facilities. You will also receive a University ID card which includes membership of the Students' Union.

In order to remain a doctoral researcher, you are required to renew your enrolment each academic year by using the online enrolment system. Information regarding this will be sent to you by email in August for the September intake and December for the January intake.

2.2 How we contact you

The University will contact you by email in the first instance, using your University of Westminster email address. Please be aware, if you do not regularly check your University email account, or do not set up an automatic forward from your student account to another account you do use regularly (through the settings function on email), there is a risk you will miss important communications which may affect your enrolment status.

Should you need to be contacted by letter, correspondence will be sent to your term-time address, so please be sure to keep your personal information up-to-date on the Student Record System.

2.3 Self-generated student letters

If you need an official letter from the University of Westminster, please follow the steps below:

- Make sure you are fully enrolled on your programme
- Visit 'My Student Record' student record via the Student Hub here: https://www.westminster.ac.uk/current-students and locate the Registry Services menu

- Click Students Letters - self service

- Provide the required addressee information for the letter you require
- Click 'Generate new letter'

- Once generated, click the link to download in a pdf format. You can now print your letter
- If you require an official University stamp, please bring the printed letter to the Graduate School Registry
- If you require additional information to be provided in your letter, follow the instructions under the 'Other Letter' option to contact the Graduate School Registry.

2.4 Your academic supervisors and supervisory meetings

Supervision by subject experts is a fundamental and indispensable element in the research degree process. As a doctoral researcher, you will have a Director of Studies who will take the lead in the administration of your research progress, plus at least one secondary supervisor.

You should have your first meeting with your Director of Studies and/or supervisory team within your first two weeks after enrolment and this meeting should establish the schedule of supervisory meetings in at least the first six-months of study.

This first meeting with your supervisory team should also provide the opportunity for you to undertake a 'skills audit' with the team, enabling any skills, training and development needs to be discussed, agreed and planned for.

An early meeting should also address the need for any appropriate risk assessments to be undertaken – further guidance can be obtained from the University's Safety, Health and Wellbeing team (T: 65107, E: shw@westminster.ac.uk)

Formal supervisory meetings are an opportunity for you to discuss your progress, describe your findings, and alert your supervisors to any problems. These meetings are an important part of your working relationship with your supervisory team and it is important that you spend some time thinking about what you can do to make them as constructive as possible.

You are responsible for taking the initiative in planning and organising meetings with your supervisor. Go into the meetings with a clear idea of what you want to discuss and, where relevant, take work to show your progress so your supervisor can review and comment.

Before the meeting -

- take the initiative in agreeing a mutually convenient schedule of meetings with your supervisor
- prepare a short agenda (or email) of items that you would like to discuss and forward this to your supervisor a few days in advance of the meeting
- prepare some work for you to discuss at each meeting - as with the agenda, your supervisor may find it helpful to receive before the meeting a copy of any work you intend to discuss.
- Think about how your skills, training and development needs are being progressed and supported, and any specific requests you would like to make to your supervisor.

During the meeting -

- be prepared and feel comfortable in directing the discussion and making sure it follows the agenda as much as possible - do not expect your supervisor to do all the talking, they will want to hear from you
- ask questions - formal supervisory meetings are the best place for more detailed questions as they provide a private and quiet space in which you and

your supervisor can think about the question and come up with a possible answer.

After the meeting –

- submit, via the VRE, a record of each meeting with your supervisor(s), containing a mutually agreed summary of the key items discussed and agreed deadlines. These records will provide an invaluable reference that you can draw on as you prepare your thesis for submission and use to check that you have addressed all the suggestions made by your supervisors.

Please remember that if you are unable to work on your research due to sickness, you should notify your Director of Studies immediately – see *Regulation B7.31* for further details.

2.5 Engagement and attendance monitoring

The Graduate School monitors the attendance and engagement of doctoral researchers to ensure that you are receiving sufficient supervisory support and are on course to meet key academic stages in a timely fashion. A key part of this monitoring is for regular meetings to take place between you and your Director of Studies and other members of your supervisor team, as appropriate – *see Regulation B3*. It is your responsibility to ensure these meetings are scheduled and documented in the VRE.

Through these meetings, any potential issues can be identified and raised at the earliest opportunity in order for appropriate guidance, support and help to be discussed.

The attendance record will also contribute to the monitoring required for our Tier 4 Visa Sponsor License, and if you are in the UK on a Tier 4 Student Visa you should be aware that the University may be required to report you to the UKVI if you miss more than ten consecutive contact points.

Contact points for doctoral researchers include the following:

- Attendance at Doctoral Researcher Development Programme (DRDP workshops)
- Annual Progress Review (APR) submissions
- Supervisory meetings logged in the VRE
- Submission of thesis for examination
- Viva attendance

It is important for you to ensure that:

- your supervisory meetings are completed in the VRE
- you record your attendance at DRDP workshops
- you advise, via the VRE, if you are currently living outside the UK - see *section 2.6.*

If you experience a change in circumstances, it is important that you discuss these with your Director of Studies as soon as possible and inform the Graduate School Registry if it is going to have an impact on your attendance and engagement.

If you have any questions about attendance and engagement monitoring, please get in touch with the Graduate School Registry.

2.6 Tier 4 Visa Information

Detailed information on visas can be found at - https://www.westminster.ac.uk/international/visas-and-advice/visas
Here you will find additional information specifically for doctoral researchers.

If you are in the Schools of Computer Science & Engineering and Life Sciences and are in the UK on any type of visa you will require an Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS) certificate. You will have obtained this as part of the admissions process, however, if your visa status changes at any time during your programme you may be required to obtain an ATAS certificate.

If your research project changes significantly you may also need to obtain a new ATAS certificate. If your personal status - or any of the changes listed above - occur please contact the Graduate School Registry for guidance. Information on ATAS is available here: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/academic-technology-approval-scheme

If you are completing a PhD or a course at level NQF8/CQF8/SCQF12, you may be eligible to apply for the Doctorate Extension Scheme. This allows you to stay in the UK and work for 12 months after you have completed your course. However, you must make a visa application before you have finished your PhD. Further details on the visa and process are available found here - https://www.westminster.ac.uk/international/visas-and-advice/visas/tier-4-visa/doctorate-extension-scheme

As part of our Tier 4 Sponsor License we are required to know in which country you are residing; you will therefore need to update your current location in the VRE if it changes: ***My Project > Location.***

If you receive an extension to your enrolment period or your final examination is scheduled to take place after your visa expires, you may be eligible to apply for an extension to your Tier 4 visa. To apply for an extension you will require a Confirmation of Acceptance of Studies (CAS), which can be requested here - https://www.westminster.ac.uk/international/visas-and-advice/visas/tier-4-visa/confirmation-of-acceptance-for-studies-cas

Any periods of extension will be calculated on the following basis:

Programme stage	**New end date for CASs**
At any stage during your programme before examination	Enrolment end date
Before viva date is confirmed	Submission date + 4 months
If viva date is confirmed	Date of viva + 3 months
Post viva with minor amendments, revisions or re-examination	Date of resubmission (either 3, 6 or 12 months)

2.7 Short-term Study Visa

Doctoral researchers studying by the distance learning route - *Regulation E* - will be required to come to the UK for three key stages during their period of enrolment, as below:

1. Initial enrolment and orientation at the University of Westminster, including attendance at University Workshop 1 and School Workshop 1 as part of DRDP – see *section 2.9*

2. APR 2 viva
3. Viva Voce at the end of their research study

Doctoral researchers studying by the PhD by Published Work route will be required to come to the UK for two key stages during their period of enrolment, as below:

1. Initial enrolment and orientation at the University of Westminster
2. Viva Voce at the end of your research study

In order to visit the UK for the above activities, doctoral researchers will be expected to obtain a Short Term Study Visa. Visa requests for any other research degree-related visits would be considered on a case by case basis by the Graduate School Registry and UKVI team.

If a visit is arranged for reasons not related to your research degree programme, doctoral researchers should seek to acquire an alternative visa. Doctoral researchers will be encouraged to take any opportunity to meet with their supervisory team when visiting the UK.

Further details about the Short Term Study Visa are available here - https://www.westminster.ac.uk/international/visas-and-advice/visas/short-term-study-visa

2.8 Studentships

If you are in receipt of a University of Westminster studentship, or a Research Council (UKRI) studentship, which includes an annual stipend, you will receive your first monthly payment shortly after enrolment (normally 2 – 3 weeks after enrolment).

Subsequent monthly payments are then made directly to your bank account. Due to the method of payment used by the University an exact date of payment is not available, however, this will be on or before the first day of the relevant month.

If you change your bank account at any time, please notify the Graduate School Registry so that they can amend your payment details.

If you suspend during your studentship, your studentship will also be suspended for the duration of your suspension.

Once your studentship expires you are responsible for paying your tuition fees – please refer to the terms and conditions of your studentship in your offer letter.

2.9 Researcher Development

Doctoral Researcher Development Programme (DRDP)
The DRDP is a suite of tailor-made workshops, specialist skills sessions and personal development planning activities, designed for you to gain experience and skills which are highly relevant to your academic study and future research career.

Based on the national Vitae Researcher Development Framework (RDF), you will explore topics and issues identified nationally by practising researchers, approaching them from a discipline-specific perspective and also considering research activity in a wider context. The programme provides workshops tailored for you at all stages of your doctorate, from your first year to your final year of study.

You will be invited to attend workshops and specialist skills sessions via the VRE. A record of your attendance history will also be recorded on here.

For further information on the programme content please refer to the DRDP Handbook which can be found online at https://www.westminster.ac.uk/research/graduate-school/doctoral-researcher-development-programme.

For further information on the RDF please visit https://www.vitae.ac.uk/researchers-professional-development/about-the-vitae-researcher-development-framework.

Teaching Opportunities and Training

Doctoral research students on a full scholarship may be required to undertake a maximum of 6 hours of teaching (or other scholarly related) activities per week (for full time candidates) as part of the terms and conditions of their scholarship.

Doctoral researchers may also be contracted by their College to undertake teaching duties. All doctoral research students teaching on modules that require them to mark assessments are required to attend a University or College Assessment and Feedback workshop and/or to complete the 'University Certificate of Special Study: Supporting Learning'. This must be done prior to the first assignment that requires marking and feedback.

If you are asked to undertake teaching, or are interested in taking on teaching duties, in the first instance please liaise with your Director of Studies and relevant Head of School.

'The University Certificate of Special Study: Supporting Learning' is a 20 credit module managed by the University's Centre for Education and Teaching Innovation (CETI). To gain the 20 credits, you will need to have the required level of teaching hours/experience. However, depending on capacity and resources, it may be possible for doctoral researchers without teaching hours to attend the certificate (in such cases, a certificate of attendance can be achieved but not the 20 credits or any accreditation – however these can be obtained at a later date if teaching hours are undertaken). The Certificate will be run 3 times a year (Semester 1, Semester 2, and over the summer period).

Further details of the teacher training support offered by CETI will be available upon enrolment.

2.10 Best Practice in Research: Guidance and Policies

Academic regulations
All doctoral awards operate in accordance with the University's Academic Regulations for Research Degrees and the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland published by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) in 2008.

This handbook should be read in conjunction with the current Academic Regulations for Research Degrees which can be found online at: https://www.westminster.ac.uk/research/graduate-school/academic-programme

Please also see Appendix C for Award Descriptors for Masters and Doctoral degrees.

Plagiarism Detection
Plagiarism is presenting the work of another as one's own without proper acknowledgement. It is a serious academic offence.

This definition applies to written material, for example, encompassing direct quotations and summaries/paraphrases, and other forms of original work, for example, music, art and design works, images, drawings, diagrams, data, computer programmes, ideas and inventions. It includes:

- published and unpublished sources, including the work of other students;
- the need to cite contributions of others to composite pieces of group work;
- reuse of one's own work;
- unacknowledged use of a wide range of ideas and materials, not just the written word.

Guidance on plagiarism can be found on - https://www.westminster.ac.uk/study/current-students/resources/academic-regulations/academic-misconduct/plagiarism

As part of APR 4 you must submit your draft thesis through text-matching software such as Turnitin or Safe Assign. Please liaise with your Director of Studies in the first instance.

Research Integrity
The University takes its responsibilities for research integrity seriously and expects all those engaged in research, including its doctoral researchers, to comply with the requirements of the University Framework for Research Governance, irrespective of the sources of their funding, or their area of research.

As a doctoral researcher you will be required to not only follow the Academic Regulations for Research Degrees, but also adhere to the University Code of Research Good Practice and the University Code of Practice Governing the Ethical Conduct of Research.

All documents contained in the University Framework are available at westminster.ac.uk/research/research-framework.

Research Ethics
Research Ethics is a critical component of Research Integrity and is an on-going process that needs to be considered, understood and applied by the researcher through the entire research life-cycle. This includes from project inception, proposal, data collection, analysis, writing-up, publication and dissemination of results, through to any post project archiving of research data. A project's ethical assessment and approval should be revisited as needed.

For this reason you will be asked to assess the ethical implications of your research at each APR as a minimum (a review should also take place if there are any substantive changes to the research protocol at other times of the year). For any questions on research ethics please contact research-ethics@westminster.ac.uk

Information Compliance, Records Management and Information Security
A variety of regulations now govern what types of information the University can collect. These regulations also prescribe how the University should keep it and who the University should share it with. Further information and the associated policies can be found here:
https://www.westminster.ac.uk/about-us/our-university/corporate-information/information-compliance-records-management-and-information-security

Open access and E-thesis
Open access is about making the products of research freely accessible to all. The University of Westminster is committed to open-access research as a good principle.

An e-thesis is a digital copy of the completed, accepted thesis. It should reflect any changes made in the final stages of completion and should be your final thesis. These electronic versions are much more easily distributed and remove the problem of research being hidden from most users and available only on library shelves. Your thesis will be made available for immediate download, free of charge, to researchers worldwide.

WestminsterResearch is an online digital repository that aims to capture the intellectual output of the University and be a resource containing details of all research and scholarly output. This enables the research output of the University to be available to a wider audience.

Westminster Research has been available since 2006 and already lists over 15000 research outputs produced by members of the University's academic community, including items such as journal articles, conference papers, artefacts, exhibitions and many more types of 'publication'. It is openly available to anyone, anywhere, through the internet, acting as a shop window to Westminster's research. Adding theses to the archive allows all of the products of research to be made available in one location, accredited by the University.

WestminsterResearch is included in national and global registries including the Registry of Open Access Repositories (ROAR) and the Directory of Open Access Repositories (OpenDOAR). Due to the software we use, WestminsterResearch results are highly ranked by popular search engines such as Google.

EThOS (Electronic Theses Online Service) is run by the British Library and aims to make all UK PhD and MPhil theses available to download from one central hub.

By adding your thesis to WestminsterResearch and EThOS, you will make your research available to a much wider audience and increase your visibility as a researcher.

Further information on WestminsterResearch and Open Access publishing:
www.westminster.ac.uk/open-access

The EThOS database includes more guidance and FAQs: http://ethos.bl.uk

Intellectual Property and Copyright
As the author of the thesis, ownership of the intellectual property (IP) of your thesis remains with you, unless you re-assign ownership.

Doctoral researchers in the Schools of Computer Science & Engineering and Life Sciences may be required to assign to the University the IP they generate during

their research. This may also be required of doctoral researchers in other Schools if there is a possibility that your research may be commercially exploitable. If you think this may apply to your research, in the first instance you should speak with your Director of Studies.

For all doctoral researchers who have not assigned their IP to the University, copyright protection is automatically given once an idea is fixed, for example, when you submit your final thesis. This means that you do not have to apply for copyright although you may wish to assert your copyright ownership with an obvious statement prominently displayed toward the beginning of your thesis, e.g. © John Smith, 2010.

By submitting your thesis to WestminsterResearch and EThOS (see above) you are giving permission for your work to be reproduced - this does not alter the ownership of the copyright.

Every thesis in WestminsterResearch will also include a top sheet with the following statement:

> *The WestminsterResearch online digital archive at the University of Westminster aims to make the research output of the University available to a wider audience. Copyright and Moral Rights remain with the authors and/or copyright owners. Whilst further distribution of specific materials from within this archive is forbidden, you may freely distribute the URL of WestminsterResearch: http://westminsterresearch.wmin.ac.uk/.*

Further information on the University's Intellectual Property policy is available from the University Code of Good Research Practice, available at https://www.westminster.ac.uk/about-us/our-university/corporate-information/policies-and-documents-a-z/intellectual-property-rights

Third Party Copyright

Your thesis is likely to contain material where the copyright is owned by a person or body other than yourself. This may include extracts from publications such as books or journals, or illustrations such as images, maps, photographs, tables etc.

Traditionally it has been accepted that copyright material can be included in the print version of a thesis without the permission of the rights holder. However, the subsequent digitisation and online availability of the thesis means this is no longer the case.

To enable you to re-publish these works, you will need to gain permission from the copyright owner to include the material within your thesis, and this permission should include the right to publish your thesis electronically in both WestminsterResearch and EThOS.

It is likely to be much easier to gain the permissions you require as you write your thesis, rather than leaving this until you are about to submit as some publishers can take a long time to grant permission. To prevent delays in awarding degrees, doctoral researchers and their supervisors are encouraged to consider potential copyright permissions at an early stage, for example, as part of the Annual Progress Review (APR) process - *section 3.2*.

In all cases, sufficient acknowledgment should be given, and you should reflect carefully upon the contents of your thesis and whether any additional permissions be needed, or confidentiality protected before presenting it for deposit in WestminsterResearch.

When you write to gain permission, you should ensure you have the correct contact details of either the copyright holder themselves, if it is an individual, or the rights/permissions department of the publisher in question. Including a copy of the text extract or image will ensure there is no confusion over what it is that your request refers to.

For your final submission after the examination, if you are unable to gain permission for any third-party content included in your thesis, then you should submit a redacted electronic version with a separate Word document for University staff detailing what has been removed. You may wish to include a blank space in place of any missing illustration etc. stating “this material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions”.

In the unlikely event that a copyright holder contacts us reporting potential abuse or material appearing without permission, the thesis will be removed from public view whilst the complaint is investigated.

PhD by Published Work~~s~~ – by its very nature this type of PhD may include a great deal of content where the copyright is now owned by the publishers of the material. In this case we are able to use the accompanying commentary and contents list in WestminsterResearch. Readers would then be able to access the published materials from their original, published source.

The Intellectual Property Office provides more information on matters relating to copyright – http://www.ipo.gov.uk/

Thesis Embargo and Confidentiality

As a public institution, the University is committed to the principle of open access publishing of research (theses, books, articles etc). This is in line with UK government policy aimed at ensuring open access to scholarly literature. Hence, the Graduate School expects that all doctoral theses upon completion are published online (through WestminsterResearch, and Ethos), thereby making Westminster research accessible to the wider scholarly community and the public.

However, the University recognises the need, in exceptional circumstances, to consider individual applications for thesis embargo. Sometimes it may be necessary to request that a thesis is not made openly available through WestminsterResearch and EThOS.

Where a candidate, the University or a sponsor wishes the thesis or part of the thesis to remain confidential for a period of time after completion of the work, an application should be made to the Graduate School by no later than the application of approval for exam arrangements. However, to prevent delays in awarding degrees, doctoral researchers and their supervisors are advised to consider possible embargo at an early stage.

An application may be considered for the purposes of a) exploitation of Intellectual Property b) to permit the publication of a research output, e.g. monograph or c) to protect the wellbeing of a person involved in politically or security sensitive research. The period of embargo is normally two-years, however doctoral researchers who are awarded a University of Westminster Studentship or are externally-funded may only be permitted an embargo for one year.

The following are possible types of embargo:

Electronic – both WestminsterResearch and ETHoS
- thesis is unchanged but is not published

Redaction
- information has been deleted or blacked out

Pseudonym
- thesis is unchanged but is published under a different name (a name must be provided by the doctoral researcher)

Pseudonym and redaction
- thesis is unchanged but is published under a different name and information has been deleted or blacked out

Metadata only published
- a record giving details of the thesis is made available within WestminsterResearch and EThOS but the full-text of the thesis is not attached. A hard copy of the thesis will be required and made available for readers to consult within the Library.

If you wish to apply for an embargo, applications must be submitted via the VRE. To start the application process log on to the system and select: ***My Project > Request Changes>Thesis Embargo***

Academic Research Misconduct
The University Code of Research Good Practice and Framework for Research Governance sets out its expectations as to the proper conduct of research and applies to all members of the University who undertake research, including doctoral researchers.

Indicative examples of unacceptable conduct which may result in disciplinary action for misconduct include:
- Unethical behaviour in the conduct of research
- Plagiarism, or dishonest use of unacknowledged sources
- Fabrication, falsification or corruption of research data
- Unauthorised use of information which was acquired confidentially

For more information, please refer to 'Procedure for Managing Allegations of Research Misconduct' - westminster.ac.uk/research/research-framework

Rights and Responsibilities
The University's Essential Westminster student guide is available at www.westminster.ac.uk/essential-westminster and includes information on your rights and responsibilities as a student of the University. It is important that you make yourself aware of these rights and responsibilities.

The Student Charter
The University of Westminster Student Charter was produced jointly by the University and the University of Westminster Students' Union. The Charter sets out the University's responsibilities to you and highlights what we expect from you in return. The Charter also offers an overview of the University support and resources available to you, with more details to be found in its companion publication – our

student handbook Essential Westminster. The student charter is available at westminster.ac.uk/student-charter and an extract is provided below:

Our University is a diverse, vibrant and inspirational learning environment.

When you join the University, you become a member of a community that has the student experience at the core of its thinking. You become part of our teaching and learning experience, that engages students as critical co-creators of their higher education experience. As a student, you will also benefit from our coordinated approach to supporting the development of your employability-related skills – helping you on your journey to becoming a highly employable, globally engaged, and socially responsible citizen.

This Charter sets out how we will work together to shape the future of professional life."

At Westminster staff and students agree to:

- Treat each other with mutual respect and courtesy in order to foster a supportive and inclusive environment
- Be an active member of the University community engaging in discussion and contributing to activities that are available
- Attend and participate in all learning activities whether they are face to face or online, individual or collaborative
- Complete all assessments and submit all work and feedback on time
- Respond promptly to communications addressed to you
- Proactively engage with systems in place to improve the University
- Speak out when you think things could be improved

Update: A specific Research Degree Student Charter has been drafted and will be reviewed and approved by the Graduate School Board this autumn.

2.11 Student Wellbeing

General Wellbeing

Undertaking postgraduate research is a rewarding – and challenging – experience. You will be faced with many pressures and you may sometimes feel frustrated and anxious. It is important to realise that such feelings are common to many doctoral researchers and there is specialist support available, if you need it, through the University's Counselling Service - see *Section 4* for contact information).

Resilience workshops
As part of the DRDP, Resilience Workshops are offered to doctoral researchers in Years 1, 2 and 3. You will receive invitations via the VRE for this workshop in your 1st, 2nd and 3rd year. For more information see the DRDP Handbook.

During 19/20, the Graduate School will also be offering a number of wellbeing writing retreats. Further details are available from the Graduate School Registry.

2.12 Disability

If you have a disability or specific learning difficulty, registering with Disability Learning Support is one of the first things you should do when you join the University. They will assess your needs and make sure the appropriate support, through reasonable adjustments, is in place during your studies.

Details of the individual examination and assessment arrangements are outlined in section B4 of the Academic Regulations for Research Degrees.

Further information on Disability Learning Support is available in section 4.

2.13 Complaints and Appeals

Informal Complaints
The University works hard to provide a high-quality service to you at all times and in all areas and activities. However, if you ever feel that the standard of academic or service delivery falls short of what may reasonably be expected, where possible you should first discuss the problem with your Director of Studies or another member of your supervisory team.

If your Director of Studies cannot resolve the issue, or if you are unable - or would prefer not - to raise the issue with one of your supervisors you can speak with your College or School Doctoral Co-ordinator or the Graduate School Registry for further advice. See *Section 1.1* for contact information.

Formal Complaints Procedure
Please refer to the Student Complaints Procedure to find out how best to raise and resolve issues - www.westminster.ac.uk/student-complaints

As there are time limits for making complaints, we would encourage you to raise any concerns as early as possible. It is often easier to achieve a successful resolution if concerns are raised earlier rather than later.
E: studentcomplaints@westminster.ac.uk

Academic Appeals against a decision of the Graduate School Board
An academic appeal can only be submitted on the grounds that there has been demonstrable material irregularity in the conduct of the Graduate School Board in relation to an assessment, examination and/or a decision to exclude a candidate due to a lack of academic progress.

The procedure provides a framework within which a candidate may seek to challenge a decision in order to protect against potential unfairness resulting from an omission or error on the part of the University - please see *Appendix B* for the full Academic Appeals Procedure and *Section B9* in the Academic Regulations for Research Degrees. As with the Complaints Procedure there are strict time limits for submitting an Academic Appeal.

3. PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT AND ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE

Some of the following sections contain references to the current Academic Regulations for Research Degrees and you are advised to refer to these Regulations when consulting this handbook. A copy of these Regulations can be found online at https://www.westminster.ac.uk/research/graduate-school/academic-programme

3.1 The Virtual Research Environment (VRE)

The VRE is the Graduate School's online system that operates on desktops, tablets and mobiles and allows your doctoral researcher record to be managed from anywhere in the world.

Part of the VRE is used to manage the administrative processes associated with the doctoral researcher lifecycle which includes:

- Annual Progress Reviews (APR) – *Section 3.2*
- Research Supervision meetings
- Examination Arrangements
- Degree conferment
- Change Requests - *Section 3.5*
- Project Information
- Research Ethics applications

The other function of the VRE is to manage your personal development and engagement with our Doctoral Researcher Development Programme (DRDP). This includes:

- Invitations to workshops
- Workshop timetable
- Record of workshops you have attended
- Training Plan
- Research Diary to record your own activities and development

As part of your personal development you will also be able to create and update a researcher profile that will be hosted on our public website to show you are part of our wider research community.

As a doctoral researcher you are automatically given a profile on the VRE.

To login to the VRE please visit research.westminster.ac.uk and use your University of Westminster ID and password.

Once logged in, click on the ***My Record*** button to access and view your record.

User guides and manuals to all processes within the VRE are available via the 'Guides' button on the left-hand menu.

For candidates outside of the EU/EEA in possession of a Tier 4 visa, the VRE is also used to record and monitor your engagement with the University, which is part of our statutory obligations to the UK Home Office.

For any further questions or advice on how to use the VRE please email graduateschool@westminster.ac.uk

3.2 Annual Progress Review (APR)

Our research degree programme follows a structure designed to support you through your research, to enable you to submit your thesis within your enrolment period and allows you to reflect on your progress so far and plan for the following year.

The progress of all doctoral researchers is assessed annually (full-time) or bi-annually (part-time) until you submit your thesis for examination. This assessment, dependent on your intended award, is carried out through our APR process (which is detailed below). The process also gives doctoral researchers and supervisors the opportunity to raise and address any concerns so that appropriate support can be agreed and arranged. In addition to your School/College, the Graduate School may make its own assessment and overturn School/College decisions on the outcome of an APR submission.

At the beginning of the year you should meet with your Director of Studies to discuss the requirements of your forthcoming APR to ensure that you are prepared and on track to submit by the deadline. You can find which APR you are due to submit through the VRE: ***My Project > Annual Progress Review***

Writing your thesis is part of the process of research and analysis rather than something to do once your research is finished.

It can be tempting to leave your writing until the end of the doctorate, but be wary of doing this as:

- writing is a skill that needs to be practised - the more you write the easier it will become,
- writing helps you to think through what you are doing and forces you to analyse and make connections,
- a doctoral thesis is a long document and better tackled in small blocks.

You should use the APR process to get into the habit of writing from the start of your research by building on each APR (chapter/s) every year so you are ‘writing’ your thesis as you go along.

You will be required to complete the APR via the VRE.

- September starters submit an APR on 1 May each year.
- January starters submit an APR on 1 October each year.

If this date falls on a weekend, a bank holiday, or during a University holiday closure period, submission must be made by the next working day.

If you are progressing well with your research, and are planning your next APR submission, your Director of Studies can apply for you to submit a different APR for the same deadline, e.g. for APR 1 due 1 May 2020, a request can be made for you to complete APR 2 on 1 May 2019 instead. Please be aware that you can start your APR at any time of the year, but your submission will only be assessed in line with your deadline.

MPhil/PhD doctoral researchers recommended to undertake early upgrade to PhD on the advice of their Director of Studies would follow the APR 2 process in year 1.

To ensure parity across all doctoral research assessment periods, your APR schedule will be altered if you take a suspension or change your mode of attendance. This may result in your APR deadline changing to either 1 October, 1 March, 1 May

or 1 August and will be determined by the Graduate School. Your VRE record will be updated to reflect these changes for the remaining enrolment period.

If you have been granted an extension at the end of your enrolment period (see 'Requesting an Extension' (Regulation B7.22), you will normally be required to repeat APR4. This will be determined by the Graduate School.

You can track the progress of your APR in the VRE and you will be informed of your APR outcome via the VRE, normally by 8 weeks of the submission deadline date.

If the APR (1-3) decision is for a period of remediation to be undertaken before progress is agreed, you should contact your supervisory team to discuss the outcome of your APR and the work you need to complete by the resubmission deadline.

When resubmitting work associated with remediation, you should submit a commentary to identify how the required changes have been completed. Please see *Regulation B6.5* for details on possible remediation outcomes.

If the APR 4 decision is unsatisfactory a supportive plan should be put in place with your Director of Studies to ensure timely completion of your thesis. This should be recorded in the VRE as a supervisory meeting.

Once you have submitted your thesis for examination you are no longer required to submit any future APRs.

Podcasts on the content and APR submission process are available on the GS Blackboard site.

The table below details the APR structure:

Year of Enrolment	PROGRAMME							
	MPhil/PhD Full Time	**MPhil/PhD Part Time**	**PhD Direct Full Time**	**PhD Direct Part Time**	**MPhil only Full Time**	**MPhil only Part Time**	**PhD by Published Work**	**DProf**
Year 1	APR 1	-	APR 1	-	APR 1	-	No APR	See Course Handbook for APR structure and content
Year 2	APR 2	APR 1	APR 2	APR 1	APR 2	APR 1		
Year 3	APR 3	-	APR 3	-	APR 4	-		
Year 4	APR 4	APR 2	APR 4	APR 2		APR 2		
Year 5		-		-		APR 4		
Year 6		APR 3		APR 3				
Year 7		-		-				
Year 8		APR 4		APR 4				

The table below details the requirements of each specific APR:

APR	Aim of APR	APR requirements	APR assessed by	APR outcome	Remediation outcome
APR 1	Assess the progress of the doctoral project since enrolment	1. An overview progress report (3000 words) which must comprise of the following: i. Research objectives ii. Research question(s) iii. Literature overview iv. Methodology v. Time plan vi. Research governance: ethics, ATAS, insurance, copyright vii. Contribution to knowledge (Not MPhil only) 2. One draft chapter, report, paper or equivalent depending on the discipline. This should be between 7,000-15,000* words in length depending on discipline and the nature of the project. The contents of this chapter should be agreed with the candidate's supervisory team. *MPhil only 3,000-7,000 words	Report from the Director of Studies + Independent Assessor (normally University staff) + School Doctoral Coordinator + Graduate School Board	1. Successful progression and continuation on the intended route (MPhil, MPhil/PhD, PhD Direct) 2. Unsuccessful progression. A three-month period of remediation will be instigated	1. Successful and continuation on the intended route (MPhil, MPhil/PhD, PhD Direct) 2. Unsuccessful and exclusion

APR	Aim of APR	APR requirements	APR assessed by *	APR outcome	Remediation outcome
APR 2	To upgrade to PhD (MPhil/PhD) or assess progress and check on course to achieve intended award (MPhil only and PhD Direct)	1. An overview progress report (3000 words) which must comprise of the following: i. Research accomplished to date ii. Time/work plan for further research iii. Methodological/other challenges iv. Any significant change to project design v. Research governance: ethics, ATAS, insurance, copyright vi. Contribution to knowledge (Not MPhil only) 2. 2-3 draft chapters, reports, papers or equivalent dependent on the discipline (20,000-40,000 words (or equivalent) whose contents have been agreed with supervisors. *MPhil only 15,000-30,000 words	Report from the Director of Studies + Independent Assessor (normally University staff) + Viva + School Doctoral Coordinator + Graduate School Board	1. Successful progression and upgrade to PhD (MPhil/PhD) or Successful progression (MPhil only & PhD Direct) 2. Unsuccessful progression. A three-month period of remediation will be instigated 3. Unsuccessful progression. A six-month period of remediation will be instigated	1. Successful and continuation on the intended route (MPhil, MPhil/PhD, PhD Direct) 2. Unsuccessful and exclusion 3. Unsuccessful and continuation on MPhil only route (MPhil/PhD and PhD Direct route)
APR 3 (Not MPhil only – move straight to APR 4)	Review the draft thesis	1. An overview progress report (500 words) which must comprise of the following: i. Draft chapters completed ii. Work plan for finalisation of thesis iii. Research governance: ethics, ATAS, insurance, copyright iv. Time schedule for submission 2. 3-4 draft chapters, reports, papers or similar (30-60K words or equivalent) depending on discipline and nature of project whose contents have been agreed with Supervisors.	Report from the Director of Studies + Independent Assessor (normally University staff) + School Doctoral Coordinator + Graduate School Board	1. Successful progression. Continue towards final submission and examination 2. Unsuccessful progression. A three-month period of remediation will be instigated	1. Successful and continuation on the intended route (MPhil, MPhil/PhD, PhD Direct) 2. Unsuccessful and exclusion 3. Unsuccessful and continuation on MPhil only route (MPhil/PhD and PhD Direct route)

APR	Aim of APR	APR requirements	APR assessed by *	APR outcome	Remediation outcome
APR 4	Assess the ability of the candidate to submit their completed thesis before the end of their enrolment period	1. A completed draft thesis 2. Thesis submitted to Turnitin 3. Research governance: copyright, thesis embargo	Report from the Director of Studies + School Doctoral Coordinator + Graduate School Board	1. Satisfactory. Continue towards final submission and examination 2. Unsatisfactory. Continue towards final submission and examination with a supportive plan.	Not applicable

3.3 Remediation (Regulation B6)

If your supervisory team feel that you are not making satisfactory progress they may make the decision to enter you into remediation, normally for a period of three or six months. You can also be entered into remediation as part of the Annual Progress Review. The aim of the remediation process is to support you to complete your research programme. The requirements of the period of remediation are recorded in the VRE. Full details are available in Regulation B6.

3.4 Changes to your enrolment or personal circumstances

Requests to change aspects of your enrolment should be initiated by the doctoral researcher or supervisory team through the VRE for the following: ***My Project > Change Requests***

- Change project mode
- Extension
- Mitigating Circumstances
- Suspension
- Withdraw from programme
- Writing Up status (part-time only)
- Thesis Embargo
- Change to MPhil
- Application to defer Viva
- Other Change Request

Applying for a shorter minimum period of enrolment *(Regulation B2.6)*

The minimum – and maximum – periods of enrolment are detailed below.

FULL-TIME STUDY		
Degree	**Minimum Period of Enrolment Permitted**	**Maximum Period of Enrolment Permitted**
MPhil	18 months	36 months
PhD Direct	24 months	48 months
PhD via MPhil	33 months	48 months

PART-TIME STUDY		
Degree	**Minimum Period of Enrolment Permitted**	**Maximum Period of Enrolment Permitted**
MPhil	30 months	60 months
PhD Direct	36 months	96 months
PhD via MPhil	45 months	96 months

If you are enrolled on a DProf programme you should contact the Graduate School Registry to discuss your minimum and maximum periods of enrolment.

An application to submit a thesis before the minimum period of enrolment should be submitted by the doctoral researcher no later than the submission of the Application for Approval of Examination Arrangements – *Section 3.8* - through the VRE: ***My Project > Change Requests > Other change request***

Change to thesis title, project or programme

You should ensure that your thesis title is entered into the VRE (on your project page) when you first enrol. Any agreed changes to your thesis title should be updated in the VRE promptly.

If you are considering changing any aspect of your approved research programme, it is important that you discuss the implications with your supervisory team prior to submitting any such request.

If you are considering changing your research programme at any stage of your enrolment, e.g. PhD to MPhil, your end date will be changed in accordance with the enrolment periods detailed in the above table.

If you are on a funded studentship you may be in breach of the terms and conditions of your studentship should you change any aspect of your agreed research programme, and this may result in your funding ending.

Doctoral researchers in the Schools of Computer Science & Engineering and Life Sciences who are in possession of a visa should be aware of potential visa and ATAS implications if changes are made to their research, e.g. changed thesis title, project or programme (PhD to MPhil). In the first instance, you should contact studentadvice@westminster.ac.uk

Change in personal circumstances

If your personal circumstances change you may need to consider applying for mitigating circumstances, a suspension, an extension or to defer your examination to ensure you can complete your programme. Whilst we expect all doctoral researchers to keep to set deadlines, we do appreciate that occasionally, despite the best planning, unforeseen events may occur.

The University operates a fit-to-sit policy for assessment. This means that if you submit an APR assessment or thesis or attend any viva examination you are deemed to have declared yourself fit to attempt the assessment and must accept the result of the assessment or examination.

The table overleaf outlines the options available to you. Full details of the types of application are detailed and should be read in conjunction with section B7 in the Academic Regulations for Research Degrees.

In addition, you may consider changing your mode of attendance. See section 3.5.

Area of concern	Application type			
	Mitigating circumstances	**Suspension**	**Extension**	**Defer examination**
Before thesis submission for examination				
Cannot submit APR by deadline	✓	✓		
Cannot attend APR 2 viva	✓			
Cannot submit thesis by the end of the enrolment period	✓	✓	✓	
After thesis submission for examination but before examination				
Cannot attend examination				✓
After examination				
Cannot submit amended thesis by deadline (includes minor amendments, revisions, re-examination and further amendments)	✓	✓	✓	

Mitigating Circumstances *(Regulation B7.2)*

Mitigating Circumstances (MCs) are defined as a short term circumstance which stops you from:

- submitting your APR
- attending your APR 2 viva
- submitting your thesis for examination
- submitting your amended thesis following examination

If you are prevented from meeting your deadlines (as outlined in the above box) due to short term circumstances outside of your control you must apply for MCs.

You should be aware that for an approved MC, the deadline is normally deferred for no longer than two weeks and **your enrolment period is not extended**. If you have missed a significant part of your studies due to ill health or other personal problems, you must speak to your Director of Studies to discuss whether a Suspension of Studies would be a more suitable option (see below). You will be asked to request a

deferral date on your MC application. Any request to extend a period of enrolment must be made through an Extension request (see below).

Once a new deadline date has been agreed by RDPC, submission/attendance must take place by that date, as you are only permitted to defer your deadline once.

All MC applications must be submitted via the VRE. To start the application process log on to the system and select: ***My Project > Change Requests>Mitigating Circumstances***

All claims must be supported by independent documentary evidence, such as a medical certificate or official documents relating to your circumstances. Documents in a foreign language should include a translation which, in the first instance, can be translated by the student, but an official translated version may also be required.

You must upload a copy of this evidence to the VRE - any claim submitted without evidence will be rejected outright.

MC claims will be considered, when submitted, by the RDPC. A claim should be submitted as close as possible to the relevant assessment deadline, normally within 10 working days of the circumstances occurring.

For a claim to be accepted you must demonstrate that the circumstances were

- Unforeseen
- Out of your control and could not be prevented
- Relate to the timing of your deadline

The outcome of your claim will be communicated to you via an email from the VRE, normally within 5 working days after the next RDPC meeting.

If your claim is unsuccessful you have the right to submit additional evidence to support one further claim and this must be submitted within one month of receiving the outcome notification.

If the further claim is not accepted, your APR or thesis is not submitted by the stated deadline, you will be deemed to have become inactive and risk exclusion - see *Regulation B7.37*
If your claim is successful you will not be charged any additional fees.

Suspension of Studies *(Regulation B7.11)*

Suspension is defined as a period of time when you are inactive and cannot participate in your research. By suspending, your deadline will change for:

- submitting your APR
- submitting your thesis for examination
- submitting your amended thesis following examination

The University expects you to complete your studies in one continuous period of study. However, we do understand that serious, unforeseen or unpreventable situations may arise that require you to take a formal break from your research.

In these circumstances you may apply for a suspension of studies. All applications must include a statement from your supervisory team and School before being submitted for approval by the RDPC.

If you are in the UK on a Tier 4 Student Visa, the University is required to notify the Home Office if you suspend. If you are no longer attending your programme, you will not be meeting the terms of your student visa and the Home Office will therefore normally shorten your visa and expect you to leave the UK. Before suspending, speak to the Student Advisers for guidance.

Doctoral Researchers on Tier 4 visas are permitted to suspend studies but will have to return to their home country. You may be able to take a sixty day authorised absence, however you must remain enrolled on the programme. The number of permitted days will be added to your enrolment end date. We strongly recommend anyone on such a visa to discuss their situation with the Graduate School Registry before seeking further information from the student advisors.

All applications for suspension must be submitted via the VRE. To start the application process log on to the system and select: ***My Project > Change Requests>Suspension***

All claims must be supported by independent documentary evidence, such as a medical certificate or official documents relating to your circumstances. Documents in a foreign language should include a translation which, in the first instance, can be translated by the student, but an official translated version may also be required. You must upload a copy of this evidence to the VRE; any claim submitted without evidence will be rejected outright

You should submit your application as soon as it becomes apparent that you are unable to carry out any work, normally within one month of any situation arising. Longer retrospective suspensions will not be accepted, so it is important that you raise any issues with your Director of Studies or Graduate School Registry staff as soon as possible so we can advise and support you.

Candidates are not normally permitted a period of suspension longer than 12 months over their whole period of enrolment, and similarly during the period permitted to complete thesis amendments after examination. You may apply for a one year suspension or different periods of time that do not exceed 12 months. Any request for additional time away will only be considered under very exceptional circumstances. Before you submit your thesis, it may be possible to find alternative ways to support your situation, such as a change to mode of study. Please contact the Graduate School Registry with any questions regarding suspensions.

Wherever possible, approved suspensions will be calculated from the 1st of each month and, where relevant, your fees will be adjusted on a pro-rata basis. See Annexe D for fee liability information.

You will receive notification of the outcome of your application via an email from the VRE normally within 5 working days of the RDPC meeting. If your application is successful, your status and enrolment end date will be amended, and you will not be expected to be undertaking any research during your approved break.

If your claim is unsuccessful you have the right to submit additional evidence to support one further claim and this must be submitted within one month of receiving the outcome notification. If the further claim is not accepted, your APR or thesis is not

submitted by the stated deadline, you will be deemed to have become inactive and risk exclusion - see *Regulation B7.37.*

We encourage all suspended doctoral researchers to remain in touch with their Director of Studies during any period of absence.

Returning from Suspension
When you re-commence from your time away, your APR schedule will have been updated to take account of your suspension. This may result in your APR deadline changing to either 1 October, 1 March, 1 May or 1 August - this will be determined by the Graduate School. Your VRE record will be updated to reflect these changes for the remaining enrolment period.

A supervisory meeting should also take place within one month of your return to review the work plan and timetable in line with the new end date. You should also take this opportunity to review and plan your engagement with forthcoming DRDP sessions – the Graduate School can be contacted for further guidance.

If you re-enrol later than the return date, your end date will not be changed accordingly as that period of non-enrolment has to be considered as non-engagement and not continued suspension.

Maternity, Paternity, Adoption, Parental & Shared Parental Leave *(Regulation B7.32)*

Maternity and adoption leave of up to 12 months can be requested through the suspension process detailed above.

Paternity, parental and shared parental leave (in line with the entitlement for employees of the University) can be arranged through your Director of Studies. The Graduate School Registry Office must be informed of the arrangement so that your enrolment end date can be amended accordingly. You will need to provide evidence to support the application. If the Graduate School Registry are not informed, your end date will not be amended, and retrospective application of paternity leave is not permitted. Apply through the VRE: ***My Project > Change Requests > Suspension***

If you are pregnant, it is recommended that a risk assessment is undertaken for your own health, safety and wellbeing. Therefore, you are advised to consider informing your School at the earliest opportunity.

Requesting an Extension *(Regulation B7.19)*

Extension is defined as an event which occurs towards the end of your enrolment period or amended thesis deadline which means you require more time to write up your thesis. By taking an extension it will extend your deadline for:

- your enrolment period and the deadline to submit your thesis for examination
- submitting your amended thesis following examination

The expectation is that all doctoral researchers will:

- submit their thesis for examination within the permitted period of enrolment; and
- submit their amended thesis following examination by the set deadline

However, we do understand that there are rare occasions where a serious or unforeseen event may impact on your progress towards the end of your enrolment or amended thesis deadline. In such situations you may be eligible to apply for an extension.

Please be aware – if an extension is approved, additional tuition fees will normally apply. See Annexe D for fee liability information.

All applications must include a statement by your supervisory team and School before being submitted for approval to the RDPC.

All applications for extension must be submitted via the VRE. To start the application process log on to the system and select: ***My Project > Change Requests>Extension***

All claims must be supported by independent documentary evidence, such as a medical certificate. Documents in a foreign language should include a translation which, in the first instance, can be translated by the student, but an official translated version may also be required. Please note that reasonable adjustments made for any disability cannot be used as your evidence for an extension request (see 2.12). You must upload a copy of your evidence to the VRE. Any claim submitted without evidence will be rejected outright.

You must submit your application before the end of your enrolment period or your amended thesis submission deadline. You will normally only be permitted an extension of up to a maximum of 12 months to your period of enrolment or to your amended thesis deadline. Longer extensions are only granted in very exceptional circumstances that are supported by strong independent evidence.

Only in very exceptional circumstances can a further application for extension be submitted. Exceptional circumstances are defined as a new unexpected or unforeseen event, and not a continuation of the reason for the initial extension. If it is a continuation of the previous event you should instead suspend in line with suspension requirements.

In some situations where you need an extension to your enrolment period, a suspension of studies or change of mode of attendance from full-time to part-time may be a better option for you. Therefore, it is important that you discuss any problems with your supervisory team and the Graduate School Registry as soon as possible so we can advise and support you.

You will receive notification of the outcome of your application via an email from the VRE normally within 5 working days of the RDPC meeting. If your application is successful, your enrolment end date will be amended to represent the permitted additional time.

If your claim is unsuccessful you have the right to submit additional evidence to support one further claim and this must be submitted within one month of receiving

the outcome notification. If the further claim is not accepted, your thesis is not submitted by the stated deadline, you will be deemed to have become inactive and risk exclusion - see *Regulation B7.37.*

Requesting to defer an examination (Regulation B7.26)
Once you have submitted your thesis for examination, if you encounter issues which mean that you cannot attend your examination, you will need to apply to defer your examination.

As soon as you are aware that you cannot attend your examination, you should inform your Chair of Examiners and the Graduate School Registry and apply to defer your examination.

All applications must include a statement by your supervisory team and School before being submitted for approval by the RDPC.

All applications must be submitted via the VRE. To start the application process log on to the system and select: ***My Project > Change Requests>Application to Defer Viva***

All claims must be supported by independent documentary evidence, such as a medical certificate or official documents relating to your circumstances. Documents in a foreign language should include a translation which, in the first instance, can be translated by the student, but an official translated version may also be required. You must upload a copy of this evidence to the VRE. Any claim submitted without evidence will be rejected outright.

If your claim is unsuccessful you have the right to submit additional evidence to support one further claim and this must be submitted within one month of receiving the outcome notification. If the further claim is not accepted, and you do not attend your examination, you will be deemed to have become inactive and risk exclusion - see *Regulation B7.37.*

If you make an application to defer your examination more than once, the Graduate School Board will make an assessment about whether you are capable of attending an oral examination and take appropriate action.

Change of Mode of Attendance *(Regulation B2.8)*
In some instances you may need, or want, to change your mode of attendance part-way through your enrolment period (e.g. full-time to part-time study).

If you are on a Tier 4 visa you are unable to change mode of attendance.

If you are on a funded studentship you may be in breach of the terms and conditions of your funding should you change mode, which may result in your funding ending – see your offer letter and terms and conditions for details.

For these reasons it is important that you discuss the implications of changing mode of study with your supervisory team or Graduate School Registry prior to submitting any request.

Applications must be submitted through the VRE. To do so, log on to the system and select: ***My Project > Change Requests>Change Mode of Attendance***

If approved, you will receive an email from the VRE; your mode will be updated, and your enrolment end date and future APR requirements amended to reflect the new duration allowed to submit your thesis.

Annual Leave
The Graduate School Supports reasonable amounts of leave for all doctoral research students. The parameters of 'reasonable' are based on the leave allocations of staff – ie 35 days (pro-rata for part-time). Annual leave is negotiated at a local level between the doctoral research student and their Director of Studies.

Change of Supervisory Team
There may be instances where the arrangement of your supervisory team needs to change. You may require support from an additional supervisor with specific expertise or the direction of your research may change, and different supervisors be allocated.

Supervisory teams can request the change in the VRE via 'Request Changes' on 'Your Project'.

Withdrawing from your degree *(Regulation B7.35)*
Should you wish to end your enrolment and leave your programme of study at the University voluntarily you must complete a formal request to withdraw.

We recommend that you discuss any potential decision to withdraw with your supervisory team or the Graduate School Registry before completing the process in case we can advise and support you in any way that will allow you to continue with your studies.

All requests to withdraw must be made via the VRE. To start the process log on to the system and select: ***My Project > Change Requests>Withdrawal from Programme***

Once processed you will receive written confirmation from the Graduate School Registry.

Should you wish to return to the University at a later date you can reapply through the normal application process.

If you are in the UK on a Tier 4 Student Visa, the University is required to notify the Home Office if you withdraw. If you are no longer attending a course, you will not be meeting the terms of your student visa and the Home Office will therefore normally shorten your visa and expect you to leave the UK. Before withdrawing, speak to the Student Advisers for guidance.

3.5 Writing Up Status

Full-Time Students
Full-time PhD students are no longer required to apply to enter writing-up, instead, you will automatically be entered into a 'writing-up' mode of attendance as you enrol for Year 4 of your research programme of study (if you have previously suspended or changed mode of study, this may be at a later point). Full-time students entering Year 4 are expected, by this point, to be solely engaged in writing-up their research project rather than still actively undertaking research.

Entering writing-up mode will permit you to a six month period where no tuition fees are due. The writing-up mode will not alter your end date, and the normal expectation is that you will submit your thesis for examination by the end of your six month no-fee period.

Should you not have submitted your thesis for examination by the end of the six month no-fee period you will be charged a fee of £1,500 (regardless of the time then taken to submit within that enrolment period). Each subsequent enrolment period that is required ahead of submission will also attract a fee of £1,500 for each academic year (regardless of the time taken to submit within that enrolment period), *unless the additional enrolment period results from an agreed suspension, extension, or mitigating circumstances request related to ill-health (when the fee will be deferred for the period of the agreed request).*

Once you have submitted your thesis you are no longer charged fees.

Part-Time Students
As a part-time PhD student, you will automatically be entered into writing-up as you enrol for Year 7 of your research programme of study (if you have previously suspended or changed mode of study, this may be at a later point). Part-time students entering Year 7 are expected, by this point, to be solely engaged in writing-up their research project rather than still actively undertaking research.

Entering writing-up mode will permit you a twelve month period where no tuition fees are due. The writing-up mode will not alter your end date, and the normal expectation is that you will submit your thesis by the end of your twelve month no-fee period.

Should you have not submitted your thesis for examination by the end of the twelve month no-fee period, you will be re-enrolled and charged a fee of £1,500 (regardless of the time then taken to submit within that enrolment period). Any further enrolment periods that are required ahead of submission will also attract a fee of £1,500 each academic year (regardless of the time then taken to submit within that enrolment period), *unless the additional enrolment period results from an agreed suspension, extension, or mitigating circumstances request related to ill-health (when the fee will be deferred for the period of the agreed request).*

Additionally, as a part-time student, you may apply for writing-up status before Year 7 of your programme, if you have completed the active research of your project and will solely be engaged in the writing up of your work for the remainder of your programme AND you have successfully completed APR 3 (or APR 2 for those students on the professional doctorate route). Under these circumstances, there will be two opportunities during the year to apply for writing-up status. If you are a September starter, you can apply for writing up either by the 1st October, or by the 1st April. If you are a January starter, you can apply for writing up either by the 1st February, or by the 1st August.

<u>Applications for writing-up must be received before the above dates. Late applications will not be accepted, and you will have to wait to the next application date.</u>

To apply to enter writing up you must submit an application online via the VRE. Once you've logged on to the system go to: ***My Project > Change Requests>Writing Up Status***

You will be notified by email via the VRE once accepted and your status altered accordingly. Your tuition fees will also be varied to reflect the no-fee period of enrolment (see above).

Please note: Writing Up status is not applicable to students on the MPhil only study route.

If you have any questions regarding the writing up process, please email graduateschool@westminster.ac.uk

3.6 Re-enrolling in a timely fashion

You will be asked to re-enrol each year; please be sure to re-enrol as soon as you are notified as if you do not re-enrol (for whatever reason) you may jeopardise your status as a doctoral researcher and risk exclusion. Please be aware, late re-enrolment will not result in your programme end date being extended.

3.7 Submission and Examination *(Regulation B8)*

Arranging the examination and date

Your Director of Studies is responsible for proposing examiners and applying for the Graduate School Board's approval through the VRE.

Please ensure your Director of Studies is aware when you aim to submit your thesis for examination, so they can begin the panel application process in a timely fashion. Every effort will be made to confirm the examiners and date at the earliest opportunity but will be dependent on the availability of the examiners.

In issues of thesis confidentiality, this is the latest stage you should apply for thesis embargo -*Section 2.10*.

When the examiners - including the Chair of Examiners, who is responsible for arranging the examination data and time - is approved, you will receive notification through the VRE. At this stage, if you have any further queries, please contact the Chair of Examiners.

You can view the status of your examination in the VRE: ***My Project > Examination***

Thesis Format and Submission for Examination

When you are ready to submit your thesis for examination you must contact the Graduate School Registry to arrange a time to submit. If you intend to post or courier your thesis, please use the following address:

Graduate School Registry
University of Westminster
Cavendish House
101 New Cavendish Street
London W1W 6XH

Your submission must be made before your enrolment end date. If this date falls on a weekend, a bank holiday, or during a University holiday closure period, submission must be made by the next working day.

Once you have arranged a time to submit you will normally need to prepare two paper, soft bound copies* and one electronic copy (uploaded to the VRE). Please check your examination arrangements in the VRE first, as there may be a need for you to produce more copies if you have more than two examiners – you should liaise with your Director of Studies regarding this if you aim to submit copies before you have been notified of your exam arrangements.

Your soft copy thesis – and a declaration of the originality of your work - must be uploaded online through the VRE. To do this log on and go to: ***My Project > Examination > Create New Examination Record***

*soft bound refers to perfect bound (also known as thermal or hot glue binding) or spiral binding. Supplying your soft bound copies in a ring binder or slide binder is not acceptable and thesis which are not correctly bound will not be sent out for examination. If you decide to use a card cover, it is useful to reprint the title page, or you can use a transparent cover instead. There is no need to print on the spine.

It is important that, if you have not already done so, any issues surrounding thesis embargo and confidentiality are considered - *Section 2.10.* If an embargo application is approved, you will still be required to submit an EThOS agreement (see 'Open access and E-thesis') at the time of final submission.

The Academic Regulations for Research Degrees specify that the text of the thesis should **not normally exceed approximately 80,000 words for PhD** and **40,000 words for MPhil** – this includes footnotes, but not including appendices, table of contents, tabulated and statistical data, diagrams and analogous illustrative material (maps, facsimile documents etc) and the bibliography.

These figures are intended only as an approximate guide and may vary according to either specific projects or discipline. You should not feel that your thesis must necessarily be as long as the indicated word limit.

Thesis for a **Professional Doctorate** would normally be a **minimum of 40,000 words for a STEMM subject area** and **60,000 words for a non-STEMM subject area**. Please refer to *Regulation D2.13* and your course handbook for more detailed guidance.

Please refer to *Regulation C1.13* for guidance on submission of work for **PhD by Published Work.**

The thesis should be organised in the following format:

- Title page
- Abstract (approximately 300 words, on a separate page)
- List of contents
- List of tables, illustrations, etc
- List of accompanying material (if any)
- Preface (if appropriate)
- Acknowledgements
- Author's declaration (suggested wording: *I declare that all the material contained in this thesis is my own work*.)
- Definitions
- Text of the thesis, divided into chapters, sections, etc
- Appendices
- Glossary
- List of references

- Bibliography

For the paper copies of the thesis the following additional specifications are also required:

- Theses shall normally be in A4 format.
- Copies of the thesis shall be presented in a legible printed form with the size of character used in the main text, including displayed matter and notes, normally in 12 point font size.
- The thesis shall be printed on one side of the page only; the paper shall be white and of good quality.
- The margin at the left-hand binding edge of the page shall not be less than 40mm; other margins shall not be less than 15mm.
- Double or one-and-a-half spacing shall be used in the typescript except for indented quotations or footnotes where single spacing may be used.
- Pages shall be numbered consecutively through the main text including photographs and/or diagrams included as whole pages.

The thesis title page must contain the following information - see also Appendix A:

- full title of the thesis
- full name of the author
- that the degree is awarded by the University
- the award for which the degree is submitted in partial fulfilment of its requirements
- the collaborating establishment (if any)
- month and year of submission (for examination copies only, final submission copies must contain the month and year of award).

If you have any queries relating to your thesis content you should, in the first instance, contact your Director of Studies.

Preparing for your oral examination

To help you prepare for your viva, a one hour briefing takes place twice each year, as part of the DRDP programme. You are strongly encouraged to attend one of these (a recorded version is also available on the GS Blackboard site) – please see the DRDP Handbook for further information.

Your Director of Studies should not normally attend unless you and the examiners have agreed his/her presence in advance through the Chair of the Examiners. See B8.16 of the Regulations for the Award of Research Degrees for further details.

What happens after your examination

The examiners' recommendations – and any required amendments - will be forwarded to the Graduate School to approve. In due course you will receive email notification from the VRE as to the examination outcome and what you are now required to do.

Please note – if, following your examination, you have been advised that you have to undertake minor amendments, revisions or undertake a re-examination, the new submission deadline will start from the date of the official notification from the VRE.

Amended thesis submission following the examination

If amendments are required to your thesis, it is a requirement that you refer to the amendments report from the VRE and, as well as submitting your amended thesis you should provide a list or commentary to explain the amendments you have made. It is

also good practice (although not a requirement) to provide a version of your corrected thesis which includes tracked changes.

If you are required to resubmit your thesis for re-examination you are not required to provide a list or commentary.

All documents relating to the amended thesis should be uploaded through the VRE.

Please be aware - it is not the intention for examiners to review multiple copies of the amended thesis and the University would not condone on-going dialogue and/or email communication between doctoral researchers and examiners in order to achieve an amended thesis submission. If there are any queries surrounding the amendments required following the viva, please liaise with the Chair of Examiners in the first instance.

What happens after you have submitted your amended thesis
If amendments were required to your thesis, once the revised thesis and commentary have been uploaded on the VRE, the Graduate School Registry will send the documents to the examiner/s and ask them to review and make a final decision on the award. Examiner/s are asked to respond in one month, although this is dependent on their availability.

In due course you will receive email notification from the VRE as to the outcome and what you are now required to do.

If you resubmitted your thesis and are required to be re-examined, the same procedure is followed as for the first examination.

Final thesis submission for conferment of award *(Regulation B8.48)*
Candidates are required to submit an electronic copy via the VRE of their final approved thesis in order for their work to be published on WestminsterResearch and EThOS and for the degree to be conferred. You will also be required to complete a conferment task on the VRE at the time of final submission.

Should your thesis contain explicit content a warning needs to be included after the title page.

PhD by Published Work candidates should also:

- submit a hard copy of the thesis and a copy of the portfolio of publications.
- For book chapters and journal articles, generally the full-text cannot be included so please ensure references to the published work is included within the commentary (i.e. thesis) – this will enable them to be accessed from the published source.
- For video ‘publications’, only videos where there are no third party copyright restrictions, such as a publisher, should be supplied on a USB. If required, a descriptive note should also be supplied to bring to the attention of any reader, how the video and commentary should be read/viewed.

If you have an approved thesis embargo the above submission/s apply and will be held by the Graduate School Registry until the embargo period expires.

All final copies of thesis must be formatted in the same manner as the copies submitted for examination. If you have redacted anything from your thesis for reasons of third party copyright, or if you are required to submit a hard copy, then you must also

submit this hard copy alongside the electronic version following the guidance below and Appendix A:

- The binding shall be of a fixed type so that leaves cannot be removed or replaced and shall be in a dark colour; the front and rear boards shall have sufficient rigidity to support the weight of the work when standing upright.

- The outside front board shall bear the full title of the work, the name and initials of the candidate, the qualification, and the year of award; the same information (excluding the title of the work) shall be shown on the spine of the work, reading downwards.

- Where, in addition to the thesis, the candidate wishes to submit for assessment additional non-documentary material (for example USB or CD) that is not contained within the thesis, this material must be clearly listed in the contents page and securely bound into the thesis.

- Where a candidate proposes to submit a thesis either wholly or in part in a form other than in traditional bound printed form, approval must first be obtained from the GSB – please refer to Regulation B1.4.

If you are unsure where to get your thesis bound, students have used the following companies:

Collis Bird & Withey
1 Drayton Park, London, N5 1NU
www.collisbirdandwithey.co.uk
Telephone: +44(0) 20 7607 1116
E-mail: info@collisbirdandwithey.co.uk

The Document Centre
92 Southwark Bridge Road, Southwark, SE1 0EX
www.document-centre.co.uk
Telephone: +44(0) 207 928 9738
E-mail: info@document-centre.co.uk

ALERT: Access to University systems (email, VRE – including your research diary) will cease once your conferment has been agreed. You are strongly advised to retrieve any necessary information from these systems before you submit your final thesis.

Conferment and Graduation
The final degree conferment and certificate will only be arranged once all the requirements have been submitted and the award confirmed. The conferment certificate will contain the degree - e.g. Doctor of Philosophy - and the thesis title; it will not include the subject area or College/School name.

The conferment letter will normally be issued within one week of final thesis submission, however, at busy times of the year this may take longer.

Conferment reports are issued monthly by the Graduate School to the Student Life Cycle team (who are responsible for graduation ceremonies) whereupon certificates are produced.

The graduation ceremonies for the forthcoming year will be:

Ceremony date	Invite date
11th/25th November 2019 (Royal Festival Hall)	11th October 2019
April 2020 (Marylebone Parish Church)	To be confirmed
20th/21st/22nd July 2020 (Royal Festival Hall)	19th June 2020

To ensure that you are invited to a ceremony, you will need to have completed the conferment process by the *Invite date*.

You will be invited to your graduation ceremony by email (this will be sent to your University email account). Once you receive this invitation you will be able to book your place, purchase guest tickets and, if required, apply for a visa support letter.

Further details can be found on https://www.westminster.ac.uk/study/current-students/your-studies/graduation

Student Lifecycle team - 020 7911 5119 E: stulifecycle@westminster.ac.uk

4. UNIVERSITY SUPPORT SERVICES

The University offers a huge range of services to support you through your research degree studies. Please do make full use of these services – as a registered student of the University all of these services are open and available to you. The full range of support and services can be accessed via the student hub on the University website here:

https://www.westminster.ac.uk/current-students

However, detailed below are a number of services that may be of specific interest to research degree students:

Disability Learning Support
T: 020 3506 8800
E: DLS@westminster.ac.uk
W: https://www.westminster.ac.uk/current-students/support-and-services/disability-learning-support

The Disability Learning Support team provide information, support and guidance to disabled students, for example those with specific learning difficulties (dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia and AD(H)D), long-term mental health conditions, visual impairments, hearing impairments, physical disabilities, long-term medical conditions and Autistic Spectrum Disorder.

Students can disclose a disability in confidence and put in place learning support entitlements throughout their programme to enable students to have equal access to all aspects of the university experience. Also offered is a range of confidential services, including one-to-one specialist tuition, mentoring, and advice on accessing the Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA).

If you have a disability which is likely to affect your studies, you should let Disability Learning Support know at the earliest opportunity. Please ensure you have up-to-date medical evidence e.g. a GP letter or consultant's report, or if you have a specific learning difficulty (dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia) an up-to-date diagnostic report.

University of Westminster Students' Union (UWSU)
W: uwsu.com
T: 020 350 65070
E: su-info@westminster.ac.uk

The University of Westminster Students' Union (UWSU) is run by students for students. It is an independent organisation that is here to represent your needs, protect your rights and make sure your voice gets heard.

The UWSU is run by five Sabbatical Officers who are elected each year. They have either completed their degree or chosen to take a year off from their course to do the role. There is a Sabbatical Officer based in each main Students' Union office.

The Students' Union supports you by:

- representing your views to the University: calling for the changes and specific improvements that you have identified
- providing advice when you get into difficulties with your course (for example if you are accused of plagiarism)
- offering you new opportunities and ways to get involved at a School level and through our sports clubs, societies, magazines and radio station
- asking you what matters to you about your course and your university experience and acting on what you say.
- Providing a dedicated sabbatical officer (Vice President) with responsibility for postgraduate education.
-

The University of Westminster PhD Society
W: https://www.phdsociety.co.uk/
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/UWSUPhDSociety/

The PhD Society is a social society formed under the auspices of the Student's Union (see above). The PhD Society offers a social and supportive space for the doctoral researcher community. Being part of the PhD Society means that you can share the research you are passionate about, learn from the research of others, and practice presenting at the annual symposium. You can improve your skills and knowledge by attending student-led workshops on topics chosen by the Society, plus gain teaching experience by running and designing workshops yourself. The PhD Society is also a space to communicate any worries you have to your colleagues or to the University, as well as providing the opportunity to get to know your colleagues in an informal environment.

For details of how to become a member of the Society, please visit the website address above.

Libraries and Study Spaces
W: https://www.westminster.ac.uk/current-students/studies/library-and-study-spaces

Once enrolled you are automatically registered to use the University's library services. There are four libraries - one on each campus - offering a range of books and journals (printed and electronic), DVDs and specialist materials. There are group and silent study areas in each library and computers, photocopiers and printers are also available. Open access computer rooms are located on each campus and wireless services are also available.

The library also offers training courses in research and referencing to help you with your research as well as:

- Accessing library resources on-site and from home
- Finding books, journals and past exam papers
- Requesting and renewing book loans online
- On-site WiFi access
- Copying, printing and scanning
- Dedicated liaison librarians to support your course
- Computer rooms and locations of general and specialist software at each campus
- Free e-resources, accessible via Library Search.

Full details of the University's library services are available on the website (above) and are also in printed guides available from each library. The guides are maintained by the Academic Liaison Librarians, who can provide tailored support for your research areas. Further information in respect of the Academic Liaison Librarians can be found at: https://www.westminster.ac.uk/current-students/academic-liaison-librarians

IT Services
W: https://www.westminster.ac.uk/current-students/studies/library-and-study-spaces/computer-and-study-rooms

Support for all IT related matters can be accessed via the above website. This includes information relating to the software and apps available to you through the University IT network. The University also offers a number of free accredited IT courses as part of its digital skills and capabilities development projects (including Microsoft and Adobe accredited courses. Further information can be found here: https://www.westminster.ac.uk/current-students/studies/study-skills-and-training/digital-skills

Blackboard
W: learning.westminster.ac.uk

Blackboard is an online learning system that we use as part of the DRDP. Presentation slides and workshop documents are available to download from the Graduate School site. Blackboard help is available via the 'Help' link at the top right of every Blackboard page. You can also access Blackboard on a smartphone or tablet device by downloading the appropriate app – just visit the app store for your device and search for Blackboard Mobile Learn.

Academic Learning Development
W: https://www.westminster.ac.uk/current-students/studies/study-skills-and-training

The Academic Learning Development Team offer a wide range of learning development support from help with academic writing, giving presentations and effective research to generally coping with the pressures of academic study. The team offer workshops (covering all aspects of academic skills), 1-1 appointments, research skills support, writing cafes, postgraduate cafes, Academic English modules, and digital skills support.

Careers and Employability Service
W: https://www.westminster.ac.uk/current-students/support-and-services/careers-and-employability-service

The Careers and Employability Service actively participates in the Doctoral Researcher Development Programme through the provision of a series of careers workshops throughout your time at Westminster. These sessions will help you to consider your career options within and outside academia and develop relevant skills and expertise in preparation for a successful transition into employment. In addition, you are encouraged to book one-to-one advice sessions with a Careers Consultant to receive more personalised guidance on anything from career choice to job hunting to CV/application advice and mock interviews – it's never too soon to start!

Appointments can be made via our jobs, advice and events system called Engage, accessible via the careers website. Here you will also find a wide range of careers resources, including specialist advice and vacancy sources for doctoral researchers, plus details of part-time employment and volunteering opportunities which you may want to take advantage of alongside your research. (Please note, full time doctoral researchers should not be employed to work more than six hours per week).

Counselling
E: counselling@westminster.ac.uk
W: https://www.westminster.ac.uk/current-students/support-and-services/counselling
T: 020 7911 5000 (EXT 66899)

Confidential counselling is available to all students on personal and emotional matters, including study-related anxieties, relationship difficulties, stress and mental health concerns. Both individual and group counselling is available. Throughout the year, there are workshops and events organised on issues of concern to support you. There is also a mentoring programme available to support those students who have long-term mental health problems.
Counselling is available in central London (Marylebone Campus – Luxborough Suite) and Harrow campus (Student Affairs Office).

Student Advice
E: studentadvice@westminster.ac.uk
W: https://www.westminster.ac.uk/current-students/support-and-services/student-advice
T: 020 7911 5000 (EXT 66080)

A team of specialist Student Advisers provides a range of information and advice on practical and financial issues, including those relating to:

- Student Funding
- State Benefits
- Tuition Fees
- Managing your money
- **Support and advice for EU nationals**
- **Support and advice for international students**, including student Tier 4 visas, working in the UK, police registration and settling into UK life. Student advisers are the only members of University staff who are authorised to provide UK immigration and visa advice.

Please visit the website above if you wish to make an appointment to see a student adviser either at 101 New Cavendish Street or our Harrow Campus.

Student Accommodation
W: https://www.westminster.ac.uk/study/accommodation

The Student Accommodation team can give you free help and advice on finding a suitable place to live, as well as help you apply for a place in our halls.

Fieldwork and Offsite Working
W: https://www.westminster.ac.uk/current-students/guides-and-policies/student-matters/fieldwork-and-offsite-working

Doctoral researchers who, as part of their research programme, plan to travel away from the University – either in the UK or further afield should ensure they have valid travel insurance and risk assessments in place. Please refer to the above website for further information.

Student Health Services
E: student-health@westminster.ac.uk
W: https://www.westminster.ac.uk/current-students/support-and-services/student-health

The Student Heath team offer the following services:

- Emotional Support
- Health and lifestyle guidance
- Sexual Health advice
- Support for chronic conditions and disabilities
- Emergency health support
- Guidance on infectious diseases
- Guidance for registering with a doctor

Central London: 020 7911 5186

Harrow Campus: 020 7911 5000 (EXT 68224)

Sexual Violence and Harassment
W: https://www.westminster.ac.uk/current-students/support-and-services/sexual-violence-and-harassment

If you experience any form of sexual violence, it is not your fault, you are not alone, and help and support is available.

At the University of Westminster, we believe that everyone has the right to live and learn in a safe environment. We are all part of the Westminster community. This means we treat each other with respect.

Please do visit the website above for support, advice and contact information (both within and outside of the University).

The University of Westminster is signed up to the Green Dot Active Bystander Initiative (a training programme for staff and students, which equips them with the knowledge , skills and confidence to identify, intervene and report sexual assault). Read more about Green Dot here: https://www.westminster.ac.uk/current-students/support-and-services/sexual-violence-and-harassment/green-dot-active-bystander-initiative

<u>APPENDIX A</u> - Specimen Thesis Title Page (see next page for Specimen Spine and Cover)

THE ORIGINS OF THE FARMERS'
CO-OPERATIVE IN WESSEX

JENNIFER ARCHER

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the
requirements of the University of Westminster
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

This research programme was carried out
in collaboration with the Borchester Farmers' Club

April 2020

This date is the month and year that you were awarded.

If you are unsure of this date, you can find it on your VRE record: https://research.westminster.ac.uk/ - an example is outlined below:

Thesis submitted for examination: 12 December 2019
Viva date: 1 February 2020
Award date: 12 April 2020

So, the date and year on the hard bound thesis should be April 2019.

Specimen Thesis Spine

↓

J.ARCHER PhD 2020

Specimen Thesis Cover

↓

THE ORIGINS OF THE FARMERS' CO-OPERATIVE IN WESSEX

J. ARCHER

PhD
2020

APPENDIX B – Academic Appeal Process

Academic Appeal against a Decision of the Graduate School Board or its Sub-Committees relating to an Assessment or Examination Decision or a Decision to Exclude a Candidate's Enrolment as a Research Degree Candidate.

DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of these procedures:

Academic Appeal	Is defined as a request for a review of a decision of the Graduate School Board or its Sub-Committees charged with decisions on candidate progress, assessment and awards
Academic Judgement	is a judgement that is made about a matter where only the opinion of an academic expert will suffice, for example a judgement about assessment, a degree classification, fitness to practise, research methodology or programme content/outcomes will normally be academic judgement. However, the fairness of procedures, the facts of the case, misrepresentation, the manner of communication, bias, an opinion expressed outside the area of competence, the way evidence is considered and maladministration in relation to these matters are all issues where academic judgement is not involved.
Assessment process	The assessment process includes all aspects of assessment, including the application of Annual Performance Review (APR), Remediation, compliance with assessment requirements and outcomes, and the conduct of the Board of Examiners and/or the Graduate School Board.
Deputy Registrar (Quality & Standards)	Head of the Quality and Standards Office in the Academic Registrar's Department. References to the Deputy Registrar (Quality & Standards) include his/her nominees who are working under his/her authority, or other appropriate officer nominated by the Academic Registrar.
Candidate	Is any person pursuing a research programme of study offered by the University, which leads to a research award of, or the award of credit by, the University. This includes candidates enrolled with a collaborative partner on a research degree programme approved or validated by the University, unless otherwise stated in the partnership agreement and agreed at the point of validation.
Complaint	A complaint is the expression of a specific concern about the provision of a course/module, programme of study, or a related academic or support service. The relevant procedures for dealing with complaints of this nature are the Student Complaints Procedure https://www.westminster.ac.uk/study/current-students/your-studies/forms-and-procedures/complaints
Graduate School Board	Is the formal body responsible for making decisions concerning a research degree candidate's assessment, progression and award. The Graduate School Board also responsible for the conduct of its Sub-Committees, eg the Research Degrees Progression Committee.

Material Irregularity	Material irregularity means the University has not acted in accordance with its own regulations or procedures, or has not acted with procedural fairness, and that this failing on the part of the University is so significant that it has had a material impact on the outcome, i.e. had it not been for this failing the outcome would probably have been substantively different.
Mitigating Circumstances	Are defined for the purposes of assessment as circumstances of a serious nature, usually sudden or unforeseen, that occurred during or immediately before a specific item or period of assessment, and which had an adverse impact on the candidate's performance.
Academic Standards Manager	References to the Academic Standards Manager include his/her nominees who are working under his/her authority, or other appropriate officer nominated by the Academic Registrar.
University Working Days	The normal University working days are Monday to Friday throughout the year except for Bank and National Holidays and a Christmas closure week, normally between Christmas and the New Year. The availability of Academic staff, however, may be reduced outside of term-time and this may result in stages of the procedure being slower to progress during these periods.

1 Introduction

1.1 The Graduate School Board (GSB) derives its authority from Academic Council and is the only body that can make decisions concerning:

- The academic progression of candidates
- The exclusion of candidates for academic failure
- The conferment of awards

GSB, and its Sub-Committees makes such decisions in accordance with the requirements of the Academic Regulations for Research Degrees.

1.2 The decisions of the Graduate School Board (GSB) can only be set aside in exceptional circumstances. Academic Council delegated responsibility for Research Degree progression and awards to the Graduate School Board on the 27 June 2012. A decision of GSB may only be modified by GSB, including by the Chair of GSB acting on behalf of the Board, or by Academic Council.

1.3 An academic appeal is a representation against a decision of GSB in respect of an assessment outcome for an individual candidate. The purpose of these procedures is to provide a framework within which a candidate may seek to challenge that decision in respect of that candidate's assessment, in order to protect against potential unfairness resulting from omission or error on the part of the University. The procedures are intended to provide an opportunity to remedy material disadvantage to a candidate.

1.4 No candidate appealing under these procedures, whether successfully or

otherwise, shall be treated less favourably than would have been the case had an appeal not been made.

1.5 If a candidate wishes to present a complaint about the University, its research degree programmes or services or the individuals concerned in their delivery, the Student Complaints Procedure should be used. Where a candidate submits an academic appeal against a decision of GSB in accordance with these procedures which, in the opinion of the Academic Standards Manager, requires an investigation which falls outside the remit of the GSB and which constitutes a complaint under the provisions of the Student Complaints Procedure, then the matter shall be referred for consideration under the Student Complaints Procedure. The academic appeal shall be held in abeyance until the consideration of the matter under the Student Complaints Procedure has been concluded. The Academic Standards Manager shall notify the candidate accordingly, normally within 5 University working days of receipt of the academic appeal. The findings of the Complaint investigation will then inform the consideration of the academic appeal.

1.6 The University's policies on the assessment of candidates, the role of the Director of Studies, Supervisors, Independent Assessors, Members of the Examination Board and other related matters are published in the Academic Regulations for Research Degrees and the supporting Research Degrees Handbook.

1.7 This Procedure does not cover complaints or academic appeals against matters which have already or are currently being considered by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA), a court, or a tribunal.

1.8 The University reserves the right to terminate the academic appeals process at any time if it judges that the appeal is vexatious or frivolous. This decision will be made by the Deputy Vice- Chancellor (Student Experience) on the advice of the Academic Registrar. Any candidate submitting fraudulent documentation in support of their appeal or who submits an appeal that is fraudulent in any other way will be subject to the provisions of the University's Student Disciplinary Regulations, Academic Misconduct Regulations or the Procedure for Managing Allegations of Research Misconduct, as appropriate.

1.9 As academic appeals are always related to individual assessment outcomes, it is unusual for candidates to submit collective appeals. However, the University recognises that there may be exceptional circumstances where the issues raised affect a number of candidates and therefore those candidates may wish to lodge a collective appeal. In these cases, each candidate is expected to show how they have personally been affected by the situation. In certain instances, a nominated individual may be required to act as spokesperson for those candidates who are making the collective appeal.

1.10 An academic appeal may only be submitted by the candidate whose assessment decision is being challenged – a third party may not submit an academic appeal on behalf of a candidate.

1.11 The University will not consider academic appeals which are made anonymously, nor will it consider requests made by appellants for appeals to be considered anonymously.

1.12 Candidate expenses for making an appeal will not be reimbursed by the University, regardless of the subsequent outcome.

1.13 The University undertakes to treat all appeals with confidentiality. Disclosure of evidence will be restricted to those parties involved in the review process.

1.14 The University is committed to complying fully with the Data Protection Act 2018 in its handling of personal data.

2 Accompaniment and representation

2.1 A candidate should seek advice from UWSU ("University of Westminster Students' Union") before making an academic appeal. Advice on the procedure may also be sought from the Research Quality and Standards Manager or the Graduate School Registry.

2.2 Candidates invited to attend an appeal hearing may be accompanied by an officer or staff member of UWSU, a currently enrolled candidate of the University, or a member of University staff, who may make representations on behalf of the candidate. Not all appeals will necessarily proceed to a formal hearing and will be managed in accordance with the procedure below.

2.3 Legal representation will not be permitted at appeal hearings.

3 GROUNDS FOR AN APPEAL

3.1 A decision of the Graduate School Board or its Sub-Committees or a recommendation by a Board of Examiners, confirmed by the GSB, may only be modified where one or more of the following criteria (the grounds) have been demonstrated to the satisfaction of the body considering the appeal:

a) That there is evidence that a procedural irregularity (including administrative error) has occurred in the assessment of the candidate's progress and performance (measured against the performance and rate of progress that would be required for a timely and successful completion as defined in the Academic Regulations for Research Degrees and the supporting Research Degrees Handbook) and that the procedural irregularity is of such a nature as to cause doubt as to whether the decision might have been different had there not been such irregularity; and/or

b) That there is evidence of improper assessment by the assessors of the adequacy of the candidate's progress and performance in relation to the rate of progress required for a timely and successful completion as defined in the Academic Regulations for Research Degrees and the supporting Research Degrees Handbook; a candidate may not otherwise challenge the academic judgment of the assessors;

c) That there is evidence of improper assessment of an application of Mitigating Circumstances, which resulted in the candidate being put at a disadvantage during subsequent assessments of progress and performance (measured against the performance and rate of progress that would be required for a timely and successful completion as defined in the Academic Regulations for Research

Degrees and the supporting Research Degrees Handbook), which would not otherwise have occurred had reasonable and appropriate adjustments been made;

d) That there were circumstances affecting the candidate's performance of which the examiners were not aware at an oral examination (viva)[1]; and/or

e) That there is evidence of procedural irregularity in the conduct of the examination (including administrative error) of such a nature as to cause doubt as to whether the result might have been different had there not been such irregularity; and/or

f) That there is evidence of unfair or improper assessment on the part of one or more of the examiners.

Candidates wishing to appeal should ensure they have read the Academic Regulations for Research Degrees and the supporting section of the Research Degrees Handbook.

3.2 Academic appeals which seek to challenge the academic judgement of the Board of Examiners, Assessors or the Graduate School Board and its Sub-Committees will not be considered, and therefore matters of academic judgement will not be grounds for an academic appeal.

3.3 Mitigating circumstances will not be considered as grounds for an academic appeal following an examination (see Section B6 of the Academic Regulation for Research Degrees) except where permitted under Section B7.4 as a "fit to sit" policy normally applies. It is recognised that mitigating circumstances may exist that have impacted on the progress of a candidate's research programme, however, these should have been formally reported at the time the circumstance occurred, with any reasonable adjustments that were necessary and appropriate being discussed and agreed with the Director of Studies at the time. Candidates should appeal against the decision of the Graduate School Board in relation to improper assessment of a mitigating circumstance at the time it occurs, not after a subsequent assessment of performance or examination. Claims for mitigating circumstances will not be considered retrospectively.

3.4 Candidates should seek advice from the University of Westminster Students' Union, before submitting an appeal. Further details about UWSU are available from http://www.uwsu.com/.

[1] This criteria will only be considered in exceptional circumstances as the University operates a "Fit to Sit" policy, ie it is the responsibility of the candidate to determine if they are fit to participate in an assessment or if a mitigating circumstances claim, or in the case of the final *viva voce* oral examination an "application to postpone an examination" request should be submitted for non-participation (see Sections B of the Academic Regulations for Research Degrees and the Research Degrees Handbook).

4 PROCEDURES

STAGE 1: Initial Consideration

4.1 All academic appeals must be made within 15 University working days of the publication of the decision which is being appealed (see Academic Appeals Process flowchart) using the application form for Stage 1 appeal which can be found at http://www.westminster.ac.uk/research/research-framework and submitted to the Academic Standards Manager to undertake a review of the appeal and investigate the circumstances. All evidence from the appellant must be provided at the time the appeal is submitted.

4.2 Appeals submitted after this deadline may, exceptionally, be admitted at the discretion of the Academic Standards Manager where the candidate can provide good reason, to the satisfaction of the Academic Standards Manager, for its late submission.

4.3 The appeal request will be acknowledged normally within 5 University working days of its receipt.

4.4 The Academic Standards Manager and a senior researcher (eg College Research Director, Research Centre Director) with no prior contact with the case shall undertake a preliminary review of the appeal request and investigate the circumstances applying to the case to assess if there are permissible grounds and make one of the following determinations:

i) That the appeal provides evidence of permissible grounds, see Section 3.1, in which case the appeal shall move to Stage 2.

ii) That the appeal does not provide evidence of permissible grounds, see Section 3.1, in which case the Academic Standards Manager will advise the candidate in writing of this finding, normally **within 20 University working days** of receipt of the appeal, and that the appeal will not be further considered. If more than 20 University working days is required to undertake the investigation the Academic Standards Manager will notify the appellant to explain the reason(s) for the delay.

4.5 Where the candidate is dissatisfied with a determination that the appeal does not provide evidence of permissible grounds, the appellant may, within 5 University working days of the notification letter, make a request to the Deputy Registrar (Quality & Standards) that this decision is reviewed. In these circumstances the Deputy Registrar (Quality & Standards) will refer the appeal to an Independent Rapporteur, who shall be a senior member of the University research active staff with no prior involvement in the case. The Independent Rapporteur will review all documentation available and may endorse the recommendation that no permissible grounds exist for an appeal or may determine that the appeal should proceed to Stage 2. There shall be no right of appeal against the decision of the Independent Rapporteur. The Deputy Registrar (Quality & Standards) will aim to respond, within 15 University working days of receipt of the request to review the decision of the Academic Standards Manager that there are no permissible grounds for an appeal and will advise the candidate in writing of the Independent Rapporteur's determination. If more than 15 University working days is required for the Independent Rapporteur to complete their review the Deputy Registrar

(Quality & Standards) will notify the appellant to explain the reason(s) for the delay.

4.6 Where the Independent Rapporteur's decision is that no permissible grounds for an appeal exist, or where the candidate does not request a review of the decision of the Academic Standards Manager's decision within the 5 University working days, this will constitute the completion of the University's procedures in this matter.

STAGE 2: Consideration by the Graduate School Board

4.7 Following completion of the Stage 1 - Initial Consideration and where it is determined that an appeal should proceed to Stage 2 the Academic Standards Manager will collate the documents submitted by the appellant and any other supporting documents identified during the preliminary review into a file for consideration by the Chair of the Graduate School Board. This file will include any determination made by an Independent Rapporteur, where appropriate.

4.8 The Academic Standards Manager in consultation with the College Research Director at Stage 1 will:

- In the case of an appeal based on grounds of material irregularity in an assessment process, whether examination or a decision to exclude a candidate due to poor performance, report their findings in writing to the Chair of the Graduate School Board, whose decision is being appealed. The Chair of the Graduate School Board shall consider these findings on behalf of the Graduate School Board, and where appropriate should liaise with and seek views and opinions from relevant academic and non-academic staff and where appropriate, external examiners. The Chair shall, on behalf of the Graduate School Board, reach one of the following determinations:

a) That a material irregularity in the assessment process did occur and that, had it not been for that irregularity, the original decision of the Graduate School Board would have been different. In such cases the Chair shall uphold the appeal and modify the Board's original decision as appropriate; or
b) That a material irregularity in the assessment process did occur, but even had the irregularity not occurred the original decision of the Board would not have been different. In such cases the Chair shall reject the appeal and the Board's original decision will stand; or
c) That a material irregularity in the assessment process did not occur. In such cases the Chair shall reject the appeal and the Board's original decision will stand.

- In the case of an appeal based on grounds of material irregularity in the conduct of the Mitigating Circumstances process (see Section B7 of the Academic Regulations for Research Degrees), report his/her findings in writing to the Chair of the Graduate School Board whose decision is being appealed. The Chair shall consider these findings on behalf of the Graduate School Board, and where appropriate should liaise with and seek views and opinions from relevant academic and other staff. The Chair shall, on behalf of the Graduate School Board, reach one of the

following determinations:

a) That a material irregularity in the conduct of the Mitigating Circumstances process did occur and that, had it not been for that irregularity, the original decision of the Graduate School Board would have been different. In such cases the Chair shall uphold the appeal and modify the Board's original decision as appropriate; or
b) That a material irregularity in the conduct of the Mitigating Circumstances process did occur, but even had the irregularity not occurred the original decision of the Board would not have been different. In such cases the Chair shall reject the appeal and the Board's original decision will stand; or
c) That a material irregularity in the conduct of the Mitigating Circumstances process did not occur. In such cases the Chair shall reject the appeal and the Board's original decision will stand.

4.9 Written confirmation of the Stage 2 decision, along with the full reasons for that decision, should be provided by the Academic Standards Manager to the candidate normally within 40 University working days of receipt of the appeal (or within 70 University working days in those cases where an Independent Rapporteur reviewed the initial decision of the Academic Standards Manager in accordance with Section 4.5 above). Where the outcome of the appeal may impact on a candidate's progression, and any delay in considering the appeal may adversely impact the candidate's academic career, the University will do all that it can to expedite the consideration of the appeal, however this cannot be guaranteed as it is important that a robust process is followed and full consideration is given to the appeal.

4.10 Where the Chair of the Graduate School Board modifies the Board's original decision, this shall be reported to the next meeting of the Graduate School Board.

STAGE 3: Consideration of a Request for an Appeal Hearing

4.11 Should the candidate be dissatisfied with the Stage 2 decision the candidate has the right to request the Deputy Registrar (Quality & Standards) to refer the matter for consideration by an Appeal Panel. Such a request must be received by the Deputy Registrar (Quality & Standards) within 10 University working days of the date of notification of the Stage 2 decision. Where such a request is not received by the deadline, the University's internal procedures are completed. Such a request will not be considered if Stage 2 of the process has not completed.

4.12 Such a request must be submitted on the Stage 3 application form (see Appendix A2). The completed form must stipulate clearly and unambiguously the grounds upon which the request is based, and include a comprehensive statement explaining why the grounds have been met. All evidence submitted must relate only to the grounds for the request. The Deputy Registrar (Quality & Standards) will acknowledge receipt of the request in writing normally within 5 University working days.

4.13 The only possible grounds are as follows:

- That there was a material irregularity in the consideration of the academic appeal at Stage 2;

- That new evidence has come to light to support the appeal which could not reasonably have been made available at the time the appeal was submitted.

4.14 The Deputy Registrar (Quality & Standards) will consider the request against these grounds, and only these grounds. The Deputy Registrar (Quality & Standards) may request the candidate or any other party to provide further information or clarification.

4.15 Where, in the opinion of the Deputy Registrar (Quality & Standards), there is evidence that one or both of the grounds might have been met the Deputy Registrar (Quality & Standards) shall accept the request and refer the matter for consideration by an Appeal Panel at Stage 4.

4.16 Where, in the opinion of the Deputy Registrar (Quality & Standards), there is no such evidence the Deputy Registrar (Quality & Standards) shall reject the request. In this case the Stage decision shall stand, there shall be no further opportunities for appeal, and the University's internal procedures are completed.

4.17 The Deputy Registrar (Quality & Standards) shall notify the appellant in writing of the decision, and the reasons for it, normally within 20 University working days of receipt of the request. Where it is not possible for the Deputy Registrar (Quality & Standards) to meet this deadline the appellant will be informed and will be advised of the reasons for the delay.

4.18 Pending the outcome of Stage 3 the original decision will stand.

STAGE 4: Consideration at an Appeal Hearing

4.19 The Appeal Hearing will be conducted by an Appeal Panel and its composition will be as follows:

a) Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Knowledge Exchange) or nominee (Chair)
b) 2 academic staff members of Academic Council with experience of research degree completions
c) President of the Students' Union, or sabbatical officer nominee.

The Secretary to the Panel shall be a nominee of the Deputy Registrar (Quality & Standards).

4.20 No member of the Panel shall have had any previous involvement in the case, nor shall have been involved in advising, supervising or assessment of the candidate.

4.21 The quorum for an Appeal Panel is three, including the Chair.

4.22 The Appeal Hearing shall normally be held within 30 University working days of the written notification of the Deputy Registrar (Quality and Standards) decision to accept the request to refer the matter to an Appeal Panel. Where it is not possible for the Hearing to be held within this timeframe the appellant will be informed and will be advised of the reasons for the delay. Wherever

possible the date set will be at the candidate's convenience.

4.23 The candidate's expenses for attending an appeal hearing will not normally be reimbursed by the University.

Procedures for conducting an appeal hearing

4.24 At least 10 University working days in advance of the hearing the University will write to the candidate and ask that within 5 University working days the candidate:

- Confirm their attendance at the hearing
- Confirm the name and relationship of the person who will be accompanying them to the hearing
- Confirm the name and relationship of any witnesses that the candidate wishes to call during the hearing
- Provide any additional evidence that they wish the appeal panel to consider that has not previously been submitted at stage one or stage two of the appeals process
- Provide an indication of the outcome they are seeking within the scope of the Academic Regulations for Research Degrees.

4.25 The members of the Appeal Panel, the candidate, and the Chair of the Graduate School Board, whose Stage 2 decision is being appealed, will receive the same documentation prior to the hearing including:

- The candidate's submission and supporting evidence
- The Stage 2 outcome letter, which will include the reasons for the decision
- The relevant assessment regulations
- Other documents which may be considered relevant.

4.26 Submission of additional evidence will not be permitted except orally during the hearing. Tabled evidence will not be permitted.

4.27 The panel will ask questions of:

- the candidate
- any witnesses that the candidate wishes to call
- the Chair of the Graduate School Board whose decision is being appealed
- any witnesses that the Chair of the Graduate School Board wishes to call

4.28 The candidate is expected to attend the hearing in person. In the event of a candidate's non-attendance the appeal hearing will proceed. Exceptionally, this condition may be waived by the Chair of the Appeals Panel where there is evidence to show that a candidate is unable to comply, e.g. where a candidate is too incapacitated by illness to attend. A representative will not be allowed to attend on the candidate's behalf.

4.29 Candidates have the right to call any witnesses that they choose who will be able to provide information pertinent to the issues under consideration at the

appeal hearing. The Chair of the Graduate School Board whose decision is being appealed also has the right to call any witnesses that they choose who will be able to provide information pertinent to the issues under consideration at the appeal hearing. Witnesses will not be able to ask questions on behalf of the candidate and are only permitted to be present whilst giving evidence.

4.30 Appeal Hearings shall be held in private.

4.31 The Appeal Panel shall consider the evidence presented, and shall limit its consideration to the grounds stated at Section 4.13 above. It is not the purpose of the Appeal Hearing to re-hear the original academic appeal. The Appeals Panel will decide, on the balance of probabilities, either:

i) That one or both of the grounds for appeal are met, in which case the appeal is upheld and the matter is referred back to the Chair of the Graduate School Board to reconsider the original academic appeal. The Panel may also make recommendations to the Chair of the Graduate School Board; or

ii) That neither ground for appeal is met, in which case the appeal is rejected and the Stage 2 decision shall stand. There shall be no further opportunities for appeal, and the University's internal procedures are completed.

4.32 In the event that the Panel does not reach a consensus, the Chair will have the casting vote. No vote will be counted for absent panel members.

4.33 The Appeals Panel may also recommend to Academic Council and Graduate School Board changes to assessment procedures or highlight examples of good practice as a result of the appeals process.

4.34 The candidate and the Chair of the Graduate School Board will be informed in writing of the outcome of the appeal hearing within 5 University working days. The outcome letter will include the reasons for the Panel's decision.

4.35 The decision of the Appeal Panel is final and cannot be the subject of any further appeal. This is considered the end of the University's internal procedures.

4.36 Pending the outcome of any appeal at Stage 4 the original decision will stand.

STAGE 5: Reconsideration by the Graduate School Board

4.37 Where the Appeal Panel upholds the appeal and refers the matter back for reconsideration by the Chair of the Graduate School Board this reconsideration must be completed at the earliest opportunity and normally within 20 University working days of notification of the Panel's decision.

4.38 This reconsideration will be undertaken in accordance with the provisions of Section 4.8 above.

4.39 The candidate must be informed by the Academic Standards Manager of the outcome within a further 5 University working days.

4.40 There shall be no further right of appeal following this reconsideration, which shall constitute the completion of the University's internal procedures.

Completion of Procedures

4.41 At the completion of the University's internal processes relating to appeals, the Deputy Registrar (Quality and Standards), or nominee, will issue a letter informing a candidate that the University's procedures are complete. If a candidate remains dissatisfied with the outcome it may be possible to make a complaint to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA). Information and eligibility rules are available at http://www.oiahe.org.uk

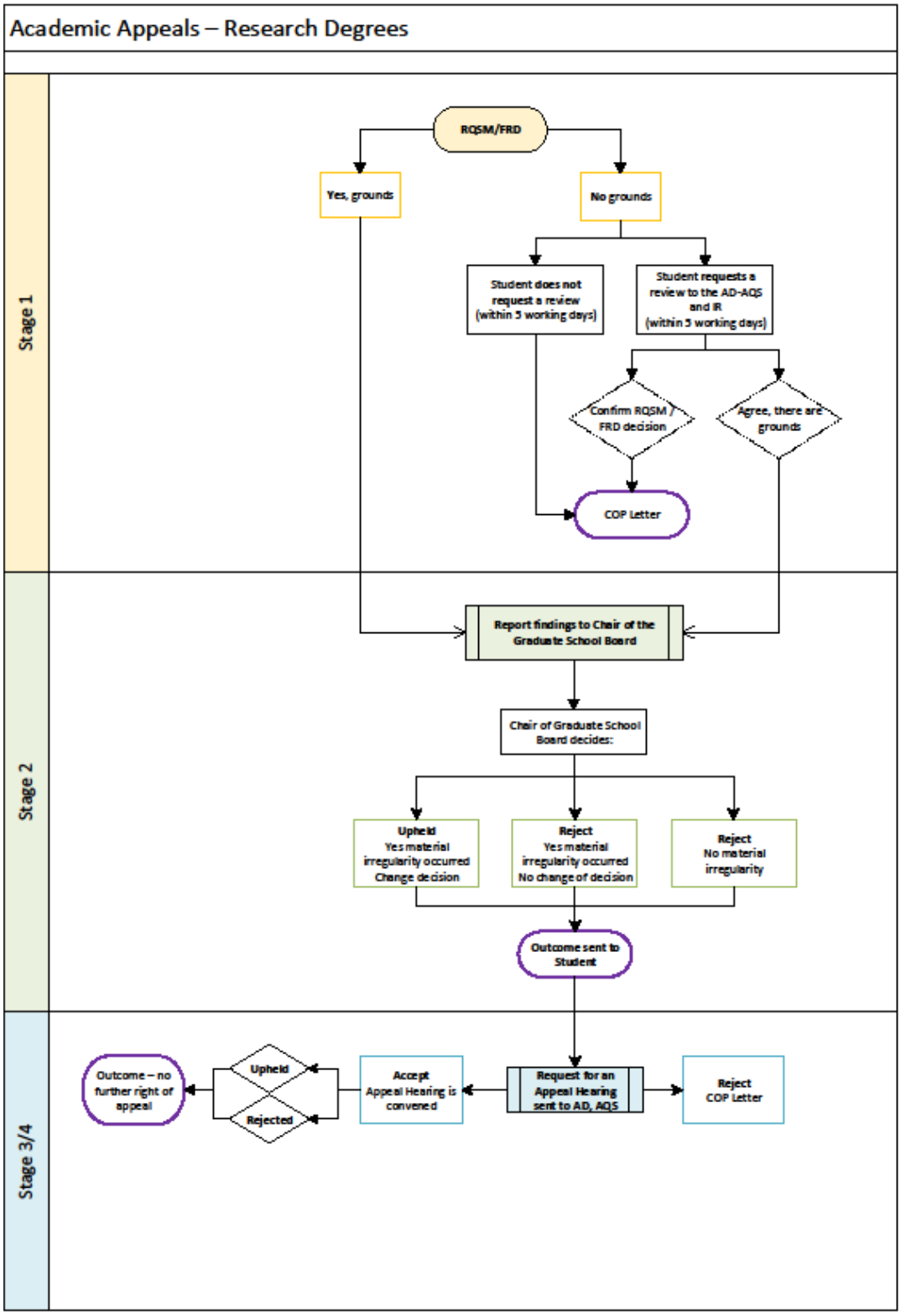
5 Annulment of the decision of an Assessment Board

5.1 Notwithstanding the fact that the candidate has no further right of appeal, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Student Experience) may recommend to Academic Council that the decision of the Graduate School Board be annulled if:

i) The Chair of the Graduate School Board has failed to reconsider the Stage 1 decision despite referral back following a successful appeal; or
ii) The Chair of the Graduate School Board has ignored a reasonable recommendation from the Appeal Panel in their reconsideration; or
iii) Following the completion of all other internal procedures the decision remains perverse or unreasonable to the detriment of the candidate.

5.2 If it is felt that the irregularity may have affected other candidates, Academic Council may annul part or all of the assessment process.

5.3 Where Academic Council annuls the decision of the Graduate School Board or part or all of an assessment process it shall put in place arrangements as it sees fit in order to remedy the situation. This may include substituting the decision of the Graduate School Board with a modified decision.


Academic Appeals – Research Degrees
Stage 1
RQSM/FRD
Yes, grounds
No grounds
Student does not request a review (within 5 working days)
Student requests a review to the AD-AQS and IR (within 5 working days)
Confirm RQSM / FRD decision
Agree, there are grounds
COP Letter
Stage 2
Report findings to Chair of the Graduate School Board
Chair of Graduate School Board decides:
Upheld Yes material irregularity occurred Change decision
Reject Yes material irregularity occurred No change of decision
Reject No material irregularity
Outcome sent to Student
Stage 3/4
Outcome – no further right of appeal
Upheld
Rejected
Accept Appeal Hearing is convened
Request for an Appeal Hearing sent to AD, AQS
Reject COP Letter

APPENDIX C – Masters and Doctoral Award Descriptors

*Extracted from Part A of the QAA Quality Code.

Level 7 Master's Degree

"4.17 Descriptor for a higher education qualification at level 7 on the FHEQ: master's degree

The descriptor provided for this level of the frameworks is for any master's degree which should meet the descriptor in full. This qualification descriptor should also be used as a reference point for other qualifications at level 7, including postgraduate certificates and postgraduate diplomas.

Master's degrees are awarded to students who have demonstrated:

- a systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of their academic discipline, field of study or area of professional practice
- a comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship
- originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline
- conceptual understanding that enables the student:
    - to evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline
    - to evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses.

Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

- deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, make sound judgements in the absence of complete data, and communicate their conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences
- demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level
- continue to advance their knowledge and understanding, and to develop new skills to a high level.

And holders will have:

- the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring:
    - the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility
    - decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations
    - the independent learning ability required for continuing professional development.

4.17.1 Much of the study undertaken for master's degrees is at, or informed by, the forefront of an academic or professional discipline. Successful students show originality in the application of knowledge, and they understand how the boundaries of knowledge are advanced through research. They are able to deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, and they show originality in tackling and solving problems. They have the qualities needed for employment in circumstances requiring sound judgement, personal

responsibility and initiative in complex and unpredictable professional environments.

4.17.2 Master's degrees are awarded after completion of taught courses, programmes of research or a mixture of both. Longer, research-based programmes may lead to the degree of MPhil. The learning outcomes of most master's degree courses are achieved on the basis of study equivalent to at least one full-time calendar year and are taken by graduates with a bachelor's degree with honours (or equivalent achievement).

4.17.3 Master's degrees are often distinguished from other qualifications at this framework level (for example, advanced short courses, which often form parts of continuing professional development programmes and lead to postgraduate certificates and/or postgraduate diplomas) by an increased intensity, complexity and density of study. Master's degrees, in comparison to postgraduate certificates and postgraduate diplomas, typically include planned intellectual progression that often includes a synoptic/research or scholarly activity.

4.17.4 Some master's degrees, for example, in science, engineering and mathematics, comprise an integrated programme of study spanning several levels. Such programmes typically involve study equivalent to at least four full-time academic years in England, Wales and Northern Ireland and five in Scotland. Of this, study equivalent to at least one full-time academic year is at level 7 of the FHEQ and the final outcomes of the qualifications themselves meet the expectations of the descriptor for a higher education qualification at level 7 in full. Study at bachelor's level is integrated with study at master's level and the programmes are designed to meet the qualification descriptors in full at level 6 of the FHEQ as well as those at level 7 of the FHEQ. Such qualifications are often termed 'integrated master's' as an acknowledgement of the prior period of study at lower levels (which typically meets the expectations of the descriptor for a higher education qualification at level 6).

4.17.5 First degrees in medicine, dentistry and veterinary science comprise an integrated programme of study and professional practice spanning several levels. While the final outcomes of the qualifications themselves typically meet the expectations of the descriptor for a higher education qualification at level 7, these qualifications may often retain, for historical reasons, titles of Bachelor of Medicine, and Bachelor of Surgery, Bachelor of Dental Surgery, Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine or Bachelor of Veterinary Science, and are abbreviated to MBChB or BM BS, BDS, BVetMed and BVSc respectively. The use of the title 'Dr' by medical doctors is a historical abbreviation for the profession; it does not indicate a qualification at doctoral level (level 8 on the FHEQ).”

Level 8 Doctoral Degree

“14.8 Descriptor for a higher education qualification at level 8 on the FHEQ: doctoral degree

The descriptor provided for this level of the frameworks is for any doctoral degree which should meet the descriptor in full. This qualification descriptor should also be used as a reference point for other level 8.

Doctoral degrees are awarded to students who have demonstrated:

- the creation and interpretation of new knowledge, through original research or other advanced scholarship, of a quality to satisfy peer review, extend the forefront of the discipline, and merit publication

- a systematic acquisition and understanding of a substantial body of knowledge which is at the forefront of an academic discipline or area of professional practice
- the general ability to conceptualise, design and implement a project for the generation of new knowledge, applications or understanding at the forefront of the discipline, and to adjust the project design in the light of unforeseen problems
- a detailed understanding of applicable techniques for research and advanced academic enquiry.

Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

- make informed judgements on complex issues in specialist fields, often in the absence of complete data, and be able to communicate their ideas and conclusions clearly and effectively to specialist and non-specialist audiences
- continue to undertake pure and/or applied research and development at an advanced level, contributing substantially to the development of new techniques, ideas or approaches.

And holders will have:

- the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and largely autonomous initiative in complex and unpredictable situations, in professional or equivalent environments

4.18.1 Doctoral degrees are awarded for the creation and interpretation, construction and/or exposition of knowledge which extends the forefront of a discipline, usually through original research.

4.18.2 Holders of doctoral degrees are able to conceptualise, design and implement projects for the generation of significant new knowledge and/or understanding. Holders of doctoral degrees have the qualities needed for employment that require both the ability to make informed judgements on complex issues in specialist fields and an innovative approach to tackling and solving problems.

4.18.3 Doctoral programmes that may have a substantial taught element in addition to the research component (for example, professional doctorates), lead usually to awards which include the name of the discipline in their title (for example, EdD for Doctor of Education or DClinPsy for Doctor of Clinical Psychology). Professional doctorates aim to develop an individual's professional practice and to support them in producing a contribution to (professional) knowledge.

4.18.4 The titles PhD and DPhil are commonly used for doctoral degrees awarded on the basis of original research.

4.18.5 Achievement of outcomes consistent with the qualification descriptor for the doctoral degree normally requires study equivalent to three full-time calendar years.

4.18.6 Higher doctorates may be awarded in recognition of a substantial body of original research undertaken over the course of many years. Typically a portfolio of work that has been previously published in a peer-refereed context is submitted for assessment. Most degree awarding bodies restrict candidacy to graduates or their own academic staff of several years' standing."

APPENDIX D – Tuition Fees, Fee Liability and Debt Management

2019/20 Research degree tuition fees

All fees are expected to increase annually by 3%, in keeping with expected inflation.

Doctoral Researchers within the Schools of Computer Science & Engineering and Life Sciences may be required to pay bench fees in addition to the fees outlined below – these can vary from £1,000 to £10,000.

MODE OF ATTENDANCE	HOME	OVERSEAS
Full Time	£5,200	£13,300
Part Time	£2,600	£6,650
Distance Learning full time	£4,327	£12,500
Distance Learning part time	£2,100	£6,650
PhD by Published Work	£2,600	£6,650
Professional Doctorate	£3,100	£6,200
Writing Up	£1,500	£1,500
Extension to Submission Date	£1,500	£1,500
Re-examination	£1,500	£1,500

2019/20 Research Degree Fee Liability

Fee liability for Doctoral students is calculated on a pro-rata basis. This means that if you withdraw (or are excluded) 14 days after enrolment, your fee liability will be calculated on a monthly basis. For example, if you enrol in September but withdraw in December, you will be liable for 3 months of your total annual tuition fee.

If you suspend your studies, your fee for that academic year will be reduced on a pro-rata basis by the number of months for which the suspension has been agreed. University finance policy states that, at the time of starting a suspension, no fees are refunded but are instead credited against the tuition fee liability when studies are resumed.

If you change your mode of attendance, your fee will be adjusted according to the number of months studied under each mode of attendance.

The fee liability pro-rata basis is <u>not</u> applicable to Writing Up, Extension or Re-examination fees. You will be required to pay the <u>full</u> Writing Up, Extension or Re-examination fee raised for that academic year, no matter when you submit your thesis.

2019/20 Research Degree Debt Management

At the date of re-enrolment each year, if you have an outstanding tuition fee debt originating from the previous academic year your enrolment with the University will be excluded.

If you are an international student whose immigration permission is dependent on your enrolment at the University, you will be reported to the UKVI if you fail to enrol due to non-payment of fees, or if your enrolment is terminated.

If you have an outstanding debt at the point of submitting your doctoral research project, you will not be invited to attend the viva examination. The Graduate School Registry will not forward your thesis to the examiners until the debt is paid. You will not be permitted to graduate, attend a graduation ceremony, or receive any results certificate, diploma or official transcript in relation to the programme of study to which the debt relates.

For full details of the University's debt management policy, please refer to the 'Student Debt Management Policy 2019/20'.