

Nottingham Trent University

Academic Standards and Quality Handbook

Section 14A. Regulations for Research Degrees

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A. Introduction

1. The University has the powers to award the degrees of Master of Philosophy (MPhil) and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) to registered students who successfully complete approved programmes of supervised research. These regulations govern the conduct of such research degrees.
2. Whilst the regulations have been approved by Academic Board and the Research Degrees Committee (URDC) (see [Appendix 1](#)), responsibility for the implementation and application of the regulations resides with College Research Degrees Committees (CRDCs) (see [Appendix 2](#)).
3. The University may also approve programmes of supervised research leading to Professional Doctorates (e.g. the Doctor of Business Administration). Such programmes conform to the principles of the following regulations, and come under the aegis of the URDC and CRDCs, but are subject to a separate Guidance Note (see [Appendix 5](#)). Notwithstanding these separate Notes, Professional Doctorates are at the same level and standard as the PhD.
4. Additionally, the University also has the power to award PhDs by published work and Higher Doctorates. These are subject to separate regulations (see [Section 14B](#) and [Section 14C](#) of the ASQ Handbook).
5. These regulations have been designed to comply with the QAA Code of Practice (Section 1, Postgraduate Research Programmes), the QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) and the University Generic Level Descriptors.
6. The regulations came into effect on 1 January 2006, with some slight revisions made thereafter. A summary of the changes is posted on the [Section 14](#) page of the ASQ Handbook part of the CADQ website.

B. Principles

7. Programmes of research may be proposed in any field of study subject to the requirement that the proposed programme is capable of leading to scholarly research and to its presentation for assessment by appropriate examiners. The submission may be in the form of a final thesis or by published work, artefact or performance that is accompanied by a written commentary placing it within its academic context. All proposed research programmes will be considered for research degree registration on their academic merits and without reference to the concerns or interests of any associated funding body.
8. All the University's programmes of research (and the regulations that govern them) are underpinned by a commitment to equal opportunities and diversity. In particular, all funded research opportunities must always be open to competition.
9. An MPhil is awarded, following an approved programme of supervised research, to either:
 - (a) a student who, having critically investigated and evaluated an approved topic and demonstrated an understanding of research methods appropriate to the chosen field, has presented and defended a thesis by oral examination to the satisfaction of the examiners.

- (b) a student who, having produced published work, artefact or performance that is accompanied by a written commentary placing it within its academic context, has presented that material and defended the commentary by oral examination to the satisfaction of the examiners.
10. A PhD is awarded, following an approved programme of supervised research, to either:
- (a) a student who, having critically investigated and evaluated an approved topic resulting in an independent and original contribution to knowledge and demonstrated an understanding of research methods appropriate to the chosen field, has presented and defended a thesis by oral examination to the satisfaction of the examiners.
 - (b) a student who, having produced published work, artefact or performance that is accompanied by a written commentary placing it within its academic context resulting in an independent and original contribution to knowledge has presented and defended a thesis by oral examination to the satisfaction of the examiners
11. In the case of the award either of an MPhil or PhD, successful students will have also met the QAA qualification descriptor as set out in its FHEQ (see para. 5 above). Additionally, the University has assessment criteria for both awards (see [Appendix 8](#)).
12. The University encourages co-operation with industrial, commercial, professional or research establishments for the purposes of research leading to research degree awards. Such co-operation is intended to:
- (a) encourage outward-looking and relevant research;
 - (b) extend the student's own experience and perspectives of the work;
 - (c) provide a wider range of experience and expertise to assist in the development of the project;
 - (d) be mutually beneficial; and,
 - (e) enable the student to become a member of a research community (where appropriate).

Co-operation with one or more bodies external to the University may be formal or informal. Formal co-operation is known as collaboration and will normally require financial support for the project from the Collaborating Establishment and/or use by the student of its facilities and other resources, including supervision.

In such cases a formal letter from the Collaborating Establishment confirming the agreed arrangements should be submitted with the application, except where collaboration is an integral part of the project (as for instance with NERC/EPSRC CASE awards).

The name(s) of the Collaborating Establishment(s) will appear on the student's thesis and degree certificate.

Informal co-operation need not require financial support for the project but could allow the student access to facilities and resources. In both cases, however, it is the responsibility of the Director of Studies (DoS) to ensure that prior permission is obtained for the use of necessary facilities, resources and access from the relevant persons at the chosen establishment(s) before embarking on the research project. All such

agreements must be reported to the CRDC as part of the application for project approval (see Section F).

Whether the activity takes the form of informal co-operation or formal collaboration, it should be subject to a written statement confirming the extent to which the Student, the collaborating organisation(s) and NTU, shall own any Intellectual Property (IP) and/or the associated Rights (IPR) that might arise from the activity.

C Applications for admission to read for a research degree

13. An individual may apply to be admitted to read for a research degree by completing the appropriate form (see [Appendix 3](#)).
14. An applicant for admission to read for a research degree should normally hold a first or second class honours degree of a UK University or a qualification which is regarded by the CRDC as equivalent to such an honours degree.
15. An applicant not meeting the 'certificated' requirement set out in para. 14 above may be considered on his/her merits and in relation to the nature and scope of the programme of work proposed. In considering an applicant in this category, the CRDC should look for evidence of the student's ability and background knowledge in relation to the proposed research. Professional experience, publications, written reports or other appropriate evidence of accomplishment may be taken into consideration.
16. In addition to the requirements set out in paras. 14 and 15 above, a CRDC may make admission dependent upon additional prior qualifications that must be published in advance.
17. The application for admission should set out the form of the student's intended submission and the proposed methods of assessment.
18. Except where permission has been given for the thesis and the oral examination to be in another language, a CRDC must satisfy itself that the student has sufficient command of the English language to complete satisfactorily the programme of work and to prepare and defend a thesis in English. Any student for whom English is not a first language should, before being admitted, normally have achieved an overall IELTS (International English Language Testing System) score of 6.5 with minimum sub-scores of 6.0 in all component sections (writing, reading, listening and speaking) or an overall TOEFL score of 560 (paper-based), 220 (computer-based) or 94-95 (internet-based – IBT) with a minimum score of 22 in each of the four component sections (writing, reading, listening and speaking). Students who have studied a first degree or higher degree and answered their examinations in English will normally be exempt. Permission to present a thesis in another language should normally be sought at the time of application for registration. Permission to present a thesis in a language other than English will normally only be given if the subject matter of the thesis involves language and related studies.
19. Once admission has been approved, a student will be registered and enrolled for one of the following:
 - (a) Master of Philosophy; or

- (b) Master of Philosophy with possibility of transfer to Doctor of Philosophy; or
- (c) Doctor of Philosophy.

Guidance note on para. 19

The normal expectation is that a CRDC will register a research student for (b) above but it may formulate appropriate policy to enable registration direct for PhD for those students where appropriate criteria have been met.

*Registration and enrolment of new research students are no longer separated and newly enrolled students are, therefore, automatically registered for a research degree as described in C19 above. Each registered student must, however, re-enrol each academic year. For the purposes of calculating maximum and minimum periods of registration, students' registration is deemed to run from the date on which they commence their studies. This date **must** be confirmed in writing by the College and formally recorded on the student's file. **Important note:** The registration period is **not** interrupted by a failure to enrol or by deactivation for administrative reasons such as non-payment of fees. Registration can only be interrupted by the circumstances described in paragraph E34 below or by formal termination of the student's studies.*

A student who is in fee arrears will not be eligible to receive tuition or have access to University facilities and resources (including examinations) until those fees have been paid. As a result, a student's progress in his/her studies is at risk of being impaired and CRDC reserves the right to place such a student on probation. At the end of the probationary period a student's registration may be terminated if there is no satisfactory academic progress in their studies (see para. 57).

D. Approval of applications for admission to read for a research degree

- 20. Applications for admission will be considered by the appropriate CRDC. The CRDC may delegate decisions to the Associate Dean (Research and Graduate Studies) (ADR) or nominee following consultation with the potential DoS or Dean of School.
- 21. The assessment of the suitability of an applicant, including interview, should involve the ADR or nominee and the potential Director of Studies (DoS) or other supervisor.
- 22. Offers of admission must be formally approved by the ADR or nominee, who will satisfy themselves that:
 - (a) the student is suitably qualified and, in the case of full-time students, has access to adequate financial support;
 - (b) appropriate resources are in place
 - (c) the student is embarking on research in a field that will yield a viable research project and for which expert supervision is available;
 - (d) the University is able to provide appropriate facilities for the conduct of scholarly research in the area of the research programme;
 - (e) an initial training needs analysis has been undertaken;
 - (f) and that there has been an appropriate provisional allocation of DoS or other supervisors.

23. A CRDC may approve an application from an individual proposing to work outside the UK, provided that:
 - (a) there is satisfactory evidence as to the facilities available for the research both in the University and abroad; and
 - (b) the arrangements proposed for supervision enable frequent and substantial contact between the student and the supervisor(s) based in the UK, including adequate face-to-face contact with the supervisor(s). A full-time student should normally spend not less than an average of six weeks per year at the University, a part-time student should normally spend not less than an average of three weeks per year at the University.
24. A CRDC may agree to supervisory arrangements that depart from the above requirement providing it is satisfied that appropriate arrangements are in place for high quality remote supervision utilising technologies such as video-conferencing. Such arrangements must be carefully scrutinised and reviewed during each annual monitoring cycle and the student must be informed, at the point of admission, that the University reserves the right to enforce the attendance requirements where there are reasonable doubts about the efficacy of the remote arrangements.
25. An induction programme will be organised for all new research students – with University, College, School and discipline-based elements.
26. Research students are normally required to follow a programme of related studies approved or specified by the CRDC. This is designed to ensure competence in research methods and of knowledge related to the subject of the thesis. CRDCs have the power to decline to approve projects not incorporating such a programme (see para. 41 below).

Where the programme of related studies includes an approved programme of studies leading to another award – and a student is registered for that programme and fulfils all its requirements – he/she may be recommended for that award in addition to the degree of MPhil or PhD.
27. A research degree student may undertake an integrated programme of work which, as well as the research element, includes a programme of postgraduate study on which his/her performance is formally assessed. Such a programme of study should not occupy more than one third of the total period of registration and should complement the research.
28. Students registered for a research degree may only concurrently register on another programme of study with the permission of the CRDC, and normally only in the circumstances noted in paras. 26 and 27 above.
29. A student may register on a full-time or a part-time basis. A full-time student should normally devote on average at least 35 hours per week to the research; a part-time student should normally devote on average at least 15 hours per week, but normally 17.5 hours per week (which is an FTE of 0.5 of the recommended full-time hours).

E. The registration period

30. The minimum and maximum periods of registration are as follows:

MPhil	Minimum	Maximum
Full-time *	18 months	36 months
Part-time	30 months	72 months

PhD (via transfer from MPhil registration & including that period of MPhil registration)	Minimum	Maximum
Full-time *	24 months	48 months
Part-time	48 months	96 months**

PhD (direct)	Minimum	Maximum
Full-time *	24 months	48 months
Part-time	48 months	96 months**

* Including any writing-up period.

** A maximum period of 120 months will apply in the case of part-time students registered prior to 1 October 1998.

31. The University does not stipulate normal periods of registration for its research degrees within the minimum and maximum set out in para. 30 above. A student who has made unusually rapid progress with a programme of research may apply to the College Research Degrees Committee for permission, exceptionally, to submit a thesis in advance of the minimum period of registration set out. The CRDC should consider such requests very carefully and should only grant them in exceptional circumstances.
32. Where a student has completed up to 24 months of full-time registration, he/she may change to part-time registration, when for purposes of calculation of the minimum or maximum permitted periods, the equivalent period of part-time registration will be considered twice that of the actual full-time period of registration, and the part-time periods given in the above table.

Where a student has completed between 24 and 36 months of full-time registration he/she may only transfer to a writing-up registration category, which, for purposes of calculation of the maximum permitted period, will be considered equivalent to full-time registration.

Where a student transfers from part-time to full-time registration, for purposes of calculation of the minimum or maximum permitted periods, the equivalent period of full-time registration will be considered to be half that of the actual part-time period of registration, and the full-time periods shown in the above table.

These rules apply on the same pro-rata basis to MPhil registrations.

33. A CRDC may, because of circumstances beyond a student's control, exceptionally extend a student's period of registration beyond the permitted maximum, normally for not more than one year. A student seeking such an extension should apply on the appropriate form (see [Appendix 3](#)).

Guidance note on para. 33

Students should be aware that where they take up full-time employment at the end of three years' research, it could be very difficult to find time to complete a thesis. They should also be aware that taking up a full-time job, however demanding, will not normally be taken as evidence of "exceptional circumstances" justifying an extension of registration.

34. Where the student is prevented, by ill-health or other cause, from making progress with the research, the registration may be suspended by the CRDC for a period of not less than a month and not more than a year at a time. Appropriate medical evidence will normally be required to support requests for suspension on health grounds. Retrospective suspension of registration will not normally be granted for more than three months.
35. Where a student has discontinued their programme of research, the withdrawal of registration must be notified to the CRDC on the appropriate form (see [Appendix 3](#)).
36. A student must enrol as a student of the University, and continue to re-enrol on an annual basis (normally at the start of the academic year), until submission of the thesis has taken place. At the time of enrolment, a student must pay such fees as may be determined from time to time by the University. The fee structure will include a writing up category.

F. Project approval

37. All students must have their projects approved by the CRDC, normally within six months of registration for a full time student. Project approval may be combined with standard points in the annual monitoring cycle which involve an independent person approved by the CRDC (see Section I below). In all cases, students seeking project approval should complete and return form RD1PA.
38. In approving a project, the CRDC must be satisfied with the following:
 - (a) the appropriateness and viability of the proposed programme of work;
 - (b) the suitability and qualification of the supervisory team (see [Section G](#));
 - (c) the relevance and appropriateness of a programme of related studies, normally to include: transferable and generic skills, subject specific training, and attendance at and participation in staff/postgraduate seminars.
39. In cases where a student's work forms part of a larger group project, each individual project must in itself be distinguishable for the purposes of assessment and be appropriate for the award. The application should indicate clearly each individual contribution and its relationship to the group project.
40. Where a research degree project is part of a piece of funded research, the CRDC should establish to its satisfaction that the terms on which the research is funded do not detract from the fulfilment of the objectives and requirements of the student's research degree.
41. Where a project proposal is not approved, the student will normally be given an opportunity to seek approval for a revised project. If, the student having been given an opportunity to remedy defects, the proposal remains unsatisfactory, the CRDC may proceed as in the case of unsatisfactory

progress at annual monitoring. Where project approval has not been secured at, or by the time of, the first annual monitoring event, the CRDC may deem this, in itself, to be evidence of unsatisfactory progress (see [Section I](#) below).

42. A student seeking a change to an approved registered research degree programme must apply in writing to the CRDC for approval.

G. Supervision

43. A research degree student should have at least two and normally not more than three supervisors. There will always be two supervisors who are members of the University's academic staff. No supervisor should have any conflict of interest with the research degree student.

Guidance note on para. 43

The term 'academic staff' includes Research Fellow.

44. Supervisory teams should normally have experience of supervising at least 2 students to the successful completion of a UK research degree or equivalent international qualification.

Guidance note on para. 44

The successful supervision to completion of a professional doctorate, with a substantial research component, is equivalent to a PhD for the purposes of complying with this regulation. NTU professional doctorates automatically meet the test of a 'substantial research component'. Where other professional doctorates are being invoked in fulfilment of this requirement, the appropriate ADR is required to satisfy her/himself that the requirement for a 'substantial research component' has been met. In cases of doubt, the approval of the Chair of the University Research Degrees Committee should be sought.

45. All new supervisors (i.e., those without successful completions) must attend a university approved course within 12 months of starting to supervise.
46. CRDCs should ensure that all supervisors, whatever their level of experience, receive regular opportunities for updating and CPD. It is expected that supervisors will avail themselves of these opportunities and failure to do so may constitute grounds for CRDCs to decline to approve supervisory teams.
47. One supervisor should be the Director of Studies (DoS) (first supervisor) with responsibility to supervise the student on a regular and frequent basis.

Guidance note on para. 47

Exceptionally a person who is not a member of NTU academic staff may take the role of DoS. In such cases, the CRDC must be satisfied that the DoS has significant experience of successful research student supervision or receives suitable training for the role and in the regulations and procedures of the University.

48. In addition to the supervisors, an adviser or advisers may be proposed to contribute some specialised knowledge or a link with an external organisation.
49. A proposal for a change in supervision arrangements must be made to the CRDC on the appropriate form (see [Appendix 3](#)).

50. The supervisory team will have responsibility for considering and advising the student on both the health and safety and the ethical aspects of any research proposal, including any parts that may be carried out away from the University.

H. Supervisory meetings

51. Each CRDC should specify minimum expectations for the frequency of supervisory meetings within its discipline areas.

Guidance note on para. 51

Because of differences between disciplines in the character of the typical postgraduate research lifecycle, it is not appropriate to specify these minima in regulatory form for the University as a whole.

52. For each individual project, it is important that there should be explicit agreement between students and supervisors on the actual frequency of supervisory meetings. It is good practice for an annual agreement on the supervision schedule and the student's writing obligations to be concluded and recorded.
53. A written record of each supervisory meeting should be kept. This record should include the date, agenda and agreed outcomes. The record should be agreed between the student and the supervisors present at the meeting.

I. Monitoring

54. The progress of students should be reviewed on a minimum of two occasions during each year of registration. Each year, at least one of these monitoring points must be a meeting involving the student, supervisors and an independent member appointed by the CRDC. The student will be required to submit a substantial written report and to make a presentation to the monitoring panel. CRDCs will stipulate the minimum and maximum word limit of the written report.
55. The monitoring panel will provide written feedback to the student. Where appropriate, revisions to the report or additional written work may be required. If there are serious concerns about progress of the student, and particularly where the panel is of the view that there is a serious chance of the student failing the degree, the panel may recommend to the CRDC that the student be subject to a three month period of probation. If there is no improvement in the student's performance, the panel may recommend that the CRDC terminate the student's registration or require that they re-register for an MPhil.
56. Where the CRDC is minded to terminate a student's registration, or to require re-registration for an MPhil, the student has the right to make written representations and/or appear in person before the Committee (or a sub-group constituted for the purpose and chaired by ADR [unless s/he is a member of the supervisory team]). A student appearing before the Committee in this way has the right to be accompanied by a friend or advisor. Where the student is not satisfied with the outcome, there is a right of appeal to the University Research Degrees Committee.
57. Monitoring points additional to the meeting described in paragraphs 54-5 should entail the production of a joint report on the student's progress, agreed by the student and supervisors. CRDCs will determine how and by whom these reports will be scrutinised. However, where the progress of a

student is giving cause for concern, such progress must be reviewed by the CRDC (or by a sub-committee or nominated person on its behalf). It is permissible for the supervisors, the student or the CRDC (or its nominees or representatives) to seek independent intervention where that is deemed necessary. In such cases, an independent person will be appointed by the CRDC. Where the concerns are sufficiently serious for the CRDC to consider invoking the probationary procedure described in paragraph 55, a panel involving an independent person must be convened. Where there is no improvement in the student's performance following a period of probation, the remaining requirements of paragraphs 55 and 56 must be observed.

58. Wherever possible, key decision points in a student's career, such as project approval and transfer/upgrade from MPhil to PhD, should normally be incorporated into the annual monitoring cycle.

J. Transfer of registration from MPhil to PhD

59. A student who has been registered for a period of at least 12 months and who has satisfactorily completed all applicable monitoring requirements may apply to the CRDC for transfer by completing and submitting Form RD2T. Such application must be made before the expiry of 24 months following registration.
60. Normally, transfer applications will be considered at one of the standard points in the annual monitoring cycle and will involve an independent person approved by the CRDC (see [Section I](#) above). A monitoring panel may make recommendation for transfer if the report and performance in the presentation are deemed sufficient to justify it (see para. 54). (Note, for tracking purposes, Form RD2T must also be completed and returned.)

Where the transfer application falls outside the monitoring cycle, the process must involve evidence of substantial progress by the student and involve an independent person appointed by the CRDC. In such cases, the student should prepare a progress report on the work undertaken in a format to be determined by the CRDC based upon the requirements set out in para. 54.

61. Before approving transfer from MPhil to PhD, the CRDC must be satisfied that the student has made sufficient progress and that the proposed programme provides a suitable basis for work at PhD standard which the student is capable of pursuing to completion.
62. In the event of an unsatisfactory transfer application, the CRDC may offer the candidate the opportunity to revise the application in the light of feedback from the panel. In the event that the transfer application is not approved, the student will remain registered for an MPhil.
63. A student registered for the degree of MPhil only may apply to transfer their registration to PhD according to the regulations set out in paras. 59 - 62 above.
64. A student who is registered for the degree of PhD and who is unable to complete the approved programme of work may, at any time prior to the submission of the thesis for examination, apply to the CRDC for their registration to revert to that for MPhil, provided that the maximum permitted period for MPhil registration set out in Section E is not exceeded.

Guidance note on para. 64

Exceptionally, a student who has passed the MPhil/PhD transfer stage and is within their maximum period of PhD registration may request in writing - at the time of submitting their PhD thesis – that the thesis be considered for an MPhil.

K. Submission of thesis

65. A student whose programme includes formally assessed course work (see paras. 26 and 27) will not be permitted to proceed to the submission of thesis stage until the course work examiners are satisfied with the student's performance. The result of the course work assessment will be communicated to the examiners of the thesis. The student must also satisfy any additional conditions of eligibility for examination required by the CRDC.
66. The student must ensure that the thesis is submitted to the College Graduate School Office before the expiry of the registration period.
67. The submission of the thesis for examination is at the sole discretion of the student.

Guidance note on para. 67

While a student would be unwise to submit the thesis for examination against the advice of the supervisors, it is his/her right to do so. Equally, students should not assume that a supervisor's agreement to the submission of a thesis guarantees the award of the degree.

68. The student must confirm, through the submission of a declaration form (see Appendix 3), that the thesis has not been submitted for a comparable academic award. The student should not be precluded from incorporating in a thesis covering a wider field, work which has already been submitted for a degree or comparable award, or which has already been published, provided this is acknowledged on the declaration form and also in the thesis. Where published work has been jointly authored with others, it should be clearly indicated which part(s) of the work(s) are the student's responsibility.
69. The student must ensure that the thesis format is in accordance with the requirements of the University's regulations (see Appendix 4). Theses should be submitted for examination in a temporarily bound form which is sufficiently secure to ensure that pages cannot be added or removed. The thesis must be presented in a permanent binding of the approved type before the degree may be awarded. A thesis submitted in a temporarily bound form should be in its final form in all respects save the binding. In such cases, the student must confirm that the contents of the permanently bound thesis are identical with the version submitted for examination, except where amendments have been made to meet the requirements of the examiners.
70. A student may undertake a programme of research in which the student's own creative work forms, as a point of origin or reference, a significant part of the intellectual enquiry. Such creative work may be in any field (for instance, fine art, design, engineering and technology, architecture, creative writing, musical composition, film, dance and performance), but must have been undertaken as part of the registered research programme. In such cases, the presentation and submission may be partly in other than written form.

The creative work must be clearly presented in relation to the argument of a written thesis and set in its relevant theoretical, historical, critical or design context. The thesis itself should conform to the usual scholarly requirements and be of an appropriate length (see Appendix 4).

The final submission should be accompanied by some permanent record (for instance, video, photographic record, musical score, and diagrammatic representation) of the creative work, where practicable, bound with the thesis.

The final submission should include a copy of the edited text(s) or collection of artefact(s), appropriate textual and explanatory annotations, and a substantial introduction and critical commentary which set the text in the relevant historical, theoretical or critical context. The thesis itself must conform to the usual scholarly requirements and be of an appropriate length (see [Appendix 4](#)).

71. Where a student, collaborative establishment or the University wishes the thesis to remain confidential for a period of time after completion of the work, application for approval should normally be made to the CRDC at the time of admission. In cases where the need for confidentiality emerges at a subsequent stage, a special application for the thesis to remain confidential after submission should be made immediately to the CRDC. The period approved will normally not exceed two years from the date of the oral examination.

L. Approval of examiners

72. A student will be examined by at least two and normally not more than three examiners of whom at least one will be an external examiner and one an internal examiner. Internal examiners should have experience in the general area of the student's work. External examiners should have experience in the specialist area of the student's thesis and demonstrate a consistent and extensive record of relevant publication. The examining team as a whole should have substantial experience of successful supervision and examination of research degree students. Normally, the examining team should have completed a minimum of three examinations.
73. An internal examiner will be:
 - (a) a member of staff of the University who is not a member of the student's supervisory team; or
 - (b) a member of staff of the student's Collaborating Establishment who is not a member of the student's supervisory team.

Guidance note on para. 73

Normally, an internal examiner should not previously have acted as an independent assessor – either for progress review or transfer of registration – in respect of the candidate being examined.

74. An external examiner must be independent both of the University and of the Collaborating Establishment, must not have acted previously as the student's supervisor or adviser, and must have no other conflict of interest involving the research student. An external examiner must normally not be either a supervisor of another student or an external examiner on a taught programme in the same University School. Former members of staff of the

University must not normally be approved as external examiners until three years after the termination of their employment with the University.

Guidance note on para. 74

A nomination for external examiner who has been in a formal collaboration, or who has authored a research paper, with a member of the supervision team within the three years prior to the examination would not normally be regarded as independent.

75. The DoS should submit for CRDC's approval - on the appropriate form (see Appendix 3) - proposals for the student's examiners. The student's examination may not take place until the arrangements have been approved. In special circumstances, the CRDC may act directly to appoint examiners and arrange the examination of a student.

Guidance note on para. 75

The proposed arrangements for the student's examination should be submitted about three months before the expected date of submission.

76. The CRDC should ensure that the same external examiner is not approved so frequently that his/her familiarity with the School might prejudice objective judgement.
77. Where the student and the internal examiner are both on the permanent staff of the same establishment, a second external examiner should be appointed. A student who is on a fixed short-term employment contract (for instance, a research assistant) is exempt from the requirements of this regulation.
78. A research degree student cannot act as an examiner.
79. The appropriate College will be responsible for determining and paying the fees and expenses of the examiners. The responsible College will be that which employs or has most recently employed the student's DoS.

M. Examination arrangements

80. The examination for the MPhil and PhD will have two stages: firstly preliminary assessment of the thesis and secondly its defence by oral or approved alternative examination.
81. The College Graduate School Office will make known to the student the procedure to be followed for the submission of the thesis (including the number of copies to be submitted for examination) and any conditions to be satisfied before the student may be considered eligible for examination.
82. The College Graduate School Office will arrange for the student, all supervisors and the examiners to be notified of the date of the oral examination.
83. The College Graduate School Office will send a copy of the thesis to each examiner, together with the examiner's preliminary report form (see [Appendix 3](#)) and the University's regulations, and should ensure that the examiners are properly briefed as to their duties.
84. Each examiner must read and examine the thesis and submit, on the appropriate form, an independent preliminary report on it to the College

Graduate School Office before any oral or alternative form of examination is held. In completing the preliminary report, each examiner should consider whether the thesis provisionally satisfies the requirements of the degree (as set out in paras. 9 or 10) and where possible make an appropriate provisional recommendation subject to the outcome of the oral examination.

85. The College Graduate School Office will indicate to all examiners that the University requires preliminary report forms to be completed independently and without formal or informal consultation between examiners, whether external or internal. An examiner having received the thesis and wishing to contact another examiner, the student or any member of supervisory team should do so only through the College Graduate School Office, except for the purpose of making practical arrangements about the oral examination, where direct contact is encouraged. Once a thesis has been submitted, members of supervisory teams may not directly contact the examiners, except about the practical arrangements for the oral examination. Contact for any other reason should be made only through the College Graduate School Office.
86. The College Graduate School Office must ensure that all the examiners have completed and returned the preliminary reports to the University before the oral examination takes place.

N. Conduct of the oral examination

87. A student will normally be examined orally on the programme of work and on the field of study in which the programme lies. Where for reasons of sickness, disability or comparable valid cause the CRDC is satisfied that a student would be under serious disadvantage if required to undergo an oral examination, an alternative form of examination may be approved. Such approval must not be given because the student's knowledge of the language in which the thesis is presented is inadequate.
88. The oral examination will be conducted by the external and internal examiners and will be chaired by an independent, senior, experienced academic of the University appointed by the CRDC.

Guidance note on para. 88

The role of the chair is to ensure that the examination is conducted with due regard to fair play and in compliance with these regulations. The chair also acts as source of experience and guidance to the examiners about the conduct of the examination and ensures that reports are completed and, where appropriate, feedback is provided to the student. The chair will also monitor the completion of reports relating to minor or major revisions and will liaise with the externals about the action to be taken in response to any resubmission required of the student.

89. The oral examination will normally be held in the UK. In special cases, the CRDC may give approval for the examination to take place abroad.
90. The supervisory team should make itself available to the student's examiners. Supervisors may, with the express written permission of the student, attend the oral examination. They may not contribute to the discussion.
91. Recording of the viva examination will not normally be permitted.

92. The student will take no part in the arrangement of the oral examination and must have no contact with relation to the thesis or the examination with the external examiner(s) between the appointment of the examiners and the oral examination.

O. Examination outcomes

93. Following the oral examination the examiners should, where they agree, submit, on the appropriate form (see [Appendix 3](#)), a joint report and recommendation relating to the award of the degree to the College Graduate School Office. The preliminary reports and joint recommendation of the examiners should together provide sufficiently detailed comments on the scope and quality of the work to enable the CRDC to satisfy itself that the recommendation chosen (see para. 94) is correct.

Where the examiners do not agree, separate reports and recommendations should be submitted. The recommendations should be made on the appropriate form.

94. Following the completion of the examination the examiners may recommend that:
- (a) the candidate be awarded the degree;
 - (b) the candidate be awarded the degree subject to minor amendments being made to the thesis to the satisfaction of the examiners (see para. 95);
 - (c) the candidate be awarded the degree subject to substantive amendments being made to the thesis to the satisfaction of the examiners (see para. 95);
 - (d) the candidate be permitted to re-submit for the degree and be re-examined, with or without an oral examination (see sub-section P, re-examination);
 - (e) the candidate be not awarded the degree and be not permitted to be re-examined (see para. 101); or,
 - (f) in the case of a PhD examination, the candidate be awarded the degree of MPhil subject to the presentation of the thesis amended to the satisfaction of the examiners.

Where the agreed recommendation of the examiners follows sub-sections (b), (c), (d) or (f), above, they must together complete the Form of Guidance (Form RD/Guidance (4/03)), which the College Graduate School Office will then transmit to the candidate and the supervisory team.

Guidance note on para. 94

In cases where the candidate does not achieve the assessment criteria for the award of PhD, the normal expectation is that the examiners will make one of the recommendations set out in (b), (c) or (d) above, each of which allows the candidate a further opportunity to satisfy the assessment criteria. Recommendation (e) or (f) should only be made in exceptional circumstances. Should the extent of the candidate's failure to achieve the PhD assessment criteria be such that the candidate – in the academic judgement of the examiners – would be unable to satisfy the PhD assessment criteria with a submission for re-examination within one calendar year, recommendation (d) can be considered with a recommendation for an exceptional extension of the period for submission for re-examination.

Examiners may indicate informally their recommendation on the result of the examination to the candidate but they should make it clear that the decision rests with the University Research Degrees Committee, acting on the advice of CRDC and under powers delegated by Academic Board, to which all decisions are reported.

95. Explanation of results categories:

94b) should be used where the requirements of the degree have been met, except that minor typographical and/or minor editorial amendments are needed and a re-examination is not required. Following the oral examination, these amendments will be stipulated by the examiner(s) on the recommendation form, which will be sent to the candidate. The candidate must complete the amendments within three months of the receipt of the recommendation form. The amended thesis should be verified by the examiner(s) as stipulated on the recommendation form;

94c) should be used where the requirements of the degree have been met except that the thesis contains limited deficiencies which the examiners consider can be corrected by the candidate without the need for re-examination of the thesis. Following the oral examination, the candidate will receive a written statement of the amendments required, signed by each examiner. The candidate must complete the amendments within six months of the receipt of the written statement. The amended thesis should be verified by the examiner(s) as stipulated on the recommendation form;

94d) see section P of these regulations - Re-examination;

94e) see para. 101.

Where the examiners are satisfied that the candidate has in general reached the standard required for the degree, but consider that the candidate's thesis requires some minor amendments and corrections not so substantial as to call for the submission of a revised thesis, and recommend that the degree be awarded subject to the candidate amending the thesis to the satisfaction of the internal and/or the external examiner(s) (see sub-paragraph 94(b)), they should indicate to the candidate in writing what amendments and corrections are required.

96. The CRDC should consider the reports and recommendation(s) of the examiners in respect of the candidate and make a recommendation to the University Research Degrees Committee. The power to confer the degree rests with the Academic Board of the University but is delegated to the URDC.

97. Where the examiners' recommendations are not unanimous, the URDC may, after advice from the CRDC:

- (a) accept a majority recommendation (if the majority recommendation includes at least one external examiner);
- (b) accept the recommendation of the external examiner; or
- (c) require the appointment of an additional external examiner.

98. Where an additional external examiner is appointed under sub-paragraph 97(c), he/she should prepare an independent preliminary report on the basis of the thesis and, if considered necessary, may conduct a further oral

examination. That examiner should not be informed of the recommendations of the other examiners. On receipt of the report from the additional examiner, the URDC should complete the examination as set out in para. 96.

99. A further examination in addition to the oral examination may be requested by the examiners. In such cases, the approval of the Chair of the URDC should be sought without delay. Where such an examination is arranged following an oral examination, it should normally be held within two calendar months of the oral examination unless the URDC permits otherwise. Any such examination will be deemed to be part of the candidate's first examination.
100. (This regulation – found in the January 2006 version of the Regulations – has now been deleted).
101. Where the URDC decides that the degree be not awarded and that no re-examination be permitted, the examiners should prepare an agreed statement of the deficiencies of the thesis and the reason for their recommendation, which should be forwarded to the candidate by the College Graduate School Office.
102. The degree of MPhil or PhD may be awarded posthumously on the basis of a thesis completed by a candidate which is ready for submission for examination. In such cases the URDC will seek evidence that the candidate would have been likely to have been successful had the oral examination taken place.
103. Where evidence of cheating or plagiarism in the preparation of the thesis or other irregularities in the conduct of the examination come to light subsequent to the recommendation of the examiners, the CRDC will consider the matter, if necessary in consultation with the examiners, and take appropriate action.
104. The URDC must ensure that all examinations are conducted and the recommendations of the examiners are presented wholly in accordance with the University's regulations. In any instance where the URDC is made aware of a failure to comply with all the procedures of the examination process, it may declare the examination null and void and appoint new examiners.

P. Re-examination

105. One re-examination may be permitted by the URDC, subject to the following requirements:
 - (a) a candidate who fails to satisfy the examiners at the first examination, including where appropriate the oral or approved alternative examination (see para. 87) or any further examination required under para. 99 may, on the recommendation of the examiners and with the approval of the CRDC, be permitted to revise the thesis and be re-examined;
 - (b) the examiners should provide the candidate, through the CRDC, with written guidance on the deficiencies of the first submission; and
 - (c) the candidate must submit for re-examination within the period of one calendar year from the date of the latest part of the first

examination. The CRDC may, where there are good reasons, approve an extension of this period.

106. The URDC may require that an additional external examiner be appointed for the re-examination.
107. There are five forms of re-examination:
 - (a) where the candidate's performance in the first oral or approved alternative examination (see para. 87) or further examination (see para. 99) was satisfactory but the thesis was unsatisfactory and the examiners on re-examination certify that the thesis as revised is satisfactory, the CRDC may exempt the candidate from further examination, oral or otherwise;
 - (b) where the candidate's performance in the first oral or approved alternative examination (see para. 87) or further examination (see para. 99) was unsatisfactory and the thesis was also unsatisfactory, any re-examination should include a re-examination of the thesis and an oral or approved alternative examination (see para. 87);
 - (c) (This regulation – found in the January 2006 version of the Regulations – has now been deleted);
 - (d) where on the first examination the candidate's thesis was satisfactory but the performance in the oral and/or other examination(s) was not satisfactory the candidate should be re-examined in the oral and/or other examination(s), subject to the time limits prescribed in sub-para. 105(c), without being requested to revise and re-submit the thesis;
 - (e) where on the first examination the thesis was satisfactory but the candidate's performance in relation to the other requirements for the award of the degree was not satisfactory, the examiners may propose instead a different form of re-examination to test the candidate's abilities; such examination may take place only with the approval of the CRDC.
108. In the case of a re-examination under sub-paras. 107(a) or (b), each examiner should read and examine the thesis and submit, on the appropriate form, an independent preliminary report on it to the College Graduate School Office before any oral or alternative form of examination is held. In completing the preliminary report, each examiner should consider whether the thesis provisionally satisfies the requirements of the degree (as set out in paras. 9 and 10) and where possible make an appropriate provisional recommendation subject to the outcome of any oral examination.
109. Following the re-examination of the thesis under sub-para. 107(a) or following an oral or other examination under sub-paras. 107(b), (d) or (e), the examiners should, where they agree, submit, on the appropriate form, a joint report and recommendation relating to the award of the degree to the College Graduate School Office. The preliminary reports and joint recommendation of the examiners should together provide sufficiently detailed comments on the scope and quality of the work to enable the CRDC to satisfy itself that the recommendation chosen in para. 110 is correct.

Where the examiners do not agree, separate reports and recommendations should be submitted. The recommendations should be made on the appropriate form.

110. Following the completion of the re-examination the examiners may recommend that:
- (a) the candidate is awarded the degree;
 - (b) the candidate is awarded the degree subject to minor amendments being made to the thesis (see para. 111);
 - (c) the candidate is not awarded the degree and is not permitted to be re-examined (see para. 116); or
 - (d) in the case of a PhD examination, the candidate is awarded the degree of MPhil subject to the presentation of the thesis amended to the satisfaction of the examiners.

Where the agreed recommendation of the examiners follows (b) or (d), above, they must together complete the Form of Guidance (Form RD/Guidance (4/03)), which the College Graduate School Office will then transmit to the candidate and the supervisory team

Guidance note on para 110

Examiners may indicate informally their recommendation on the result of the examination to the candidate but they must make it clear that the decision rest with the URDC, acting on the advice of CRDC and under powers delegated by Academic Board, to which all decisions are reported. Where requested by the candidate, examiners' reports should be released to candidate at the conclusion of the examination process.

111. Where the examiners are satisfied that the candidate has in general reached the standard required for the degree, but consider that the candidate's thesis requires some minor amendments and corrections to call for the submission of a revised thesis, and recommend that the degree be awarded subject to the candidate amending the thesis to the satisfaction of the internal and/or the external examiner(s) (see sub-para. 110(b)), they should indicate to the candidate in writing what amendments and corrections are required.
112. Where the examiners' recommendations are not unanimous, the URDC may after advice from the CRDC:
- (a) accept a majority recommendation (provided that the majority recommendation includes at least one external examiner);
 - (b) accept the recommendation of the external examiner; or
 - (c) require the appointment of an additional external examiner.
113. Where an additional external examiner is appointed under sub-para. 112c, he/she should prepare an independent preliminary report on the basis of the thesis and, if considered necessary, may conduct a further oral examination. That examiner should not be informed of the recommendations of the other examiners. On receipt of the report from the additional examiner, the URDC will complete the examination as set out in para. 96.
114. A further examination in addition to the oral examination may be requested by the examiners. In such cases, the approval of the Academic Board should be sought without delay. Where such an examination is arranged following an oral examination, it should normally be held within two

calendar months of the oral examination unless the Academic Board permits otherwise.

115. This regulation – found in the January 2006 version of the Regulations – has now been deleted.
116. Where the Academic Board decides that the degree is not awarded, the examiners should prepare an agreed statement of the deficiencies of the thesis and the reason for their recommendation, which should be forwarded to the candidate by the College Graduate School Office.

Q. Appeals procedure

117. A candidate may make a formal appeal to the Research Degrees Committee of the University (URDC) – via the University Registrar - to request reconsideration of either
- an examination decision
or
 - the decision of a College Research Degrees Committee (CRDC) to terminate their registration on a research programme or require them to re-register for MPhil

Any such appeal may only be made on the grounds indicated below:

- (a) The candidate's level of achievement was adversely affected by illness or other factors which s/he was unable to divulge to the supervisory team or the examiners at the appropriate point within the earlier procedures.
- (b) There is new and relevant information that was not available to be considered at the time of the original decision.
- (c) There has been a material irregularity in the conduct of progress reviews of the candidate undertaken by CRDC.
- (d) There has been a material administration error in the arrangements and/or conduct of the examination, such as to cast doubt on the validity of the examiners' decision.
- (e) The candidate can prove that unfair discrimination has occurred.

Disagreement with the academic judgement of the examiners or CRDC cannot in itself constitute grounds for appeal.

Academic judgement is considered to include:

- approval of a project against the criteria set out in para. 38;
 - a decision to place a student on a three month period of probation and/or terminate their studies on the basis of concerns about performance (paras. 55-57);
 - consideration of transfer of registration from MPhil to PhD against the criteria set out in para. 61;
 - a decision not to allow a student to proceed to the submission of thesis stage for the reasons set out in para. 65.
 - a recommendation of the examiners at the completion of the examination stage as set out in paras. 94 and 95.
 - a recommendation of the examiners at the completion of a re-examination stage as set out in para. 110 and 111.
118. Given the existence of procedures for complaint and grievance during the study period, together with the monitoring arrangements for research candidates, alleged inadequacy of supervisory or other arrangements

during the period of study will not constitute grounds for requesting a review of the examination decision or a decision of termination of study/re-registration for MPhil.

119. A candidate may not make an appeal to the URDC of the University against termination/re-registration until s/he has made a written submission indicating the reasons for extension of enrolment and/or appeared before the CRDC, in response to the recommendation by the CRDC which has been unsuccessful.
120. The application for consideration by the URDC of the University must be made on the appropriate form ([Appendix 7](#)), which must be submitted to the University Registrar. The grounds for appeal must be clearly indicated on the form. If ground (e) is included, a separate procedure to deal with the allegation will be instituted. See [Appendix 6](#) protocol where discrimination is alleged. Where the CRDC has made a decision of termination or re-registration for MPhil the form must be accompanied as appropriate by copies of the candidate's progress report, the supervisory team's progress report and the candidate's written submission to the CRDC. Copies of the form are available from the College Graduate School Office.
121. Where mention is made of action by the holders of specific posts, it is implicit that this activity may be delegated to an appropriate nominee, having sufficient experience and being sufficiently senior to act on behalf of the designated postholder.
122. The time limit for lodging the appeal with the Academic Office is 20 working days from the date of the communication indicating termination/re-registration from the CRDC or the notification of the outcome of the examination. Appeals outside this time will be considered only at the discretion of the Chair of the URDC and the Registrar.
123. The Registrar will decide, in consultation with the Chair of the URDC whether or not the appeal is made on permitted grounds and whether or not a *prima facie* case exists for consideration by the URDC of the University.
124. The Registrar must inform the candidate, the Director of Studies and the appropriate Chair of CRDC, within 10 working days of the receipt of the appeal application, of one of the following actions:
 - a. The appeal is made on permitted grounds and a *prima facie* case is accepted
The matter will be referred to the Chair of the URDC/Head of the Graduate School of the University and four members appointed by the URDC who have had no previous involvement in the case, but who have appropriate and relevant research degree supervisory and examination experience, who shall together be known as the University Research Degrees Appeal Panel (URDAP).
 - b. Case Rejected
The application is not made on the permitted grounds and/or there is insufficient evidence contained within the appeal to cause the original decision of the CRDC/examiners to be reviewed.
 - c. Case Referred

In cases where there appears to be new evidence not previously considered by the CRDC, the case may be referred back to it for reconsideration. A reply must be made by the CRDC to the Chair of the URDC of the University within 10 working days. If the decision is not acceptable to the candidate, he or she may re-apply within 20 working days of being informed of that decision for reconsideration by the University Research Degrees Appeal Panel.

125. Where a *prima facie* case is found to exist, the University Research Degrees Appeal Panel, the candidate and the CRDC will be provided with a detailed guidance procedure as to how to proceed, including arrangements for any hearing which may be held, by the Registrar. Any such hearing will take place within 15 working days of the decision that a *prima facie* case exists.
126. The procedure will include the opportunity for the candidate to submit documentary evidence and be present at any hearing to present their case, accompanied by a friend to help them do this.
127. Similarly the CRDC will be invited to submit relevant documentation and to be represented by up to two people to respond to the applicant's appeal.
128. The Registrar will ensure that the relevant parties and the University Research Degrees Appeal Panel are provided with all appropriate information at least 10 days prior to the hearing. Final evidence will be circulated 5 working days before the hearing. Late evidence may be circulated only with the consent of both parties and the Chair of the URDC of the University.
129. Should the candidate not attend the hearing, it will proceed with the candidate 'in absentia' and on the information already supplied unless a documented genuine reason for absence is received. In the latter case the hearing date may be rearranged.
130. The Panel will decide that:
 1. The appeal is rejected.
 2. The appeal is upheld in which case one of the following courses of action will be recommended:
 - 2.1 Re-examination is appropriate and the Panel determines that either:
 - a) the examiners are invited to reconsider their decision or
 - b) new examiners are to be appointed
 - 2.2 The termination/re-register for MPhil decision be referred back to the CRDC for reconsideration alongside any alternative recommendation which the Panel may make.
 3. There is evidence which raises doubts about the competence of the Examiners and/or the procedures being operated by the CRDC and the panel will submit a recommendation to Academic Board that it should authorise a full and proper investigation as a matter of urgency.
131. The Panel will communicate its decision to the candidate in writing within five working days of the date of any hearing.

R. Complaints procedure

This section should be read alongside the University's Complaints Procedure, available from Student Support Services or at the following web address -

www.ntu.ac.uk/currentstudents/Inav08_Student_Support_Services/Student%20Complaints%20Procedure/10393gp.html

132. A candidate may follow the University Complaints Procedure in respect of a complaint against the University. Normally these procedures will only apply to a complaint based on the activity of a member of University staff engaged in University activities, health and safety, shortcomings in the quality of supervision and/or resources and instance of maladministration.
133. This details the various steps available within the process and the situations in which the procedure may be employed. The outline steps below should be considered alongside the detail within the University's Procedure, which takes precedence.
134. A candidate making a complaint should:
- (a) in the first instance attempt local resolution via the informal procedure and an approach to the most appropriate member of staff, usually their Director of Studies, as described at section 6.2 of the Procedure.

(Candidates should not delay in implementing the informal stages of the procedure where issues need to be resolved since the University would wish to attempt resolution of any matter at the earliest possible opportunity to minimise any potential detrimental effect on a candidate's programme of research)
 - (b) If the response to the complaint is not considered by the candidate to be satisfactory, he/she may invoke Part I of the formal procedure as detailed at section 6.3.1 of the Procedure and using the Complaint Form.
 - (c) If the response to the complaint following completion of the Part I procedure is not considered by the candidate to be satisfactory, he/she may invoke Part II (Appeal Stage) of the formal procedure. Para 6.3.4 of the Procedure provides the relevant detail.
135. Outcomes of the procedure (section 7 of the University Procedure)
- Where a complaint is upheld and recommendations are made these may additionally be communicated to the Associate Dean, Research and Graduate Studies and to the College and University Research Degrees Committees
- The Senior Pro Vice-Chancellor Academic Development and Research will also be included in the reporting of each case relating to a research candidate which comes before the Complaints Panel.
136. Notification of the complaints procedure will form part of the induction process for all candidates at the time of initial enrolment.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Application for admission to read for a Research Degree

The initial stage whereby a potential research student prepares an application to read for a research degree for consideration by a CRDC. At this stage the student is neither registered nor enrolled.

Enrolment

When an application to read for a research degree is approved, a student enrolls as a university student. This enables the student to access University facilities and services. The student enrolls on an annual basis. At enrolment, the necessary fees are payable to the University.

Registration

Upon first enrolment the student becomes a registered research degree student of the University. That student's registration status is maintained until it is terminated or the student graduates. At this stage, the student's research project does not need to be approved.

Application for project approval

A registered research degree student must have their research project approved by a CRDC, normally within six months of their registration.

University Research Degrees Committee (URDC)

A. Terms of Reference

1. To ensure that the College Research Degrees Committees are being consistent in their operational practices and procedures;
 2. To undertake a review of each College Research Degree Committee every six years;
 3. To receive and respond to College Research Degree Committees annual reports;
 4. To prepare and maintain regulations for the award of research degrees in liaison with the University Research Committee and ASQC;
 5. To ensure that the University's research degree procedures are consistent with the requirements and guidance issued by QAA and other appropriate external bodies;
 6. To oversee the appeals process for postgraduate research candidates;
 7. To receive external examiner nominations approved by the College Research Degree Committees;
 8. Any other matters pertaining to research degrees at the university referred to it by the Academic Board or colleges.
- 1.

B. Membership

- Chair: Head of Graduate School
- 3 – Chairs of CRDC (one to be vice chair by annual rotation)
- 9 - PGR tutors and equivalents
- 1 – representative of the Professional Doctorate Scheme
- 3 - Student representatives (drawn from a pool of nine)
- 1 – representative from the Student Professional Doctorate Study Body
- 1 – PVC-Academic
- 1 – representative of CADQ
- 1 - Chair of Southampton Solent Research committee or his/her nominee.
- 1 member of ASQC
- 2 co-opted members: 1 from LLR and 1 from CPLD
- 1 representative of international research candidates
- 1 servicing officer

College Research Degrees Committees (CRDCs)

All Colleges have devolved powers for research degrees and are responsible for all matters relating to the quality, and standards, of such degrees.

A. Terms of reference

1. To maintain oversight over the processes of selection, admissions, training, supervision and progress monitoring of candidates for postgraduate research degrees in the College;
2. To receive and approve applications to register projects for postgraduate research degrees in the College;
3. To receive and approve applications for transfer of registration from M.Phil to PhD;
4. To oversee the monitoring of candidates' progress, to receive an annual report on the progress of each candidate and to make recommendations for renewal of registration;
5. To oversee the arrangements and conduct of examination arrangements;
6. To approve external examiner nominations and report decisions to URDC;
7. To receive recommendations from Supervisors and any School/College Progress Panel where the progress of any candidate gives cause for concern. Subject to satisfying itself as to the effective implementation of the prescribed arrangements for supporting, counselling and warning such students, the Committee may decide that a candidate's period of study be terminated and their registration withdrawn. In which case, the candidate will have the right of appeal in line with university regulations;
8. To receive notification in cases where a candidate's period of study has been extended, suspended or successfully completed, by chair's action;
9. To consider any matters relating to the quality of research degree provision or the standards of research degrees referred to the Committee by the Academic Board or its sub committees;
10. To provide support and guidance to active researchers and members of staff new to research.
11. To provide an annual report on the research degrees run within the College for submission to the URDC.
12. To receive annual reports from CRDC sub-groups and on Professional Doctorates – where appropriate.

B. Membership

- Associate Deans (Research) in the College (ex officio) as chair,
- Deans of Schools or their nominee,
- A member, who must be an experienced supervisor, from each subject group in the College or equivalent (as determined by CRDC) in the College,
- A member of another College who is an experienced supervisor and who is familiar with arrangements for registering and examining research degrees both at this and other universities,
- A maximum of two co-opted members,
- Up to four candidate representatives,
- Vice-Chair from with CRDC,
- Chairs of CRDC sub-groups (where they exist),
- LLR Academic Liaison Team Manager,
- Senior administrator (Research) as Secretary.

Note: Members of the Committee will take no part in discussing or making decisions about candidates under their own supervision. A candidate representative will not be party to discussions of a confidential nature relating to other candidates.

List of University's Research Degree Forms

Research Degree Application Form	Application for admission to read for a research degree of the University
RDPW	Application to register for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy on the basis of published works.
RD1PA	Application for project approval for a research degree of the University
RD2T	Application for transfer of registration from Master of Philosophy to Doctor of Philosophy
RD3MS	Application for change in approved mode of study
RD4S	Application for change in approved arrangements for supervision
RD5SEW	Application for suspension/extension and/or notification of withdrawal of registration
RD6E	Application for approval of examination arrangements
RD7DEC	Candidate's declaration form
RD8PRE	Preliminary report and recommendation of an examiner on a candidate for the degree of Master of Philosophy or Doctor of Philosophy
RD9REX	Recommendation of the examiners on a candidate for the degree of Master of Philosophy or Doctor of Philosophy
RD10G	Guidance to candidates, following examination, on amendments/re-submission

Format of thesis

1. Except with the specific permission of the CRDC the thesis should be presented in English.
2. An abstract of approximately 300 words should be bound into the thesis which will provide a synopsis of the thesis stating the nature and scope of the work undertaken and of the contribution made to the knowledge of the subject treated. Three loose copies of the abstract must be submitted with the thesis. The loose copies of the abstract must have the name of the author, the degree for which the thesis is submitted, and the title of the thesis as a heading.
3. The thesis should include a copyright statement, immediately following the title page, in the following form: "This work is the intellectual property of the author (*Note: if there are other owners of the IP, as a consequence of any statement issued under paragraph 12 of Section 14A, they must also be named here*). You may copy up to 5% of this work for private study, or personal, non-commercial research. Any re-use of the information contained within this document should be fully referenced, quoting the author, title, university, degree level and pagination. Queries or requests for any other use, or if a more substantial copy is required, should be directed in the owner(s) of the Intellectual Property Rights."
4. The thesis should include a statement of the candidate's objectives and must acknowledge published or other sources of material consulted (including an appropriate bibliography) and any assistance received.
5. Where a candidate's research programme is part of a collaborative group project, the thesis should indicate clearly the candidate's individual contribution and the extent of the collaboration.
6. The candidate is free to publish material in advance of the thesis but reference should be made in the thesis to any such work. Copies of published material should either be bound in with the thesis or placed in an adequately secured pocket at the end of the thesis.
7. The text of the thesis should normally not exceed the following length:

PhD	80,000words
MPhil	40,000words

Where the submission includes material in other than textual form, the written thesis should normally be within the range:

PhD	30,000 - 40,000 words
MPhil	15,000 - 20,000 words

The recommended length of the texts are indicative and examiners will have regard to the candidate's fulfilment of the University's published assessment criteria (see appendix 8).

8. The title of the thesis should not normally exceed twenty (20) words in length.

9. Conferment of the award is conditional on receipt by the College Graduate School Office of all of the following:

(a) A PDF version of the thesis for deposit in the University Institutional Repository (IRep), together with additional bound copies for each of any collaborating institutions.

If your thesis contains third party copyright material that you have either been refused or unable to obtain permission to include in an electronic version, you will not be able to make the full version of the thesis publicly available online in IRep. You will therefore need to select the option on the Thesis Deposit Agreement to restrict access to the electronic version of your thesis because of copyright restrictions. However you are still required to deposit an electronic copy of your thesis which will be held securely. When you come to deposit your thesis you should:

- Submit two electronic versions of your thesis, one complete and one with the third party copyright material removed. The electronic version of your thesis with third party copyright material removed will be added to IRep and made publically available. The complete version will be retained by the University on restricted access

However, if removing the third party material seriously affects the remaining text, then you should:

- Deposit only the complete version with the third party copyright material retained. The complete version will be retained by the University on restricted access and bibliographic details will be included within IRep

(b) A completed and signed Thesis Deposit Agreement.

(c) A draft certificate, including the wording of the thesis title, agreed by the candidate and the Chair of the CRDC.

10. Following the award of the degree the College Graduate School Office will send a copy of the title page, abstract and list of contents to the British Library in accordance with the arrangements for participation in the UK thesis service.
11. Where the CRDC has agreed that the confidential nature of the candidate's work is such as to preclude the thesis being made freely available in the library of the University (and Collaborating Establishment, if any) and, in the case of a PhD, the British Library, the thesis will, immediately on completion of the programme of work, be retained by the University on restricted access and, for a time not exceeding the approved period, only be made available to those who were directly involved in the project.

Guidance note on para. 11

The CRDC should normally only approve an application for confidentiality in order to enable a patent application to be lodged or to protect commercially or politically sensitive material. A thesis should not be restricted in this way in order to protect research leads. While the normal maximum period of confidentiality is two years, in exceptional circumstances the CRDC may approve a longer period. Where a shorter period would be adequate the CRDC should not automatically grant confidentiality for two years.

12. The copies of the thesis submitted to fulfil the requirements of the degree will remain the property of the University but the copyright in the thesis is vested in the candidate or as otherwise provided in any IPR or collaborative agreement made under paragraph 12 of [Section 14A](#).

13. The following requirements should be adhered to in the format of the submitted thesis.
- (a) Theses should normally be in A4 format; the CRDC may give permission for a thesis to be submitted in another format where it is satisfied that the contents of the thesis can be better expressed in that format; a candidate using a format larger than A4 should note that the production of microfiche copies and full-size enlargements may not be feasible.
 - (b) copies of the thesis must be presented in a permanent and legible form either in typescript or print; where copies are produced by photocopying processes, these should be of a permanent nature; where word processor and printing devices are used, the printer should be capable of producing text of a satisfactory quality; the size of character used in the main text, including displayed matter and notes, should not be less than 2.0mm for capitals and 1.5mm for x-height (that is, the height of lower-case x).
 - (c) the thesis shall be printed on the recto side of the page only; the paper shall be white and within the range 70 g/m² to 100 g/m².
 - (d) the margin at the left-hand binding edge of the page should not be less than 40mm; other margins should not be less than 15mm.
 - (e) double or one-and-a-half spacing should be used in the typescript except for indented quotations or footnotes where single spacing may be used.
 - (f) pages should be numbered consecutively through the main text including photographs and/or diagrams included as whole pages.
 - (g) the title page must give the following information:
 - (1) the full title of the thesis;
 - (2) the full name of the author;
 - (3) that the degree is awarded by the University;
 - (4) the award for which the degree is submitted in partial fulfilment of its requirements;
 - (5) the Collaborating Establishment(s), if any; and
 - (6) the month and year of submission.

A specimen title page is provided below:

<p>THE ORIGINS OF THE FARMERS' CO-OPERATIVE IN WESSEX</p> <p>JOHN SMITH</p> <p>A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of Nottingham Trent University for the degree of Master of Philosophy</p> <p>This research programme was carried out in collaboration with the Borchester Farmers' Club</p> <p>October 2012</p>

GUIDELINES ON PROFESSIONAL DOCTORATES

Introduction

1. The following Guidelines set out the aims, principles and regulations for programmes of study leading to the award of Professional Doctorate. The award is located within the University's Research Degree Framework. The Guidelines will help to clarify the nature and position of the Professional Doctorate - for programme designers, approval panels and others. They also seek to distinguish the award from the PhD and the MPhil.

General principles

2. The University believes that the introduction of Professional Doctorate awards will make a valuable contribution to the University's Mission. They will greatly contribute to our aims of providing high-level opportunities for lifelong learning and continuous professional development, which in respect of these awards will be at the very forefront of new knowledge, theory and practice. Professional doctorates will especially meet our aspiration to promote critical and reflective practice at the highest levels.
3. The Professional Doctorate is primarily designed to enable candidates to demonstrate a significant contribution to the enhancement of professional practice in a particular field through the application and development of theoretical frameworks. The integration of theory, research and practice is a key characteristic of the Professional Doctorate. It will contain a substantial piece of practical research or equivalent enquiry but is also likely to include a significant 'taught' component as well as a cohort-orientated learning process.
4. The Professional Doctorate is concerned with investigating real issues relating to professional practice through a critical review and systematic application of appropriate theories and research. The candidate is normally expected to base their programme upon a problem in professional practice that needs investigation and resolution.
5. Whereas a traditional PhD might be said to develop *professional researchers*, a Professional Doctorate will be designed to develop *researching professionals*.
6. The research aspect of the Professional Doctorate will have the following characteristics:

Domain of research topic: the candidate is expected to undertake research aimed at contributing to the knowledge of professional practice, and the role and development of practitioners within it.

Type of research: the candidate is expected to undertake research to gain new knowledge that has practical aims and objectives.

Focus of research: it is expected that the research topic will have direct relevance to the candidate's own professional interest, working life or that of his/her organisation.

Guidance note on para. 6:

These characteristics may be contrasted with the nature of research within a PhD, whereby a candidate may research any topic within their field and undertake an original investigation that is not necessarily directed towards practical application or makes a contribution to the candidate's own practice.

7. A Professional Doctorate is normally located in a specific professional field (and the award designation will reflect this – see para 20). However, a Professional Doctorate may often be interdisciplinary in approach and/or content.
8. It is intended that the Professional Doctorate should provide an opportunity for considerable personal development, such that the candidate achieves a greater level of effectiveness as a practitioner.
9. Notwithstanding the above differences in orientation, the Professional Doctorate is a true Doctoral programme and is equal in status and rigour to the PhD.

Guidance note on para. 9:

The University's Generic Level Descriptors for Professional Doctorates are comparable to the Qualification Descriptors formulated by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) for awards at Doctorate Level.

Programme standards

10. All **Professional Doctorate** programmes will be approved against the University's *Generic Level Descriptors* at D Level and **must contain a minimum of 540 credits of which at least 360 will be at D Level** (*please see para. 16*). The following *Descriptors* do not constitute a specification for the outcomes of any given programme of study but a framework to aid such programme specification:

Doctorate, D Level. Learning at this level will reflect the ability to:

Knowledge, skills

- systematically acquire and understand an advanced body of knowledge, which is at the forefront of an area of professional practice.
- generate, interpret and apply new knowledge, techniques and skills in the professional field.

Tasks, procedures

- conduct original research or equivalent enquiry at the current limits of the professional field.
- conceptualise, design and implement appropriate research methodologies and adjust the project design in the light of unforeseen problems or contradictions.
- make informed judgements on the results of research and communicate ideas and conclusions clearly and effectively to specialist and non-specialist audiences.

Autonomy, responsibilities

- exercise personal responsibility and largely autonomous initiative in complex and unpredictable situations in professional or equivalent environments, and with a high level responsibility for others.

Programme aims

11. The aims of the award of Professional Doctorate are broad. An individual programme of study can be designed to meet one or more of these aims, to:
 - contribute to professional practice through research and/or other appropriate enquiry,
 - update or gain new knowledge within the professional field,
 - understand professionalism and its practice within the field,
 - nurture personal development (often specifying reflective practice),
 - form an appreciation of the contribution of research to the work of senior professional practitioners.

A candidate completing a Professional Doctorate is likely to be able to:

- demonstrate a vision of the future of their profession,
- be capable of empowering and supporting colleagues,
- contribute as an active member of a wider professional community;
- act as an interface between the wider professional community and professional colleagues;
- conduct authoritative research and equivalent enquiry individually or as part of a team.

12. Each Professional Doctorate programme must have its own specific programme learning outcomes which demonstrate an appropriate correspondence with the above aims and the *Generic Level Descriptors* set out in para. 10.

Programme structure and design

13. Professional Doctorates must be clearly structured to ensure the understanding of all those involved.
14. Programme Teams should consult the Section 3 of the ASQ Handbook and the guidance on:
 - Design and delivery,
 - Specification,
 - Structure,
 - Module size and specification.

The general principles and guidelines set out in that Section should be applied to the design of Professional programmes. In addition, paras. 15-19 below provide guidance that is more specific.

Professional Doctorate

15. The normal duration of a Professional Doctorate is 5400 notional hours of student effort (or broadly the equivalent of 3 years full-time learning) and equivalent to 540 credits overall.
16. A Professional Doctorate will normally comprise two components:

- a substantial piece of original research or equivalent enquiry. This will normally comprise 360 credits.
 - a significant 'taught' component. This component will typically contain modules that focus upon the field of study and modules that focus upon research methodologies, techniques and training. It is expected that the 'taught' component will normally comprise 180 credits.
17. A Professional Doctorate programme may be designed so that the 'taught' component includes M Level modules, up to a value of 180 credits. It is expected that this flexibility will be applied in the earlier stages of a Professional Doctorate programme, and not as part of the final assessment.
18. For the purposes of providing feedback and encouraging progression and completion, the programme should be sufficiently structured to provide appropriate milestones or stages.
19. Programmes should be structured to demonstrate, particularly for full-time participants, how the appropriate access to and linkage with a supporting organisation(s) can be achieved.

Designation of awards and titles

20. A Professional Doctorate should normally have a designation that refers to professional field of study. The following are the award designations are currently available:

DBA – Doctor of Business Administration

DDM – Doctor of Digital Media

EdD – Doctor of Education

DFI – Doctor of Fashion Industry

DFA – Doctor of Fine Art

DLegalPrac – Doctor of Legal Practice

DMedSci – Doctor of Medical Science

DPsych – Doctor of Psychology

DPA – Doctor of Public Administration

DSocPrac – Doctor of Social Practice

Profession Doctorate in Journalism, Media and Communication (DProf),

Profession Doctorate in Museum and Heritage Management (DProf),

Profession Doctorate in Applied Languages and Linguistics (DProf),

Profession Doctorate in International Development and Global Cultural Policy (DProf).

Admissions and selection

21. The Professional Doctorate is designed for individuals with significant practitioner experience in the designated field. It is particularly intended for practising professionals, particularly those in, or who aspire to, senior or leading positions within their profession.
22. Candidates will be well qualified in their chosen field and will normally have already gained a related Masters Degree or equivalent qualification, together with a sufficient amount and level of professional experience in the field appropriate to the programme being undertaken. There is no requirement for such candidates to have already obtained a Professional Masters. Typically, the candidate should have a minimum of 7 years relevant experience.

23. Exceptionally, a candidate may be accepted onto a Professional Doctorate with a good Honours Degree in their field or a Masters Degree in an unrelated field. As with standard entrants, such candidates must have a sufficient amount and level of professional experience in the field appropriate to the programme being undertaken.
24. In order to meet the learning outcomes of their Professional Doctorate programme, it is normally anticipated that candidates will need to carry out detailed learning activities with one or more participating organisations. In such circumstances, access to and support from the appropriate organisation(s) is considered essential in terms of the initial selection of candidates.
25. A Programme Team is expected to pay particular attention to the admission process, during which prospective candidates are expected to develop an initial proposal for subsequent research or equivalent enquiry. Evidence of sufficiency of problem definition, initial research, personal capability and appropriate professional experience are factors to be looked for.
26. A Programme Team must ensure that it is able to provide the appropriate supervision in relation to the focus/professional interest of the candidate before accepting that individual for entry.

Accreditation of prior learning (APL)

27. A student who can demonstrate that they have achieved part of the learning outcomes of a Professional programme by other means, can be admitted with credit to an appropriate point in the programme.
28. In respect of a Professional Doctorate, admission with credit will not exceed 180 M Level credits.

Learning support

29. Candidates will be recruited to Professional Doctorate programmes as part of a 'cohort' rather than as individuals. This will enable cohesive groups of professional peers to work and learn from one another. There should be structured support for 'cohort' activities such as weekend or summer schools.
30. There should be clear and shared expectations by all involved as to the amount and nature of supervision provided for Professional Award candidates.
31. Particularly in respect of Professional Doctorates, participants must have supervisors who collectively have experience of supervising programmes at this level to completion; some specialist subject knowledge and practitioner expertise may be utilised within the supervision process through the involvement of well-qualified external contributors.
32. Given the practitioner orientation of the Professional Awards, significant learning will be expected to occur through interaction with the participating organisation(s).
33. There should be opportunities created within the Professional Award programmes for significant interaction between participants, and – where appropriate – other relevant research students and active researchers.

Assessment

34. The assessment scheme should have detailed criteria and clarify the range and relative values of assessment methods used. Taught modules will have

learning outcomes and appropriate assessment methods to measure their achievement.

35. The different nature of Professional Doctorates means that alternative approaches to assessment may be incorporated in addition to – or in place of – the defended thesis. Assessments will need to ensure that the reflective practitioner emphasis is appropriately assessed.

Guidance note on para. 35:

It would be acceptable to structure the research enquiry into a series of separate projects, each separately assessed as the candidate works his/her way through the programme. The research enquiry should not become so fragmented as to make it impossible for the candidate to produce work of sufficient scope and depth.

36. For a Professional Doctorate, a central element of assessed work may be a substantial piece of individual work in the form of a dissertation. This will typically be between 40,000 to 80,000 words and be examined by internal and external examiners and may include a viva.
37. An External Examiner(s) must be nominated and appointed to each Professional Doctorate programme. Bearing in mind the level of work and the potentially wide range of programme topics, Specialist External Assessors may need to be appointed to assist in the assessment of the research, technical or professional activities. The nomination and appointment of External Examiners and Specialist External Assessors will need to meet with the University's general requirements. The oral examination will be conducted by the external and internal examiners and will be chaired by an independent, senior, experienced academic of the University appointed by the CRDC. With the agreement of the CRDC, the approval of the oral examination panel may be delegated to the Professional Doctorate Board of Examiners, subject to an annual report being submitted to the CRDC.
38. Professional Doctorate programmes must have a specific set of assessment regulations that are consistent with the University's Guidelines on Common Assessment Regulations.

Quality management

39. University authority for the overall quality of the Professional Doctorate awards will reside with the University Research Degrees Committee, on behalf of Academic Board. Proposals for the introduction of a new Professional Doctorate award designation must be approved by Academic Board following approval by URDC and the appropriate CRDC (or CRDCs in respect of cross-college proposals). The approval of the award designation should precede the approval of the specific programme(s) leading to that award.
40. A proposal for a new Professional Doctorate programme must first receive planning approval from the College Management Team within which the programme will reside (or each CMT in respect of cross-disciplinary proposals). In terms of academic approval, the CRDC will consider the proposal, normally with external membership as appropriate, and make recommendations to URDC. Where a programme is cross-College, URDC will set up an approval panel drawn from members of each CRDC, with some

external membership, to conduct the approval process. In all cases, URDC will consider and approve the report and recommendations of the approval event.

41. Programme teams must design Professional Doctorate programmes that meet the specifications set out in these guidelines. The overall programme framework and specification will be subject to the approval of the URDC. Programmes will normally be approved indefinitely, subject to a periodic review process.

Guidance note on para. 41:

Programme Teams are expected to present proposals that will enable considerable variation in the specific programmes of study to be followed by individuals; each individual programme of study will not require separate approval from URDC. However the Programme Team's arrangements for scrutinising and approving each research enquiry will be a major concern at validation.

42. A Professional Doctorate programme must be located in the quality management procedures of the School offering the programme.
43. Each programme will have a Programme Leader, a Programme Committee and a Board of Examiners. The Programme Committee will produce a Programme Standards and Quality Report (PSQR) on the operation of the overall programme framework and specification.

PROTOCOL WHERE UNFAIR DISCRIMINATION IS ALLEGED

1. The appeal procedures for Research Degree candidates of the Nottingham Trent University specify that a candidate may appeal against termination of registration by the CRDC, a requirement to re-register for MPhil or an examination decision, where they 'can prove that unfair discrimination has occurred'.
2. Discrimination for the purposes of this protocol is defined as in the appropriate legislation (e.g. Sex Discrimination Act 1975, Race Relations Act 1976, Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, Disability Discrimination Act 1995, Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001,) and in the university's Equal Opportunities Policy.
3. In a case where a candidate has made application to appeal based on more than one ground, of which unfair discrimination by the university is one, the procedure for investigating the allegation of unfair discrimination will be carried out in full before the other grounds for appeal are investigated. Any time limits under the normal procedure will be suspended pending consideration of the allegations of unfair discrimination.
4. The time limits referred to within this protocol shall be exclusive of university closure days
5. Reference is made within this protocol to the role of the Director of Studies, the Associate Dean of Research and Graduate Studies (ADR) and the Chair of the Research Degrees Committee of the University. Where mention is made of action by the holders of these specific posts, it is implicit that this activity may be delegated to an appropriate nominee, having sufficient experience and being sufficiently senior to act on behalf of the designated postholder.
6. Where unfair discrimination by the university is alleged within a formal claim submitted by a Research Degree candidate, this matter shall be immediately identified by the Registrar. On receipt of the appeal application, the matter will be referred to the Academic Office Projects Manager (AOPM) who shall take the following actions on behalf of the Registrar:
 - i) The Associate Dean Research and Graduate Studies (ADR) responsible for the candidate shall be informed in writing of the nature of the allegation. S/he will prepare a College response for the AOPM. In cases where the unfair discrimination is alleged to be the result of the action of (a) named individual(s), the ADR will inform them in writing of the allegation and the requirement that they must not contact the candidate in relation to it. The ADR will liaise with them in the preparation of the College response. (If a named individual is in a different College to that in which the candidate is registered they should be approached via their own ADR/line manager, as appropriate.)
 - ii) If the AOPM considers that the allegation is not sufficiently detailed to allow further action to take place, he/she will ask the candidate to provide the complete case in writing within 10 working days and will alert the ADR to this course of action.

- iii) When the complete case is received by the AOPM from the candidate, it will be sent to the ADR within 5 working days.
 - iv) The ADR will be required by the AOPM to respond in writing within 10 working days of the despatch of the information to him/her by the AOPM.
7. A panel, consisting of two academic staff, drawn from the university's Research Degrees Committee on the request of the Academic Office Projects Manager, will consider the case based on the information available. The AOPM will provide administrative support to this panel and specialist advice will be provided by the university's Equality and Diversity Manager. The panel may determine either that a *prima facie* case of discrimination exists, or that, based on the evidence available, no case of unfair discrimination can be proved.
 8. Where it is considered that a *prima facie* case of discrimination exists, the Chair of the panel will ask the university's Equality and Diversity Manager to appoint a trained investigator to examine the case. (Included within the training of any investigator appointed within this protocol will be an awareness of discrimination and harassment)
 9. Where this panel determines that no case of unfair discrimination can be proved, the candidate may appeal against that decision. Any such appeal must be made in writing giving full reasons for the appeal and received by the Academic Office Projects Manager no more than 10 working days after the date of despatch of the notification of dismissal of the appeal. In such circumstances, a trained investigator will be appointed by the university's Equality and Diversity Manager.
 10. The investigator will undertake a full and factual investigation and provide a detailed report. The investigation will be completed as speedily as is practicable in the circumstances and with appropriate rigour. It may involve interviewing the candidate, the ADR, any individual(s) named in the allegation, also any witnesses to the facts, followed by collation of any relevant written material/ documentation. Any interviewees have the right to be accompanied and supported by a Harassment Adviser, Union representative or friend during the investigation. On completion of the report, the investigator will send a copy to the candidate, the ADR and any named individual(s) who will then have an opportunity to provide further written comments to the investigator. Any further response from a named individual will be co-ordinated via their ADR. Any such responses shall be received by the investigator within 10 working days of the despatch of the report.
 11. A panel consisting of the Registrar, Chair of the University Research Degrees Committee and the university's Equality and Diversity Manager (or nominee) will receive the report of the investigator together with any further comments made by the candidate/ADR /named individual(s).
 12. The Panel may make the following decisions:
 - Dispose of the case by holding that no act of unfair discrimination can be proved to have occurred. In these circumstances, where the candidate has appealed on multiple grounds, of which unfair discrimination by the university is one, these other grounds will then be considered, according

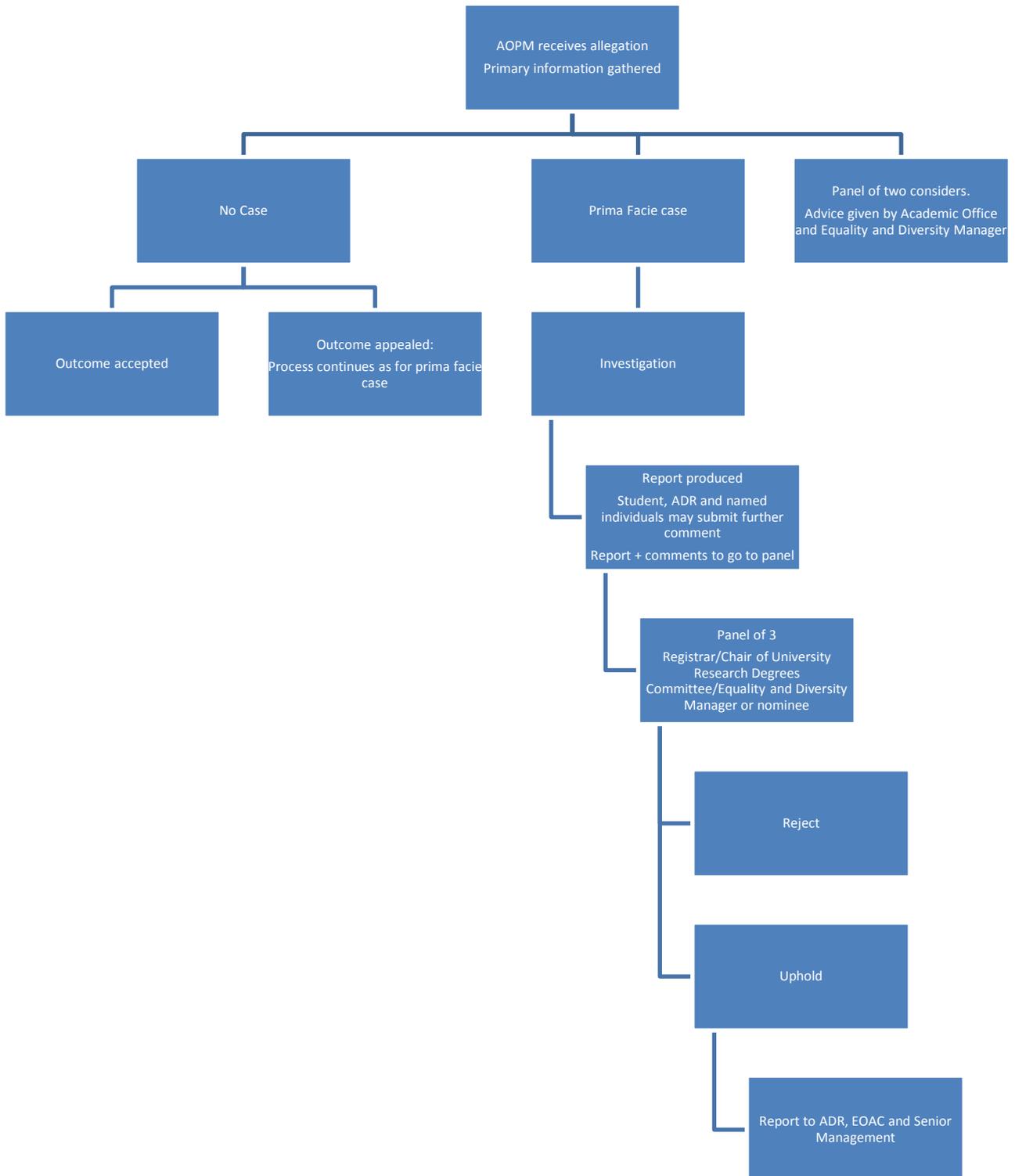
to the university's academic appeals procedures for research degree candidates.

- Decide that it requires further information or clarification via the investigator before reaching a decision. In this situation, the investigator shall report any additional information to the panel as soon as practicable having referred any such additional reporting to the student, ADR and any named individual(s), as described in para. 10 above.
 - Find that the candidate has been unfairly discriminated against in connection with his/her academic performance. The Chair of the panel will then notify the ADR who is responsible for ensuring that appropriate action is taken to remedy the effects of the unfair discrimination. The ADR will report his/her actions to the Chair of the panel within 20 working days of being informed of the decision of the panel. (Where the ADR is named within the allegation, the Chair will report the findings to the Head of College, or other appropriate line manager in the case of a support department, who will take the actions described above.)
13. As part of its findings, the panel may recommend, in respect of a named member of staff, that the formal disciplinary procedure of the university be followed in determining an appropriate outcome.
14. Where the unfair discrimination is the consequence of institutional practices either within a specific College or administrative department or university-wide and not the unsanctioned behaviour of (an) individual(s), the Panel will advise the Chair of the Equal Opportunities Advisory Group and the Senior Management of the university when appropriate, on the steps which are recommended to prevent a re-occurrence.
15. The decision of the panel under paragraph 11 is final and there is no further opportunity to make representation on grounds of unfair discrimination within the university's academic appeals procedures for research degree candidates.

Guidance note on para. 15

- (i) The procedure described above precedes any other grounded appeal.*
- (ii) Where an allegation of unfair discrimination is one of a number of representations made by a candidate under the appeals procedures, any other allegations will be managed and considered within the main procedures by appropriate persons not previously involved in the process.*

Unfair Discrimination Protocol Flowchart



NOTTINGHAM TRENT UNIVERSITY

APPLICATION FOR AN APPEAL TO THE RESEARCH DEGREES COMMITTEE OF THE UNIVERSITY

SECTION 1

NAME:
COLLEGE:
DIRECTOR OF STUDIES:

NOTES

- i) Prior to submitting this appeal candidates must have already submitted a written response to the College Research Degrees Committee.
- ii) The Chair of the University Research Degrees Committee of the University and the Registrar will consider your application and decide whether you have established grounds that warrant the case being referred.
- iii) Your attached statement will be circulated to the College for comment.
- iv) The information supplied will be treated in confidence. Indicate by ticking the box below if there is information which is highly confidential which needs to be discussed with you before circulation.

SECTION 2

Indicate by a tick on which grounds you wish your appeal to be considered (see Appeal Procedures for Research Degree Candidates).

A	<input type="checkbox"/>	b	<input type="checkbox"/>	c	<input type="checkbox"/>	d	<input type="checkbox"/>	e	<input type="checkbox"/>
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SECTION 3

Indicate briefly in this space below a summary of your appeal.

SECTION 4

Provide a supporting statement on separate sheets of A4 paper, clearly numbered, preferably typed or written in BLACK INK.

SECTION 5

Where applicable enclose copies of the following:

- i) your progress report
- ii) the supervisory team's progress report
- iii) your written submission to the College Research Degrees Committee

SECTION 6

Confidential Box [] DATE:

SIGNATURE

Return to: The Registrar, Nottingham Trent University.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Doctoral level awards — PhD (including PhD by Published Works) and Professional Doctorates

These criteria should be read in conjunction with the Research Degree Regulations to be found in Section 14 of the Academic Standards and Quality Handbook.

Achievement will be assessed by the examination of the candidate's thesis and performance under oral examination. (In the case of Professional Doctorates this will also include the assessment of achievement by a variety of methods in accordance with the learning outcomes of any modules specified for the programme and their associated published assessment criteria.) Assessment will normally be based on the candidate successfully demonstrating achievement of an appropriate combination of the following criteria:

1. the creation and interpretation of new knowledge and/or the invention and generation of ideas, through original research, of a quality to satisfy peer review, extend the forefront of the discipline and merit publication;
2. the systematic acquisition and understanding of a substantial body of knowledge which is at the forefront of an academic discipline or area of professional practice;
3. the ability to relate the results of such study to the general body of knowledge in the discipline;
4. 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;
5. a detailed understanding of applicable methods and techniques for research and advanced academic inquiry;
6. the ability to evaluate and criticise received opinion;
7. the ability to make reasoned and well-informed judgements on complex issues within the specialism whilst understanding the limitations on judgements made in the absence of complete data;
8. the ability to communicate the results of the programme of research as demonstrated in the style and overall presentation of the thesis.
9. the ability to defend the thesis orally to the satisfaction of the examiners.

Master's level awards by research — MPhil

Achievement will be assessed by the examination of the candidate's thesis and performance under oral examination. Assessment will normally be based on the candidate successfully demonstrating achievement of an appropriate combination of the following criteria:

1. a systematic understanding of a substantial body of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of the academic discipline, field of study, or area of professional practice;
2. a comprehensive understanding of methods and techniques applicable to the research or advanced scholarship;
3. originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and inquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline;
4. conceptual understanding that enables:
 - the critical evaluation of current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline; and
 - the evaluation of methodologies, the development of critiques of them and, where appropriate, the proposal of new hypotheses;
5. the ability to evaluate and criticise received opinion;
6. the ability to make reasoned judgements whilst understanding the limitations on judgements made in the absence of complete data;
7. the ability to communicate the results of the programme of research as demonstrated in the style and overall presentation of the thesis.
8. the ability to defend the thesis orally to the satisfaction of the examiners.

NB

In judging the merit of a thesis submitted in candidature for any research degree, the Examiners shall bear in mind the standard and scope of work which it is reasonable to expect a capable and diligent student to present after the period of registered full-time or part-time study.