



BUCKINGHAMSHIRE
NEW UNIVERSITY

EST. 1891



REGULATIONS FOR RESEARCH DEGREES

Effective from 1st March 2013

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Preamble

All University formal documents relate to the policies, strategies, procedures and regulations of the University having been approved by the appropriate formally recognised and constituted body. All University staff and students are required to adhere to the formal processes and regulations of the University.

This document should not be read in isolation as other University processes/formal documents could be relevant. A full listing of all formal documents is available on the University's website.

Any interpretation of the content of this formal document will be at the discretion of the Chair of the University Research Degrees Committee.

All previous versions of this document as approved by Senate before March 2009 shall be rescinded.

The names of committees and titles of posts may change from time to time. This shall not invalidate the powers of the equivalent successor committees or post holders.

If required this formal document is available in an alternative format eg Braille, tape, disc, email or a larger font size. Please contact Student and Academic Services.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The research degrees of the University are validated by either
 - a. Brunel University, for students who registered with Brunel and first enrolled with the University prior to 1st January 2009 or
 - b. Coventry University, for students who registered with Coventry and first enrolled with the University on or after 1st January 2009.In terms of these regulations the term 'validating institution' refers to either Brunel University or Coventry University.
- 1.2 Regulations specific to the University pertaining to research degrees will be governed by and from time to time, amended or substituted by Senate on the advice of the Research Degrees Committee.
- 1.3 The Research Degrees Committee (RDC), which reports to the University's Senate, is responsible for ensuring that these regulations and those of the validating institution pertaining to the quality assurance of research degrees are complied with.
- 1.4 Students are enrolled with the University and registered with the validating institution with the former being responsible for supervision and support.
- 1.5 These regulations should be read in-conjunction with the relevant validating institution Code of Practice – Postgraduate Research Degrees.

2 Terminology

Head of Research (HoR) or nominee	The person designated by the University's Senate as having formal responsibility for the administration of research degrees in a faculty.
Enrolment	The process by which a student declares an intention to study for a research degree during a continuous period of twelve calendar months. Enrolment constitutes an agreement to pay all fees due and to abide by the rules and regulations of the University.
Registration	The process by which a student declares an intention to follow a research degree through the validating institution
Thesis	A substantial piece of work in which the candidate is required to demonstrate a sound knowledge and critical appreciation of his or her discipline. The submission may take the form of a wholly written dissertation, or one, which comprises original, creative work, supported by adequate documentation indicating its originality and contribution to knowledge within the discipline. All submissions involving creative work should include a means of storage, access and retrieval of work.
Viva voce	A defence by the candidate of the thesis in an oral examination conducted by two or more examiners.

3 Admissions

- 3.1 An applicant may seek admission to a programme of study, either full-time or part-time, which may lead to the postgraduate research degree award of either:
 - a) Master of Philosophy (MPhil)
 - b) Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

- 3.2 An applicant may be admitted to study for a postgraduate research degree if he/she holds:
- a) an appropriate Masters Degree; or
 - b) at least an upper second class honours degree in a relevant subject from a university or any other institution of higher education in the United Kingdom with degree awarding powers granted by the responsible Secretary of State; or
 - c) a qualification which is regarded by the University as equivalent to such an honours degree.
- 3.3 Qualifications:
- a) An applicant holding qualifications other than those in paragraph 3.2 above may be considered on his/her merits.
 - b) International students will additionally have to meet the requirements of the UKBA.
- 3.4 Prior to interview an applicant is required to complete the University Research Degrees Application Form RES1 and provide:
- a) details of two referees, at least one of the referees must have direct knowledge of the applicants academic work but only one can be from the University – and neither referee should be a partner or family member
 - b) a copy of his/her first degree certificate (if applicable)
 - c) if English is not the mother tongue, a copy of his/her certificate of English language competence; and
 - d) a project proposal of up to 2500 words
- 3.5 If the applicant is being considered under paragraph 3.3 above he/she will be required to submit a professional portfolio in addition to the completed RES1 form.
- 3.6 English Language requirements:
- a) All applicants for a higher degree must have a sufficient command of the English language to be able to complete satisfactorily the programme of study and to prepare and defend the thesis in English. Applicants may be required to demonstrate their competence through attainment of a notified minimum IELTS score (or equivalent) and/or attendance at a pre-sessional English course or any other requirement as determined by the University.
 - b) International students are required to consult the latest UKBA regulations in relation to English language requirements
- 3.7 The interview panel should consist of at least two interviewers, one being the HoR and the other being the proposed main supervisor. If the HoR is to be the main supervisor an additional person from the research degree programme who has supervised to completion should be on the panel. Overseas applicants should be interviewed by telephone interview if possible where a face-to-face interview is not practicable.
- 3.8 A postgraduate research student agreement and a formal offer of admission to the University will be approved by the Chair, RDC. If the prospective student is from the same faculty as the Chair, RDC, the offer will be approved by the HoR from another faculty.

The offer letter and the postgraduate research student agreement will include:

- a) the area of research
- b) the names and roles of the two supervisors appointed to support the student, as detailed at the time of the interview
- c) the start date for the research

- d) the registration period relevant to the mode of study
 - e) the terms of the bursary (if applicable)
 - f) liability for fees (if applicable)
 - g) the requirement for the student to attend an MPhil/PhD transfer interview and the annual reviews
 - h) any conditions which the student is required to meet before he/she can register
 - i) the campus at which the student will be based
 - j) a statement that the offer is subject
 - to ethics approval if the proposed research project involves human subjects (if applicable); and
 - to acceptance by the UK Government of the student's application for a visa to enter and remain in the UK for the duration of the programme of study if the student is not a resident of European Economic Area (if applicable)
- 3.9 If the student is self-funded or sponsored the student must provide an acceptable financial guarantee.
- 3.10 A student may be permitted to pursue the whole or part of his/her programme of research at a specified place away from the University. Permission will only be granted provided that:
- a) the proposed place of research is approved by the HoR;
 - b) the programme remains under the control of the HoR;
 - c) suitable arrangements have been made for the supervisor to visit the student;
 - d) an appropriate person has been appointed to act as a local supervisor;
- and that the student has agreed to attend the University:
- a) for his/her MPhil/PhD transfer interview
 - b) for annual reviews
 - c) for his/her examination and
 - d) normally for forty days annually

4 Enrolment

- 4.1 Each student shall be required to enrol annually with the University, until an award is made or unless taking an authorised suspension of studies.
- 4.2 If a student has submitted his/her thesis and is waiting for the formalities of examination to be completed, he/she is still required to enrol.
- 4.3 If a student, following examination, is required to re-submit the thesis or be re-examined orally, he/she is still required to enrol.

5 Registration

- 5.1 The registration period determines the period in which the thesis must be submitted.
- 5.2 A student may be registered for a research degree from the start of any month.
- 5.3 A student for a research degree will normally be registered initially for an MPhil.
- 5.4 Exceptionally, research students may be registered for a PhD, subject to confirmation.
- 5.5 The normal and maximum duration of registration for a research programme is as shown in the relevant Code of Practice – Postgraduate Research Degrees.:

- 5.6 Both the normal and maximum periods shall be determined from the first day of the month in which the student first registered for a research degree.
- 5.7 Registration is not permitted to continue beyond the maximum duration, except to allow for the formalities of the examination to be completed.
- 5.8 Registration will lapse at the end of the appropriate maximum period.
- 5.9 A student whose registration has lapsed or been terminated for whatever reason will not be entitled to supervision, nor to present a thesis for examination nor to attend the University.
- 5.10 After review by the RDC, the validating institution may, in exceptional circumstances, consider an application for re-registration or for an extension beyond the maximum duration, for a specified period for completion of the work, if the HoR supports it.
- 5.11 Students may not normally be enrolled and registered simultaneously for more than one degree.

6 Fees

- 6.1 Tuition fees must be paid annually at enrolment.
- 6.2 In addition to tuition fees a bench fee may be charged.
- 6.3 Where a student has financial support for fees from an employer or other organisation the student must supply proof of sponsorship at enrolment, otherwise he/she will be assumed liable for the payment of tuition fees. The student is ultimately responsible for all and any payment owing to the University in the case of default by the sponsor.
- 6.4 Students who have completed their research and require minimal supervision, but who are still writing up their thesis can be placed in Continuation status and charged a Continuation Fee rather than the full Tuition Fee.
- 6.5 If a student, following examination, is required to re-submit their thesis or be re-examined orally enrolment and payment of a 'Revisions Fee' is required. The Revisions Fee will be charged in full without exception.
- 6.6 A student will not be permitted to enter an examination of his/her thesis nor be awarded a degree unless he/she has paid the fees prescribed and any other sums due to the University.
- 6.7 All home and EU students should consult the formal document Student payment and debt procedures – Home/EU: Effective from August 2009 regarding fees regulations. International students should seek the advice of both the Finance Office and the International Administration Office for clarification of the requirements for payment of fees.

7 Bursaries

- 7.1 University bursaries are:
 - a) for full-time students only;
 - b) for three years only; and
 - c) subject to satisfactory progress at annual reviews.
- 7.2 The bursary includes £500 to be used by the student for stationery, book purchases, computer consumables and thesis printing and binding. In addition the requirement to pay fees is waived.
- 7.3 A student who is in receipt of an award from another source (such as an employer or is otherwise financially supported by another organisation or by a foreign government) which the

University considers to be sufficient to cover maintenance and tuition fees, will not be eligible for a bursary from the University.

- 7.4 If a University bursary holder is subsequently granted an additional award or an equivalent form of support, the entitlement to the University bursary will be re-assessed and adjusted from the date on which the new award/form of support starts.
- 7.5 Certain types of scholarships and other awards may be exempted. These are:
- a) prizes awarded competitively and not directly related to the work carried out by the student during the tenure of the award
 - b) scholarships or similar payments made to the student by professional or industrial institutions in respect of the training being received but which are not intended to cover maintenance and fee costs
 - c) academic bursaries funded from private monies and obtained in competition
- 7.6 The private income of a student will normally have no effect on the entitlement to an award or its value except where that income is derived from another award as detailed in paragraphs 7.3 & 7.4.
- 7.7 Where a student is in receipt of scholarship, a prize and another award from sources other than the University he/she must inform the University.
- 7.8 A bursary normally starts on the same day as registration starts.
- 7.9 A bursary holder will:
- a) be required to work on his/her research programme for at least 35 hours per week and
 - b) be entitled to 7 weeks holiday (to include University and public holidays) per twelve month period.
- 7.10 If a bursary holder transfers from full-time to part-time registration he/she will lose his/her entitlement to a bursary and will be required to pay the part-time tuition fees.
- 7.11 The University will not make any national insurance contributions in respect of bursary payments.
- 7.12 A student in receipt of a bursary may apply to suspend his/her studies for a period of up to a maximum of twelve months year.
- 7.13 If the performance of a bursary holder is such that continuation of the award is not justified, the supervisor, through his/her HoR, must notify the Research Unit (RU) immediately.
- 7.14 If a student finishes his/her research before the bursary expires, the award will terminate on the date the degree is signed off as completed.
- 7.15 If a student in receipt of a bursary takes up full-time employment before the expiry date of the award, the award will terminate on the commencement of that employment.
- 7.16 A bursary may be terminated, or its conditions varied, at any time, at the absolute discretion of the University.

8 Supervisors

- 8.1 Each research student will be assigned a supervisory team, appointed by the HoR, who together will be experienced in the conduct of research in the broad subject area of interest.
- 8.2 One member of the supervisory team will be designated the Main Supervisor and specifically allocated to supervise the student's project. This supervisor will normally have:

- a. experience of the specific research topic
 - b. supervised at least one research student through to successful completion of a PhD
 - c. a doctorate
- 8.3 The Main Supervisor shall be a suitably qualified member of staff of the University. A probationary member of staff or one funded on a contract of lesser duration than the programme may be appointed as a second supervisor.
- 8.4 Exceptionally, a Main Supervisor may be appointed without holding a doctorate in which case the second supervisor should be qualified to PhD level and should have supervised to completion.
- 8.5 Supervisors who hold full-time teaching posts should not supervise more than six students, allowance being made for main/second supervision and full/part time students. For all other post holders their supervisory loadings must be appropriate to their post and any exceptions must be approved by the Chair, RDC.
- 8.6 Contact with the Main Supervisor should conform to that established in the Working Agreement.
- 8.7 A supervisor who is not employed by the University may be appointed but will normally act as second supervisor.
- 8.8 Where a supervisor is appointed without experience of supervision, it is the responsibility of the HoR to ensure that the supervisor undertakes appropriate training.
- 8.9 All supervisors are required to attend at least two of the Research Supervisor Development Programme sessions every two years.
- 8.10 A student and his/her supervisors should, on the day that the student starts (or shortly thereafter) agree a working agreement that details:
- a) a schedule of regular meetings
 - b) a proposed date for the submission of the thesis outline
 - c) access to supervisors outside of scheduled meetings
 - d) the students training requirements
 - e) a proposed date for the submission of the completed thesis, which should aim to comply with the normal period of registration
- 8.11 The supervisor and the student will agree a written summary of their discussions of each supervisory meeting.
- 8.12 If after examination the examiners recommend that the student re-submits the student should be entitled to an appropriate level of supervision which will be agreed between the supervisors and the HoR.
- 8.13 If the Main Supervisor is likely to be absent from the University for a period of more than two months the HoR, following discussion with the student, should, prior to the period of absence and within a period of one month, propose alternative supervisory arrangements.
- 8.14 Where there is a need for a change in supervisory arrangements:
- a) because a supervisor leaves the University; or
 - b) a student has requested a change in supervisor through a formal application to his/her HoR

the HoR, following discussion with the student, should within a period of one month propose, if possible, alternative supervisory arrangements. Such arrangements to be approved by the Faculty Research Committee. If the period is likely to exceed one month the Chair, RDC, must be informed.

- 8.15 A supervisor who leaves the University will normally no longer be eligible to be the Main Supervisor.
- 8.16 If problems arise between a student and his/her supervisor, which cannot be resolved informally the HoR should seek a satisfactory resolution. If the problems continue to persist, the Dean of Faculty should seek, in conjunction with the Chair, RDC (where necessary), a resolution satisfactory to both parties.
- 8.17 Where a student is close to completing his/her programme and his/her supervisor leaves the University the supervisor may be appointed to the Associate Staff of the University and, together with a new supervisor, may continue to provide supervision to the student.
- 8.18 Where a supervisor leaves the University, the HoR should appoint another supervisor, normally in consultation with the student.
- 8.19 All changes in supervisory arrangements require RDC approval.

9 Students

- 9.1 In order to obtain a PhD in the normal registration period a full-time student will be expected to work for a minimum of 35 hours per week and 45 weeks per year.
- 9.2 Employment restrictions:
- a) A full-time student may not enter into full-time employment but may enter into some part-time employment subject to the approval of his/her supervisor and the HoR.
 - b) In addition to 9.2 a), international students are required to consult UKBA regulations in relation to employment in the UK.
- 9.3 A part-time student may enter into both full-time and part-time employment.
- 9.4 Full-time students are entitled, with the approval of their supervisor, to take up to seven weeks holidays (including University and public holidays) in a period of twelve months.
- 9.5 It is the student's responsibility to:
- a) inform his/her HoR and the RU immediately if he/she is prevented from working on his/her research project because of illness;
 - b) provide self-certified absence forms for periods of illness up to 5 working days and a medical certificate for periods greater than or equal to 6 working days.
 - c) inform his/her supervisors in advance of holidays to be taken.

10 Annual review of student progress

- 10.1 The University requires that the progress of each student is reviewed formally on an annual basis.
- 10.2 All students, including those based off-campus or overseas, are required to have an annual review. The only exceptions are students:
- a) who have submitted their thesis
 - b) who registered after February of the academic year
- 10.3 All students must attend the University for the Annual Review Process.
- 10.4 Students should be given at least four weeks prior notice of the date of the interview.

- 10.5 The student will be required to produce a report to be made available to the interview panel at least one week prior to the interview.
- 10.6 The interview panel should consist of three members of staff (the HoR or a person designated by the HoR and both the supervisors) with the interview taking place in private. If the HoR is also one of the supervisors one other member of staff, who has supervised to completion, should be on the interview panel.
- 10.7 The possible outcomes are:
- a) registration confirmed
 - b) further review to be held normally within three months to allow the student to undertake, to the satisfaction of the interview panel, a programme of work as recommended by the panel
 - c) registration transferred to MPhil
 - d) registration withdrawn
- 10.8 A copy of the completed University Annual Review Report form will be given to the student.

11 MPhil/PhD transfer

- 11.1 A student registered for the degree of MPhil will be formally assessed twelve months following initial registration for full-time students or eighteen months for part-time students, in order to confirm that the student will be submitting for a MPhil or transferring to a PhD award.
- 11.2 The transfer process will normally be based on a formal interview.
- 11.3 The student will be required to produce written work at an agreed date in advance of the transfer interview. Students will be notified of the requirements.
- 11.4 The interview panel will consist of the HoR and both supervisors. If the HoR is also one of the supervisors one other member of staff, who has supervised to completion, should be on the interview panel.
- 11.5 The decision will be one of the following:
- a) transfer to PhD recommended;
 - b) MPhil registration to be maintained for a further, specified, period (the date of the next interview to consider transfer should be set in advance);
 - c) agreement to submit MPhil thesis;
 - d) required to withdraw.
- 11.6 A unanimous decision by the interview panel is required before transfer to PhD is approved.
- 11.7 Should an interview panel fail to agree to transfer a student to PhD, the student will have the opportunity to be reassessed on one other occasion, which should normally occur within three months for full-time students and six months for part-time students.
- 11.8 A report on the outcome of transfer will be completed and signed by all members of the interview panel and the student, who will be given a copy of the report.
- 11.9 The transfer interview and annual review must be distinct and separate meetings and must be held on different days.

12 Thesis

- 12.1 A student for a research degree must submit a thesis:
- a) in the English language;

- b) on a topic that has been approved by the University;
 - c) which conforms to the relevant University Code of Practice – Postgraduate Research Degrees;
 - d) the major part of which, including the written material, must have been completed during the student's period of enrolment with the University and registration with the validating institution, under supervision arrangements approved by the University.
- 12.2 The thesis must be presented in conformity with ISO 7144:1986 (Documentation – Presentation of Theses and Similar Documents).
- 12.3 The thesis may include work that the student has already had published, with other collaborators or as the sole author. The student must acknowledge this in the text of the thesis and bind it in at the end.
- 12.4 A student may include in a thesis work that has been submitted for an award of the validating institution or any other university or award-granting body, or published prior to his/her registration for a research degree, provided that the work:
- a) is clearly indicated in the text
 - b) is appropriately and critically reviewed in the main text; and
 - c) does not make up a substantial part of the thesis
 - d) All work that is not the student's own must be acknowledged
- 12.5 The word limit of a thesis must not normally exceed:
- a) 80,000 textual words – PhD
 - b) 20,000 textual words – practice based PhD
 - c) 40,000 textual words for an MPhil
- If a student is likely to submit a thesis which has a textual word content that exceeds the applicable word limit the student must seek approval from his/her supervisor.
- 12.6 The thesis must contain the following items in the order given:
- a) Title Page
 - b) Abstract
 - c) List of Contents
 - d) List of Illustrations
 - e) List of Tables
 - f) List of notations/symbols (where applicable)
 - g) Acknowledgements
 - h) Authors Declaration
 - i) Main Text of Thesis
 - j) List of References
 - k) Appendices
- 12.7 The title page of every volume of the thesis must contain the following information:
- a) full title of the thesis (and sub-title, if any)
 - b) volume number, if more than one volume will be submitted
 - c) full name of the research student
 - d) degree, written in full, for which the student is registered
 - e) Buckinghamshire New University
 - f) the validating institution
 - g) the month and year of submission or, if re-submitted, the date of re-submission
 - h) the following copyright statement

This copy of the thesis has been supplied on condition that anyone who consults it is understood to recognise that its copyright rests with its author under the terms of the United

Kingdom Copyright Acts. No quotation from the thesis and no information derived from it may be published without proper acknowledgement.

12.8 The abstract should be on one side of A4, no more than 300 words in length and bound after the title page. It should state:

- a) the nature and scope of the research undertaken
- b) the contribution made to knowledge
- c) the method of investigation, where appropriate
- d) an outline of the principal arguments
- e) a summary of conclusions; and
- f) it should be in a form suitable for separate publication

It may be edited by the student's Main Supervisor and the University may publish the abstract without further reference to the author.

12.9 Before a thesis is examined, the first supervisor and the HoR must certify on the validating institution's form that the student has completed the required study for the degree.

12.10 The thesis should be submitted within the normal and maximum periods of registration for the award sought. In exceptional circumstances, if a student reaches the necessary standard in less than the normal period of registration, the RDC may recommend to the validating institution that the candidate be examined, and, if successful, the degree be awarded.

12.11 The University form, Supervisor's/Candidate's Section, must be signed by the Main Supervisor and then by the student confirming that the responsibilities of both have been fulfilled.

12.12 The thesis for the examination should be bound according to the relevant University Code of Practice – Postgraduate Research Degrees.

12.13 The student will be liable for the cost of copying and binding the thesis.

12.14 The copies of the thesis should be submitted to the Research Unit not less than one month and not more than three months before the intended *viva voce* date.

13 Examiners

13.1 The examiners for a research degree shall be appointed by the validating institution on the recommendation of the HoR and endorsement by the RDC.

13.2 Internal examiners will be nominated by the HoR and must be members of the academic staff of the University.

13.3 Each external examiner should normally hold:

- a) a PhD or equivalent evidence of research competence and
- b) a position in a UK university as a Professor, Reader or Senior Lecturer

13.4 An external examiner will generally possess a profound knowledge and understanding of the subject area in which the student's thesis is centred. A person who has not been active in the subject area within the past five years should not be nominated as an examiner.

13.5 The collective experience of the examining team should include a minimum of three MPhil or PhD candidates examined, normally in the UK.

13.6 Normally the same person should not be asked to serve again as an external examiner within the same department of the University within a twelve-month period.

- 13.7 Members of staff from the validating institutions cannot serve as external examiners.
- 13.8 An external examiner may not be employed by, or otherwise closely associated with, the University or one of its associate institutions, nor have been employed by the University or an associated institution during a period of three years prior to the examination.
- 13.9 The external examiner should not have been cited as an academic referee on the student's original application and registration forms.
- 13.10 The external examiner should not have collaborated with the student, or have provided significant support for the student in earlier research or that on which the thesis to be examined is based.
- 13.11 The student must have no direct role in the nomination of examiners, but has the right and duty to draw to the attention of his/her supervisor and the HoR any matter that might militate against comprehensive and fair examination.
- 13.12 Examiners must, on no account, have any contact with the student prior to examination of the thesis.
- 13.13 An examiner who, after appointment, is unable to serve should submit a formal letter of resignation.

14 Examination

- 14.1 The examination will have two stages:
 - a) preliminary assessment
 - b) defence by *viva voce*
- 14.2 A *viva voce* examination is normally a requirement before an MPhil degree may be awarded.
- 14.3 A *viva voce* examination is a requirement before a PhD degree may be awarded. If, for very exceptional reasons, the examiners propose to recommend such an award without holding the *viva voce* examination, the permission of the validating institution must be sought.
- 14.4 In exceptional circumstances, if a student reaches the necessary standard in less than the normal period of registration, the RDC may recommend to the validating institution that the student be examined, and, if successful, the degree be awarded.
- 14.5 Each Examiner will assess the thesis and each will complete a preliminary written report on the thesis.
- 14.6 *Viva voce* examinations should normally be held on a campus of the University.
- 14.7 Immediately prior to the *viva voce* a meeting of the Board of Examiners, consisting of the internal examiner, the external examiner/s and a Chair will be held.
- 14.8 The Chair will be a senior member of the academic staff of the University but will not be from the same school/discipline as the candidate.
- 14.9 The *viva voce* will be held in private in the presence of the Board of Examiners.
- 14.10 Only one supervisor may be present at the *viva voce* and then only with the agreement of the student. The supervisor(s) may speak during the *viva voce* only if invited to do so by the Chair on behalf of the examiners.

- 14.11 Attendance at the examination by anyone other than the Board of Examiners, the student and the supervisor(s) is strictly forbidden unless the approval of the examiners is sought in advance.
- 14.12 At the end of the examination the supervisor(s) may remain but will not be present when the Board of Examiners discusses its recommendations.

15 Examination Outcomes

- 15.1 The examiners are required to confirm:
- that they are satisfied that the thesis is genuinely the work of the student;
 - that the thesis is satisfactory as regards literary presentation; and
 - that the thesis is suitable for publication (by placing on the shelves of the University library or otherwise) as a work approved for a higher degree of the validating institution.
- 15.2 For the award of PhD the examiners should also consider if the student has demonstrated:
- the criteria and interpretation of new knowledge, through original research or other advanced scholarship of a quality to satisfy peer review and to extend the forefront of the discipline;
 - the acquisition and understanding in a systematic way of a substantial body of knowledge at the forefront of the discipline;
 - a detailed understanding of applicable techniques for research and advanced academic enquiry; and
 - an ability to conceptualise, design, and implement a thesis for the generation of new knowledge, applications or understanding.
- 15.3 For the award of MPhil, the examiners should also consider if the student has demonstrated:
- a systematic understanding of relevant knowledge and a clinical awareness of current problems informed by the forefront of the discipline
 - originality in the application of that knowledge
 - a practical and comprehensive understanding of applicable research techniques and how they are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline; and
 - a conceptual understanding and evaluation of current research, advanced scholarship, and relevant technologies
- 15.4 For an MPhil or a PhD the examiners will recommend one of the options detailed in the relevant University Code of Practice – Postgraduate Research Degrees.
- 15.5 At the conclusion of the *viva voce* examination the examiners will complete a validating institution's Report of Examiners form.
- 15.6 Where the examiners have recommended minor amendments the amendments will be approved by at least one examiner (normally the internal examiner). The examiner/s are required to confirm, on the validating institution's form, that the minor amendments detailed in the Report of Examiners have been satisfactorily completed.
- 15.7 After approval of the thesis by the examiners, the student must submit to the Research Unit copies of the thesis and documents as itemised in the relevant University Code of Practice – Postgraduate Research Degrees.
- 15.8 Buckinghamshire New University will pay for the binding of the one hardbound copy. Please refer to either the Research Unit or Blackboard for further information on reimbursement. The student must submit a receipt with the bound final version. Reimbursement will then be by electronic transfer only.

- 15.9 The recommendation for the award of MPhil or PhD research degree will not be forwarded to the validating institution until the student has complied fully with the above.
- 15.10 The RDC may agree that a thesis should be held under confidential cover for a maximum period of two years.

16 Continuation status

- 16.1 If a full-time student submits before the end of the normal registration period the student will be placed in continuation for the next enrolment period and the continuation fee will be waived.
- 16.2 If a full-time student does not submit before the end of the normal registration period the Main Supervisor will be required to confirm that the student will submit in the next 12 months.
- a) If the supervisor is able to do so the student will be placed in continuation but the continuation fee will not be waived. The supervisor must be able to show that the student has completed his/her research and writing up his/her thesis with the balance of work to be completed requiring little or no active supervision. Reasonable access to the supervisors will still be permitted.
- b) If the supervisor is not able to do so the student will not be placed in continuation and the full fee will be charged.
- 16.3 If the student is on a bursary and has not submitted before the end of the normal registration period the Main Supervisor must satisfy himself/herself that the student can support himself/herself and at the same time pay the necessary fees.
- 16.4 If a part-time student submits before the end of 72 months for a PhD or 24 months for an MPhil the student will be placed in continuation for the next enrolment period and the continuation fee will be waived.
- 16.5 If a part-time student does not submit before the end of the maximum registration period the Main Supervisor will be required to confirm that the student will submit in the next 12 months.
- a) If the supervisor is able to do so the student will be placed in continuation but the continuation fee will not be waived. The supervisor must be able to show that the student has completed his/her research and writing up his/her thesis with the balance of work to be completed requiring little or no active supervision. Reasonable access to the supervisors will still be permitted
- b) If the supervisor is not able to do so the student will not be placed in continuation and the full fee will be charged
- 16.6 A student may not normally be registered 'in continuation' for more than 12 months.
- 16.7 Transfer from full/part time status to continuation status does not affect the overall registration period. Students in continuation status must continue to enrol annually.

17 Suspension of studies (Abeyance)

- 17.1 Students may be permitted to suspend their studies for normally not more than a total of 12 months (full-time students) or 24 months (part-time students).
- 17.2 Applications to suspend studies must be passed to the RDC for approval.
- 17.3 No tuition fee will be due in the period of suspension and the appropriate portion of unused fees in the period prior to suspension will be rolled forward to be offset against the fees due after studies are resumed.

- 17.4 A student, on returning from a period of abeyance of more than six months or who misses an annual review while in abeyance, will be required to attend a formal review with his/her supervisors and HoR immediately upon the resumption of his/her research.
- 17.5 Retrospective suspensions will not normally be permitted.
- 17.6 A student returning from a period of suspension of registration shall be subject to the Regulations that apply at the time of re-enrolment.

18 Training for students

A student will not be permitted to transfer from MPhil to PhD until all the training elements identified in his/her working agreement have been attended.

19 Ethics

The HoR is responsible for ensuring that research students adhere to any ethical codes pertinent to their own discipline, guidelines within their programme area and are aware of the University's ethics policy.

20 Communications

- 20.1 Communications with both full-time and part-time students, on matters related to their studies as a research student at the University will normally be via a Buckinghamshire New University email account.
- 20.2 Emails sent to this account will be deemed to:
- be a legitimate form of communication
 - have been delivered to the student

21 Research students as teachers

Where teaching work is available, a research student should not teach more than six hours per week and no more than 180 hours per academic session and, ideally focusing on laboratory and tutorial sessions. A student who undertakes teaching does so at the discretion of his/her supervisor and the approval of his/her HoR

22 Appeals

Appeals against decisions of a Board of Examiners shall only be permitted in accordance with the regulations as laid out in the formal document - Academic Appeals Procedure: Research Degrees.

Prepared by:	Research Unit	Date:	November 2004
Final Approval by:	Senate 5 November 2004		
Review Date:	2012/13		
Updated on:	13 October 2005, 13 June 2007, 26 February 2009, 16 May 2012		

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