Education Committee

Approved at the meeting of Graduate Panel 22.06.12 and subsequent Chair’s action

Regulations for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, § 7 Examination of students for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Additional detail to regulations concerning minor and major changes to theses

With effect from October 2013

In Examination Regulations, 2012, delete p. 840, l. 25 – p. 843, l. 4 and insert:

‘6. Having completed the examination of a candidate for the first time, the examiners may make any one of recommendations (i), (ii) or (iv) below only. Having completed the examination of a candidate who has revised and re-submitted his or her thesis, the examiners may make any one of recommendations (i)-(vi). The recommendations are:

(i) that the board should grant the candidate leave to supplicate for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy. In making this recommendation, the examiners must include in their report statements that:

1. the student possesses a good general knowledge of the particular field of learning within which the subject of the thesis falls;

2. the student has made a significant and substantial contribution in the particular field of learning within which the subject of the thesis falls;

3. the thesis is presented in a lucid and scholarly manner;

4. in their opinion the thesis merits the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy;

5. the student has presented a satisfactory abstract of the thesis.

Examiners shall bear in mind that their judgement of the substantial significance of the work should take into account what may reasonably be expected of a capable and diligent student after three or at most four years of full-time study in the case of
a full-time student, or eight years in the case of a part-time student.

(i) (a) Minor corrections

If the examiners are satisfied that the candidate's thesis is of sufficient merit to qualify for the degree but consider, nevertheless, that before the thesis is deposited the candidate should make minor corrections (which are not sufficiently substantial to justify reference back for re-examination and which should be capable of completion within one month), they must require the candidate to correct the thesis to their satisfaction before they submit their report. If the candidate has not completed these corrections within one calendar month of the date of receipt of the list of minor corrections from the examiners, his or her name shall be removed by the Registrar from the Register of Students for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, provided that the board may, on good cause shown by the candidate, grant an extension of time of one further calendar month in which the candidate may fulfil this requirement before the removal of his or her name from the Register. No subsequent extension shall be granted, but it shall be open to a candidate who has failed to fulfil this requirement within those one or two months in total, as the case may be, to apply to the board for reinstatement as a Student for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, with the support of his or her society and supervisor, upon submission to the Registrar of a copy of his or her thesis incorporating the required corrections, and upon payment of such reinstatement fee as may from time to time be prescribed by Council by decree. Permission to supplicate shall not be granted until this fee has been paid;

(i) (b) Major corrections

If the examiners are satisfied that the candidate's thesis is of sufficient potential merit to qualify for the degree but consider, nevertheless, that before the thesis is deposited the candidate should make major corrections (which are not sufficiently substantial to justify reference back for re-examination and which should be capable of completion within six months), they should report this preliminary recommendation to the board with a description of the major corrections which they require the candidate to make before they confirm their recommendation.

Where the examiners make this recommendation, and the board, considering the extent and nature of the major corrections, takes the view that the recommendation ought to be reference of the thesis back to the candidate in order that he or she may revise it for re-examination, the board may, exceptionally, ask the examiners to review their recommendation.

If the candidate has not completed these corrections within six calendar months of the date of receipt of the list of major corrections from the examiners, his or her name shall be removed by the Registrar from the Register of Students for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy. No extension shall be granted, but it shall be open to a candidate who has failed to fulfil this requirement within those six months, to apply to the board for reinstatement as a Student for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, with the support of his or her society and supervisor, upon submission to the Registrar of a copy of his or her thesis incorporating the required corrections, and upon payment of such reinstatement fee as may from time to time be prescribed by Council by decree. Permission to supplicate shall not be granted until this fee has been paid.

Where a recommendation of approval subject to major corrections has been made,
the examiners, on receipt of the corrected thesis on the first occasion, may conclude and report one of the following:

(a) the original recommendation is now fully substantiated;

(b) the work as submitted still requires minor corrections prior to confirmation of the original recommendation and a further one month may be allowed for this from that date;

(c) the work as now submitted still requires major corrections prior to confirmation of the original recommendation and a further six months may be allowed for this from that date.

Recommendation (a) or (b) may be made without a further oral examination on condition that both examiners have reviewed and approved the major corrections. A further oral examination must be held if either of the examiners requires it or if the recommendation is likely to be (c).

In the exceptional instance where (c) applied and the outcome of the second and final submission of corrections still remained unsatisfactory, the examiners will amend their original recommendation to (ii) below.

(ii) that the board should offer the candidate a choice between (a) reference of the thesis back to him or her in order that he or she may revise it for re-examination for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, and (b) leave to supplicate for the Degree of Master of Letters or of Master of Science, as appropriate, on the basis that the thesis has not reached the standard required for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy but has nevertheless reached that required for the Degree of Master of Letters or of Master of Science. If the board adopts this recommendation, and the student chooses to revise the thesis for re-examination for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, the student shall retain the status and obligations of a Student for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy and shall be permitted to apply again for the appointment of examiners, in accordance with the procedure laid down in this subsection, not later than the sixth term after that in which the board gave permission so to reapply. If such permission shall have been given by a board during a vacation, it shall be deemed to have been given in the term preceding that vacation;

(iii) that the board should refer the student's thesis back in order that he or she may present it for re-examination for the Degree of Master of Letters or of Master of Science only. If the board adopts the recommendation the student shall be transferred forthwith to the status of Student for the Degree of Master of Letters or Student for the Degree of Master of Science as the case may be, and shall be permitted to apply for permission to supplicate for the Degree of Master of Letters or Master of Science in accordance with the provisions of the appropriate regulation. If such permission shall have been given by a board during a vacation, it shall be deemed to have been given in the term preceding that vacation. The word limit for a thesis resubmitted under this provision shall be that specified by the DPhil regulations under which it was originally submitted;

(iv) that the board should refer the student's thesis back in order that he or she may present it for re-examination either under (ii) above for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy or, if the student chooses, under (iii) above for the Degree of Master of Letters or of Master of Science only. The board shall adopt such a recommendation only if it is fully satisfied that the thesis as it stands is not of the standard required for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, nor for the Degree of Master of Letters or of
Master of Science as the case may be, but that the candidate could reach the standard required for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy. If such permission shall have been given by a board during a vacation, it shall be deemed to have been given in the term preceding that vacation;

(v) that the thesis has not reached the standard required for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy but has nevertheless reached that required of the Degree of Master of Letters or of Master of Science, and that the candidate may be granted leave to supplicate for one of the latter degrees on the basis of the thesis as it stands;

(vi) that the student's application for leave to supplicate should be refused.’