



REGULATION C9: PROFESSIONAL DOCTORATES (2020/21)

2020/21 - formerly Regulation 2C: Courses Leading to the University Doctorate by Taught Study and Research

1. DEFINITIONS

The following definitions shall apply in respect of these regulations:

Assessment Criteria: The guidelines for marking approved from time to time by Senate which are to be interpreted by examiners in the context of the subject.

Award: Any formal qualification awarded by the University to an individual student.

Compulsory Module: A module which is compulsory for students registered on a specified course. Compulsory modules count towards a course's subject credit requirements.

Course: A collection of modules or units of study grouped under a specific title, the details of which have been approved by Senate as leading to the Doctorate.

Co-requisites: Modules which must be studied concurrently by students registered on a specified course.

Course Regulations: The regulations governing one or more specified courses.

Credit: In a modular course, the unit of academic value by which successful completion of a module contributes to a student's programme of study.

Elective Module: A module a student can study as part of their course, but which does not count towards their course's subject credit requirements.

Examination: A written assessment with fixed time-limit conducted under examination conditions in an examination hall designated by the Head of Student Records and Examinations for the purpose. Examinations which are not unseen may be either seen, where the student is advised of the content of the paper prior to the examination although the paper is written under normal examination conditions, or open-book for which students may bring into the examination specified material which can be highlighted or underlined but not annotated.

Examination Period: A period which is set aside for the conduct of examinations.

In-Course Assessment: Any assessment which is not an examination and which shall not exceed such maximum requirements as may be determined by Senate from time to time.

Level 8: Modules, the standard of whose learning outcomes is appropriate to a postgraduate award at Level 8 as defined in the National Qualifications Framework.

All designations refer to the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) as set out in the conversion table.

Module: A separate identifiable self-contained unit of a course of study which is at a specified level, is assessed and is given a credit value.

Module Assessment: The processes by which it is ascertained whether, and at what standard of performance, a module has been completed and the learning outcomes thereof achieved.

Module Catalogue: Documentation which describes the modules available to students.

Optional Module: A module selected from a group of available modules. Optional modules count towards a course's subject credit requirements.

Part 1: That part of the course which shall comprise modules or other designated units of study equivalent to at most 50% of the total assessment for the course.

Part 2: That part of the course which shall be a period of research leading to the submission of a thesis.

Precursor: A module, the study hours of which a student shall be required to have completed in order to proceed to a subsequent specified module or modules, but for which credit may not necessarily have been awarded.

Prerequisite: A module in which a student shall be required to have received credit in order to proceed to a subsequent specified module or modules.

Programme of Study: The specific modules or other units of study pursued by individual students within the context of an approved course.

Unit of Study: An element of Part 1 of a course which is not organised as a module and is designated in the course regulations.

Any reference in these regulations to Senate shall be deemed to include a reference to any committee of **Senate** designated by Senate for the purpose.

Any reference in these regulations to the **Director of Student and Academic Services, Head of Department/School**, or other named officer of the University shall be deemed to include a reference to any person designated by that officer for the purpose.

2. ADMISSION

2.1 Any student admitted to the Doctorate course under these regulations shall be required as a minimum to:

(a) either

- i. be a Level 7 graduate of Keele, of any other University approved for this purpose, or of the Council for National Academic Awards;
- ii. be a graduate of Keele, of the Council for National Academic Awards or any other University approved for this purpose, who also has appropriate professional experience;
- iii. be any other person whose qualifications and/or relevant professional experience are deemed by the Senate to be acceptable. Persons applying under this sub-clause may be required to take a qualifying examination; and

(b) meet any particular entry requirements for the course applied for, as specified in the relevant course regulations; and

(c) provide approved identification at enrolment; and

(d) provide original copies of academic transcripts or certificates used for admission if requested; and

(e) enrol in each session with the University by a date to be determined by the University Executive Committee; and

(f) provide a valid UK contact address at all times whilst enrolled as a student; and

(g) Students who do not abide by points (a)-(f) above will be withdrawn from the University

2.2 Head of Planning and Admissions, in consultation with the relevant Head(s) of Department/School, is authorised to offer applicants admission with advanced standing who already hold up to 120 credits at Level 7, provided always that no exemption shall be accorded for the Masters dissertation.

2.3 The University reserves the right to withdraw a student's registration if the student is found at a later stage to have submitted a fraudulent application to the University.

2.4 Applicants requiring student visa route sponsorship to study in the UK must not only meet the entrance criteria for the course but also the requirements, rules and responsibilities of the UK Home Office for sponsorship. Therefore, an offer of a place does not guarantee automatic student visa route sponsorship and is at the discretion of the University.

3. COURSE REGULATIONS

3.1 Where appropriate there shall be course regulations in a form approved by Senate.

3.2 The course regulations shall specify the designation of the award.

3.3 All such course regulations shall require the approval of Senate.

4. MODULES AND UNITS OF STUDY

4.1 The credit value for any module shall be determined by reference to a common currency whereby one unit of credit represents the typical outcome of 10 hours of study. All modules shall have a credit value which is a multiple of 5, and no module shall have a value of less than 10.

4.2 Where a module is available for more than one course, its status as a compulsory, optional or elective may vary between courses.

4.3 Precursors, prerequisites and/or co-requisites may be defined for any module or unit of study.

4.4 Any fieldwork or similar requirements shall form part or all of one or more specified modules or units of study subject to any timetabling or other constraints. Any fieldwork or similar activity may be scheduled either within the approved semester dates, or at other times.

5. STRUCTURE OF UNIVERSITY AWARDS

5.1 A course leading to the award of the Doctorate shall comprise both a 'Part 1' and 'Part 2' as defined in section 1 above.

5.2 Part I shall consist of modules or units of study to the equivalent of not more than 50% of the total assessment for the award.

5.3 Part II shall consist of a thesis which shall contribute no less than 50% of the total assessment for the award.

5.4 Course regulations may permit a student who has successfully completed Part I to submit a dissertation of 15000 to 20000 words with a view to being examined for the award of MRes.

6. RESPONSIBILITIES OF SUPERVISORS

6.1 The responsibilities and duties of supervisors shall be prescribed by Senate from time to time.

7. PROGRAMME OF STUDY

7.1 All students shall be required to register for their programmes of study for the coming academic session by such a date as shall be determined by the Head of Student Records and Examinations.

7.2 No student shall undertake additional modules or other units of study outside of their approved programme of study without the prior approval of the Head of Student Records and Examinations.

8. TIME-LIMIT

8.1 A thesis for a higher degree or by taught study or research must normally be submitted no later than the following periods after initial registration:

(a) Level 7: 24 months full-time, 48 months part-time

(b) Level 8: 48 months full-time, 96 months part-time

8.2 In case of illness or other special circumstance, the Senate may at its discretion, on receipt of an application from the relevant Postgraduate Committee justifying the request, extend the period within which a thesis must be submitted. In considering any such case the Senate may take account of any conditions of sponsorship with which the student is required to comply. Any extension will not normally exceed one calendar year.

It should be noted that a return to restricted timescales will require a return to the policy where if a student has a period of approved leave of absence, this will automatically extend the final date for submission by an equivalent period.

9. ASSESSMENT

Part 1 (Modular courses)

9.1 All modules shall be assessed in accordance with the University's agreed assessment criteria, either by:

- (a) in-course assessment conducted during the semester(s) in which the module(s) is/are completed; or
- (b) examination during an examination period; or
- (c) a combination of both 9.1.a and 9.1.b above.

9.2 The method of assessment for each module, including the weighting for each element of the assessment, shall be notified to students.

9.3 The minimum mark for a pass in each module shall be 50%. Where a student satisfies the examiners in a module, he/she shall be awarded the appropriate credits.

9.4 A student who passes a module in which they have has previously failed, shall be credited with the minimum mark for a pass irrespective of the actual mark achieved.

9.5 The assessment of all modules shall be University assessments.

9.6 A student who has been awarded credit in a module shall not be permitted to be reassessed in that module with a view to improving their mark, save under the provisions of paragraph 13.1.b below.

Part 1 (Non-modular courses)

9.7 All assessments shall be undertaken in accordance with the University's agreed marking criteria.

9.8 The assessment methods for individual or groups of units of study shall be defined in the course regulations. The principles set out in paragraphs 9.1 to 9.6 above shall apply.

Part 2

9.9 A student is required to submit a thesis, the minimum and maximum lengths of which shall be defined in the course regulations but shall be in the range 50,000 60,000 words.

9.10 All students shall be required to attend an oral examination.

9.11 The thesis must be written in English except that in language subjects it may, at the discretion of the supervisor, be in the language concerned.

9.12 The thesis must be the student's own account of their research and must be accompanied by such declaration to this effect as Senate may require. Any breach of this regulation may result in an allegation of academic misconduct under the terms of Regulation D1 Assessment.

9.13 Every copy of a thesis submitted must be accompanied by an abstract not exceeding 300 words.

9.14 The greater portion of the thesis must have been undertaken subsequent to the initial registration of the student. Any work undertaken earlier must be so acknowledged.

9.15 Students shall submit the thesis in such form and such manner as shall be determined by Senate from time to time.

9.16 Any thesis previously submitted to Keele or any other University may not normally be resubmitted, except as part of re-examination. However, a student may incorporate in a thesis work which has already been part of a thesis submitted for a higher degree in this or any other University, provided that this is clearly indicated in the thesis and on the form of entry and in the thesis.

9.17 Before the degree is conferred the candidate must lodge a copy of the thesis with the University Library, bound in a manner prescribed by the Library, which will be the property of the University.

10. APPROPRIATE ENGAGEMENT WITH STUDIES AND ASSESSMENTS

10.1 Any student failing to engage appropriately with their studies within two weeks of a final academic warning being issued may be withdrawn from the University by the Director of Student and Academic Services or nominee at any stage in the programme. Failure to engage appropriately with studies shall include non-attendance at compulsory learning and teaching events and/or failure to submit assessments without prior consent.

10.2 Any student failing to engage appropriately with assessments, without prior consent, may be withdrawn from the University by the Director of Student and Academic Services or nominee within 2 weeks of the formal communication of each semester's module results to students. A student will be deemed to have failed to engage with their assessments if they obtain a mark of 10 or below in 50% or more of the modules they have studied in the most recent semester.

10.3 Any student who is withdrawn as a result of 10.1 or 10.2 above will forfeit their entitlement to undertake any remaining assessment opportunities upon their failed modules, including assessment opportunities granted as a result of exceptional circumstances.

11. STUDENT HEALTH AND WELLBEING

11.1 Students must be in an adequate state of physical and mental health to enable them to continue with their studies. Information on Leave of Absence, which may be an option for those needing a break from their studies to support their health and wellbeing, is included in Regulation B4 Fitness to Study.

12. DETERMINATION OF RESULTS

12.1 There shall be a Board of Examiners for each course approved by Senate which shall determine and make recommendations to Senate on:

- (a) the student's mark for each module or unit of study; and that
- (b) the student be permitted to proceed from Part I to Part II of the course; or

- (c) the student not be permitted to proceed from Part I to Part II of the course; or
- (d) the student be awarded the Doctorate; or
- (e) the student not be awarded the Doctorate; or
- (f) the student, having pursued the option available under the provisions of paragraph 5.4 above, be awarded the degree of MRes; or
- (g) the student be required to withdraw from the University.

12.2 No student shall be permitted to proceed from Part I to Part II unless they have achieved all required credits or passed all units of study and/or has satisfied such other criteria as may be required by the course regulations.

12.3 No student shall be permitted to continue to pursue a programme of study where it would be impossible for them to complete the course and do so within the approved time-limit.

12.4 A student who has failed one or more modules or units of study on two occasions shall be required to withdraw from the course.

13. ACTION TO BE TAKEN IN RESPECT OF ACADEMIC FAILURE BY STUDENTS

13.1 Where the student has not been required to withdraw from the University, the relevant Board of Examiners shall determine whether:

- (a) the student shall be permitted to be re-assessed once only in the failed module(s) or units of study, either:
 - i. at the next examination period; or
 - ii. with or without attendance on the module(s) or unit(s) of study at the next opportunity; and/or
- (b) in the case of failure in an option module(s) or unit(s) of study, the student shall be permitted to pursue an alternative option(s) with attendance during the following session or calendar year but not subject to the limitation imposed by paragraph 9.4 above; or
- (c) the award of the Doctorate be made once revisions have been made to the thesis to the satisfaction of the Board; or
- (d) although the required standard for the Doctorate has not been met, the submission is of sufficient merit to justify the student being permitted to re-present the thesis and to submit to a further oral examination within two years from the date of the decision at the relevant meeting of Senate.

13.2 A student who is permitted to be re-assessed in any form of in-course assessment other than the thesis shall not be permitted to re-submit modified versions of their original work, but shall be required to submit for assessment a new work from that which originally failed to satisfy the examiners.

13.3 Where a student who has been examined under the provisions of paragraph 5.4 above fails to satisfy the examiners in the dissertation, the examiners shall follow the provisions available for the retrieval of the failure under Regulation C7 Taught Postgraduate Degrees.

14. AWARD

14.1 A student shall be eligible for the award of the Doctorate who has successfully completed both Parts I and II of the course.

14.2 Neither the Doctorate nor an MRes awarded under the provisions of paragraphs 5.4 above shall be graded.

14.3 Posthumous

(a) A postgraduate research degree may be conferred posthumously where the death of a candidate occurs prior to their completion of the requirements for their award. A posthumous award may be accepted on the candidate's behalf by a parent, spouse or other appropriate individual. Where a candidate's thesis has been submitted for examination but not yet examined, examiners are to be appointed in the usual way and shall submit reports to the Research Degrees Committee for consideration.

(b) If the death of a candidate occurs before submission of their thesis for examination, the Research Degrees Committee shall consider available evidence of the candidate's ability. A sufficient amount of the research must have been completed in order to properly determine that the required standard has been achieved and the supervisor shall submit a written statement to support the recommendation.

14.4 Aegrotat

(a) An aegrotat award for incomplete study may be conferred in exceptional circumstances, such as in cases where a candidate's ability to complete an award is permanently compromised by severe illness. All research awards are available as aegrotat awards with the exception of degrees which are subject to fitness to practice requirements and, where a programme of study has professional body requirements, accreditation will not take place. As an aegrotat award is a final exit award it must be considered to be the conclusion of a candidate's programme of study. Before a recommendation for an aegrotat award is submitted, the candidate

must have indicated that they are willing to accept the award and they understand that this involves waiving the right to be reassessed.

(b) Where a candidate's thesis has been submitted for examination but not yet examined, examiners are to be appointed in the usual way and shall submit reports to the Research Degrees Committee for consideration.

(c) Where submission of the thesis for examination has not taken place, the Research Degrees Committee shall consider available evidence of the candidate's ability. A sufficient amount of the research must have been completed in order to properly determine that the required standard has been achieved and the supervisor shall submit a written statement to support the recommendation.

15. STRUCTURE AND CONTENT OF RE-ASSESSMENTS

15.1 Where a student is required to be re-assessed for one or more modules or units of study prior to the start of the following academic year, the re-assessment shall, unless the relevant Board of Examiners decides that this is not practical, be of the same structure and be based upon the same syllabus as the assessment at the time of the initial failure, but need not include those elements of assessment in which the student has already satisfied the examiners.

15.2 Where a student is permitted to be re-assessed in one or more failed modules or units of study without attendance on the module(s) or unit(s) of study, the following arrangements shall apply:

(a) for re-assessment within one year of the initial failure, the re-assessment shall, unless the relevant Board of Examiners decides that this is not practical, be of the same structure and be based upon the same syllabus as the assessment at the time of the initial failure;

(b) for re-assessment beyond one year of the initial failure, where the structure of the assessment is different from that at the time of the initial failure and/or the re-assessment is to be based upon a different syllabus, the Head of Department/School concerned shall make arrangements for the student to be:

- i. informed of changes in the structure of the assessment and the syllabus content; and
- ii. offered, at an appropriate charge, the opportunity of attending relevant classes and/or receiving other appropriate academic assistance.