

Section 16F

Nottingham Trent University

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**Quality Handbook**

**Part E: Regulations**

**Section 16F: PhD by  
Published Work**

# Section 16F

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## Preface

### 1. Scope of the regulations

- 1.1 These regulations apply to all students registered on the University's PhD by Published Work with effect from the 2018/19 academic year. PhD by Published Work is awarded on the basis of existing published or creative work.
- 1.2 The degree of PhD by Published Work may be awarded on the basis of existing published or creative output that shows evidence of originality and independent critical judgement at the level appropriate for the award. All work should normally have been published in the last ten years and have currency in the academic community (e.g. traceable in catalogues and/or peer-reviewed).
- 1.3 The body of published work may contain a portfolio of peer-reviewed academic papers, books, cited works or other materials that have been placed in the public domain as articles that have been published, accepted for publication, exhibited or performed. All publications, including electronic publications, used in the final submission must be published prior to the submission date. Confidential research reports or reports of restricted circulation are not citable for the award. Conference papers and non-peer-reviewed papers are not normally considered to be acceptable for submission, depending on the requirements for specific disciplines.
- 1.4 The creative work suitable for submission is defined broadly here through an indicative, rather than definitive, list encompassing: original artworks, artefacts, productions, musical compositions, dance, exhibitions, designs, video/audio outputs and computer programmes, a collection of poetry, a collection of short fiction, a novel, creative non-fiction, a script, or interactive fiction. The precise selection of previously been published work undertaken by the applicant will depend upon the discipline concerned.
- 1.5 These regulations provide specific information about regulatory matters that differ to those of standard PhD Awards.
- 1.6 Unless specific mention is made, the regulations do not distinguish between students on different modes of attendance.
- 1.7 These regulations apply to PhD by Published Work unless the University Research Committee (URC) has approved alternative arrangements.

### 2. Changes to the regulations

- 2.1 The University reserves the right to modify from time to time its regulations for the admission and progression of students and for the conferment of awards.
- 2.2 The regulations will be reviewed and updated periodically in line with developments in University policy and practice. There may be differences in regulations as they apply to different cohorts of students registered for the same award. Every effort

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will be made to inform students about proposed changes and, if educationally appropriate, introduce such changes for all cohorts of students.

## 3. Consultation

- 3.1 While the University reserves the right to modify its assessment regulations at any time, particular thought will be given to the timescale for introducing changes and the effect on current cohorts of students. Changes would not normally be introduced for implementation in the current year of study, but would take effect in the following academic year.
- 3.2 Changes to the regulations should be made after appropriate consultation. At University level, proposed changes will be discussed with staff who will be given the opportunity to comment on such changes. Students will also have an opportunity to comment. Proposed changes may be modified in the light of feedback.

## 4. Students with disabilities

- 4.1 Reasonable adjustments to assessment arrangements will be made to ensure that students with disabilities are not substantially disadvantaged. The Doctoral School will ensure that students are made aware of the procedures for requesting adjustments, will consider such requests and will agree arrangements, referring to Student Support Services and the Academic Office for guidance as necessary. Any agreed adjustments will be notified to the oral examination team.

## Registration matters

## 5. Eligibility

- 5.1 As per the eligibility requirements stated in Quality Handbook Section 11: Research Degrees, the PhD by Published Work is open to candidates who are, either:
  - a. full-time and part-time members of staff on a 0.2 contract or above of Nottingham Trent University and its collaborative centres, or members of an institution which has a strong research base and who have collaborated in research with staff members of Nottingham Trent University for at least three years, on the conditions that:
    - (i) the applicant has been a member of staff of the University or a collaborative partner / research partner institution for at least three years;
    - (ii) study and research carried out during the period of appointment forms a significant contribution to the published work;
    - (iii) the applicant meets the entry requirements for PhD (i.e. as specified in paragraph 5.1 of Quality Handbook (QH) Section 11: Research Degrees);
    - (iv) the applicant has published papers / works in their area of research prior to applying for this degree; and,

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- (v) the applicant was awarded their first degree not less than five years before the date of application;
  - or,
  - b. graduates who hold a 2:1 honours degree from a university in the UK, of at least seven years standing, and have already obtained a master's degree (or equivalent as evidenced by the Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL)) from a University in the UK, provided that they have a strong academic career as evidenced by publication, and the work submitted must principally be the candidate's own work.
- 5.2 In exceptional circumstances, a candidate may be admitted with the approval of the University Research Degrees Committee (URDC).

## 6. Registration procedures

- 6.1 All applicants will be reviewed by the appropriate School's Postgraduate Research Tutor and a potential supervisor.
- 6.2 If a potential supervisory team can be found then the applicant will be called for interview. The interview panel should comprise of three members – normally the relevant School's Postgraduate Research Tutor, the Associate Dean for Research (or their nominee) and a nominated Director of Studies. The interviewing panel will require the candidate to provide evidence of the level of their individual contribution to any collaborative work to be submitted (e.g. signed letters from co-authors or corroborating parties specifying the applicant's contribution to the published work). The candidate must establish a prima facie case for their project, indicating coherence of the works and their proposed contribution to knowledge.
- 6.3 All applicants will be required to submit a proposal to the relevant College Research Degrees Committee (CRDC) which includes a statement on the underlying theme of the published or creative work that they propose to include, and if possible include a list of examples of their work with full bibliographical details and word count.
- 6.4 The Doctoral School can provide advice on the appropriate application form. The applicant's proposal would normally include:
- a. details of the existing published or creative work that the applicant wishes to be considered and referenced in a recognised and appropriate style (see paragraphs 1.3 – 1.4 of this document for the requirements on the existing published work);
  - b. a statement of not more than one thousand words, indicating how and in what respect the work has made a significant and coherent contribution to the current state of knowledge;
  - c. a statement indicating the extent to which the work has been carried out by the applicant and a clear indication of any parts of the work which have been carried out in collaboration with other parties / authors. Further, if the work is the result of collaborative research, a statement must be provided by the collaborating researcher(s), confirming the contribution made to the published work by the applicant;

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- d. a statement by the applicant as to whether or not the work or any part thereof has been submitted, successfully or unsuccessfully, for a degree of this or any other University.
- 6.5 The chair of the interview panel will report to the appropriate CRDC. The committee will make any recommendations for admission to the Head of the Doctoral School. All admissions decisions rest with the Head of the Doctoral School.
- 6.6 Candidates must be made aware that while the interview panel may judge the portfolio of submitted works as satisfactory basis for enrolment, this does not guarantee that the examiners will agree; the final decision on quality of submission and outcomes rests with the examination team.

## 7. Registration periods

- 7.1 A student on a PhD by Published Work must enrol as a student of the University, and continue to re-enrol on an annual basis until conferment of the award has taken place.
- 7.2 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.
- 7.3 The minimum and maximum periods of registration are as follows:

Award	Mode	Minimum Length	Maximum Length
PhD by Published Work	part-time	12 months	24 months

- 7.4 Maximum registration periods include any writing up period.
- 7.5 The University does not stipulate normal periods of registration for its research degrees within the minimum and maximum. A student who has made unusually rapid progress with a programme of research may apply to the CRDC for permission to submit a thesis in advance of the minimum period of registration set out above.
- 7.6 A student on a PhD by Published Work will normally be registered for not less than one year and not more than two years. In exceptional cases, a minimum registration period of 6 months may be allowed by a CRDC for a well prepared candidate with a strong set of existing published or creative work.
- 7.7 Candidates who cease to be employed by the University, or who cease to qualify as Category C staff, will remain eligible for the PhD by Published Work award, providing that they complete within the normal two year maximum and comply with all other regulations and requirements. Category C staff are defined as individuals employed by an organisation other than a Higher Education Institution, whose contract or job role (as documented by their employer) includes the undertaking of research, and whose research is primarily focused in the submitting

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unit on the census date (31 October 2013) (Research Excellence Framework (REF) Assessment framework and guidance on submissions, July 2011).

## 8. Extensions to the registration period

- 8.1 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.
- 8.2 Appropriate evidence is required to support requests for extension.

### **Guidance note 8.1**

*Students should be made aware that taking up a full-time job will not be taken as evidence of "exceptional circumstances" justifying an extension of registration.*

## 9. Suspension of studies

- 9.1 Where the student is prevented, by ill-health or other cause, from making progress on the course, the registration may be suspended by the CRDC for a period of not less than a month and not more than eight months at a time. Appropriate evidence is required to support requests for suspension. Retrospective suspension of registration will not normally be granted for more than three months.
- 9.2 The total number of suspensions a student is permitted should total no more than one third of the maximum registration period. Students who are suspending studies for maternity or paternity leave are exempt from this regulation.
- 9.3 When returning from a period of suspension of studies, a student is required to meet with the supervisory team to agree targets and to establish whether previously achieved project approval remains valid.

## 10. Withdrawal

- 10.1 Where a student has discontinued the course, the withdrawal of registration must be notified to the CRDC.

## Progression

## 11. Monitoring

- 11.1 Students will be monitored in accordance with the regulations for PhD as set in Quality Handbook Section 11.

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## 12. Probation

- 12.1 A student who is deemed by the CRDC to be making unsatisfactory progress at monitoring can be placed on a three month probation.
- 12.2 During the probationary period, the supervisory team sets targets for the student, and reviews progress through regular supervisory meetings.
- 12.3 The student's progress will be reconsidered immediately after the probationary period. Where there is no improvement in progression, the CRDC may terminate the student's registration.
- 12.4 Where a student has more than one probationary period during the period of registration, this may be taken into consideration when reviewing a student's progress.

## Assessment

## 13. Requirements for the submission of work

- 13.1 The candidate's submission shall consist of an introductory chapter / critical study and full, high quality, copies of the actual publications / creative works (to be accompanied by translations if the original is not published in English, except for some disciplines such as Modern Languages). Additionally, the submission 'package' should include:
  - a. an abstract of approximately 300 words;
  - b. a list of the submitted publications / works with bibliographical details (and word count for each paper as appropriate);
  - c. application for the Award of PhD on the basis of published work (RDPW form);
  - d. a statement regarding joint authorships (corroborating the extent of the candidate's contribution) which, whenever possible, should contain signed statements from all co-authors indicating the candidate's contribution to the various stages of research and publication (e.g. design of the project, conduct of the research, analysis of results, preparation for publication in the case of standard works). A template for this statement can be obtained from the Doctoral School. Where it is not possible to supply such statements, candidates should indicate why that is so. It is anticipated that successful candidates will, in some of the works, have contributed significantly at all stages of research and publication.
- 13.2 The introductory chapter / critical study shall be between 10,000 – 20,000 words in length. The purpose of the introductory chapter is both to analyse the individual publications comprising the submission and to state their significance, but also to show the interrelationship between them as a coherent body of work. The discussion in the introductory chapter / critical study should normally: link submitted papers to theory; address adopted methodologies; review existing

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literature in the broader field; include review evidence, citations and status / reception of the works.

- 13.3 The body of work to be submitted should represent an equivalent amount to that considered of a traditional PhD in the appropriate discipline. The work submitted must be in the public domain.
- 13.4 The submission should be accompanied by the creative work itself, presented or having been presented in an appropriate public context, and/or a durable, visual record of it.

## Examiners

### 14. Examining teams

- 14.1 A candidate will be examined by two external examiners who shall not hold any appointment in the University or its Collaborative Centres, nor have been a co-author of any of the work on which the candidate's application is based. External examiners should have experience in the specialist area of the student's work and demonstrate a consistent and recent record of relevant publication.
- 14.2 The examining team must have knowledge and understanding of UK sector agreed reference points for the maintenance of academic standards and the assurance and enhancement of student learning opportunities, e.g. the QAA Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies (FHEQ) (November 2014).
- 14.3 The examining team as a whole should have substantial experience of successful supervision and examination of research degree students. Normally, the examining team as a whole should have completed an examination in the UK. If an examiner has no previous experience of examination in the UK, they should join an experienced team or be supported by an experienced independent chair.
- 14.4 The Director of Studies submits proposals for the student's examiners to the CRDC between three and six months prior to the expected date of submission of the thesis.
- 14.5 Upon approval of the examining team, the independent chair makes sure that the external examiners are fully briefed about the regulations under which the candidate is being examined and the assessment process as a whole.
- 14.6 The student's examination may not take place until the arrangements have been approved and a casual worker contract for the external examiner(s) has been issued by Corporate Human Resources.

### 15. Chair

- 15.1 The oral examination is chaired by an independent, senior, experienced academic of the University.
- 15.2 The chair is appointed at the same time as the rest of the examination team.

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- 15.3 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.
- 15.4 The chair 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.
- 15.5 The chair also monitors 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.

## 16. External examiners

- 16.1 The CRDC is guided by the following criteria when considering external examiner nominations.
  - a. External examiners should have experience in the specialist area of the student's thesis and demonstrate a consistent and extensive record of relevant publication.
  - b. External examiners should have substantial experience of successful supervision and examination of research degree students. If one examiner has no previous experience of examination in the UK, the expectation is that the other external examiner is experienced and the examining team will be supported by an experienced independent chair.
  - c. An external examiner must be fluent in English, and where appointed to examine a thesis written in languages other than English, must also be fluent in the relevant language(s).
- 16.2 The following **restrictions** on appointments apply.
  - a. 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.
  - b. A member of the Board of Governors or a committee of the University (or one of its collaborative partners) cannot be appointed as an external examiner. Additionally a current employee of the University or one of its collaborative partners (in the case of a collaborative PhD) cannot be appointed as an external examiner.
  - c. An external examiner should not be either a supervisor of another student or an external examiner on a taught course in the same University School.
  - d. A former NTU student or member of staff cannot be appointed as an external examiner unless a minimum of five years has elapsed.
  - e. No external examiner may be appointed if by doing so a reciprocal arrangement for external examining would arise involving cognate programmes of study at another institution.

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- f. No external examiner may be appointed 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.
  - g. The same external examiner should not be approved so frequently that his/her familiarity with the University might prejudice objective judgement.
- 16.3 The appropriate College will be responsible for determining and paying the fees and expenses of the external examiner(s). The responsible College will be that which employs or has most recently employed the student's Director of Studies.

## Determining awards

### 17. Examination arrangements

- 17.1 The examination for the PhD by Published Work will have two stages:
- a. preliminary assessment of the thesis;
  - b. its defence by oral examination.
- 17.2 Each examiner must read and examine the thesis, and submit an independent preliminary report before the oral examination is held.
- 17.3 In completing the preliminary report, each examiner should consider whether the thesis provisionally satisfies the requirements of the degree and, where possible, make an appropriate provisional recommendation subject to the outcome of the oral examination.
- 17.4 Preliminary report forms must be completed independently and without formal or informal consultation between examiners.
- 17.5 An examiner, having received the thesis and wishing to contact another examiner, the student or member of the supervisory team, should do so only through the Doctoral School Office.
- 17.6 An examiner may contact another examiner or member of the supervisory team for the purpose of making practical arrangements about the oral examination.

### 18. Alternative forms of examination

- 18.1 Where the student would be under serious disadvantage if required to undergo an oral examination for reasons of sickness or disability, an alternative form of examination may be approved by URDC. Such approval must not be given because the student's knowledge of the language in which the thesis is presented is inadequate.

### 19. Conduct of the oral examination

- 19.1 The oral examination will normally be held in the UK. Exceptionally, the examination may take place abroad or by video conference.

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- 19.2 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.
- 19.3 Recording of the oral examination is not permitted.
- 19.4 The student will take no part in the arrangement of the oral examination.
- 19.5 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.

## 20. Outcomes

- 20.1 Following the completion of the oral examination, the examiners may recommend that the candidate on a PhD by Published Work award:
- is awarded the degree;
  - is awarded the degree subject to minor amendments being made to the Introductory Chapter / Critical Study only (maximum 3 months to complete these amendments). Examiners shall indicate to the candidate in writing what amendments and corrections are required;
  - is permitted to re-submit for the degree by amending the Introductory Chapter / Critical Study only, and be re-examined with or without an oral examination (maximum 6 months permitted);
  - is permitted to re-submit for the degree by amending the Introductory Chapter / Critical Study and submitting further published work, and be re-examined, with or without an oral examination. In such cases a candidate may not resubmit for the award of PhD by Published Work until three years have elapsed from the date of the initial oral examination;
  - is not to be awarded the degree and is not permitted to be re-examined, in which case the candidate may be awarded the appropriate interim award where they meet the requirements of such an award. A candidate to whom the degree is not awarded may submit a fresh application at any time after three years have elapsed since the initial oral examination, provided that such an application includes additional work based upon further study and research.
- 20.2 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 URDC, acting on the advice of the CRDC, and under powers delegated by Academic Board, to which all decisions are reported.
- 20.3 Candidates should be allowed one further opportunity to satisfy the assessment criteria.
- 20.4 Recommendation (e) should only be made in exceptional circumstances.
- 20.5 Should the extent of the candidate's failure to achieve the PhD assessment criteria be such that the candidate would be unable to satisfy the assessment

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- 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.
- 20.6 Following the oral examination the examiners should, where they agree, submit a joint report and recommendation relating to the award of the degree.
- 20.7 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 is justified.
- 20.8 Where the examiners do not agree, separate reports and recommendations should be submitted.
- 20.9 The CRDC should consider the reports and recommendation(s) of the examiners in respect of the candidate and make a recommendation to the URDC. The power to confer the degree rests with the Academic Board of the University but is delegated to the URDC.
- 20.10 Where the examiners' recommendations are not unanimous, URDC may:
- accept a majority recommendation;
  - accept the recommendation of the external examiner; or
  - require the appointment of an additional external examiner.
- 20.11 Where an additional external examiner is appointed, they should prepare an independent preliminary report on the basis of the thesis and, if considered necessary, may conduct a further oral examination.
- 20.12 The additional examiner should not be informed of the individual recommendations of the other examiners.
- 20.13 On receipt of the report from the additional examiner, the URDC should complete the examination.
- 20.14 A further examination in addition to the oral examination may be requested by the original examiners. In such cases, the approval of the Chair of the URDC should be sought.
- 20.15 Where such an examination is arranged following an oral examination, it should 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.
- 20.16 Where the URDC decides that the degree is not to be 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 will be forwarded to the candidate.
- 20.17 The 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 be successful had the oral examination taken place.

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## 21. Re-examination

21.1 One re-examination is permitted subject to the following requirements:

- a. A candidate who fails to satisfy the examiners at the first examination, may, on the recommendation of the examiners and with the approval of the CRDC, be permitted to revise the assessment and be re-examined.
- b. The examiners provide the candidate with written guidance on the deficiencies of the first submission.
- c. The candidate must submit for re-examination within the period of one calendar year from the date of the most part of the first examination.

21.2 URDC may require that an additional external examiner be appointed for the re-examination.

21.3 There are four forms of re-examination as follows.

- a. Where the candidate's performance in the first oral examination 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 oral examination.
- b. Where the candidate's performance in the first oral examination was unsatisfactory and the thesis was also unsatisfactory, re-examination should include a re-examination of the thesis and an oral examination.
- c. Where on the first examination the candidate's thesis was satisfactory but the performance in the oral examination was not satisfactory the candidate should be re-examined by oral examination, without being requested to revise and re-submit the thesis.
- d. 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.

21.4 For re-examination, each examiner should read and examine the thesis and submit an independent preliminary report before any oral or alternative form of examination is held.

21.5 In completing the preliminary report, each examiner should consider whether the thesis provisionally satisfies the requirements of the degree and where possible make an appropriate provisional recommendation subject to the outcome of any oral examination.

21.6 The conduct of the oral re-examination will be the same as for the original examination, unless agreed otherwise by URDC.

21.7 Following the re-examination of the thesis, or following an oral or other examination, the examiners should, where they agree, submit, a joint report and recommendation relating to the award of the PhD by Published Work.

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- 21.8 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 is justified.
- 21.9 Where the examiners do not agree, separate reports and recommendations should be submitted.
- 21.10 Following the completion of the re-examination the examiners may recommend that:
- the candidate is awarded the degree;
  - the candidate is awarded the degree subject to minor amendments being made to the thesis;
  - the candidate is not awarded the degree and is not permitted to be re-examined, in which case the candidate may be awarded an MPhil.
- 21.11 Where the agreed recommendation of the examiners follows decision (b) above, they must together complete the Form of Guidance which will be transmitted to the candidate and the supervisory team.
- 21.12 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 warrant 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 examiners, they should indicate to the candidate in writing what amendments and corrections are required.
- 21.13 Where the examiners' recommendations are not unanimous, the URDC may:
- accept a majority recommendation (provided that the majority recommendation includes at least one external examiner);
  - accept the recommendation of the external examiner; or
  - require the appointment of an additional external examiner.
- 21.14 Where an additional external examiner is appointed, they should prepare an independent preliminary report on the basis of the assessment and, if considered necessary, may conduct a further oral examination. That examiner should not be informed of the individual recommendations of the other examiners. On receipt of the report from the additional examiner, the URDC will complete the examination.
- 21.15 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.
- 21.16 Where the Academic Board decides that the PhD is not awarded, the examiners should prepare an agreed statement of the deficiencies of the thesis and the reason for their recommendation, which is forwarded to the candidate.

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<b>Policy owner</b>
CADQ

<b>Change history</b>			
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Sept 2016	13.07.16 (URDC)	01.10.16	New Section
Sept 2017	12.09.17	01.10.17	Clarification on the deadline for submitting proposals for the viva examining team.
Sept 2018	12.09.18	01.10.18	None

<b>Equality Impact Assessment</b>		
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