

**Education Committee**

**Approved at the meeting of Education Committee of 16 June 2017**

**General Regulations for Higher Doctorates**

**Brief note about nature of change:** New regulations for higher doctorates following their review by Education Committee

**Effective date**

From MT18

**Location of change**

In *Examination Regulations 2017* after the Regulations for the Doctor of Engineering,  
<http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/examregs/2017-18/doctofengi/>

Insert text as follows:

**General regulations for the Higher Doctorates**

*Awards*

1. The Higher Doctorates shall be the Doctor of Civil Law, Doctor of Divinity, Doctor of Letters, Doctor of Music, and the Doctor of Science.

*Eligibility*

2. Any person who is a current member of Congregation or holds a degree of the University may apply for leave to supplicate for one of the higher doctorates. Candidates from the University of Cambridge or the University of Dublin who have been incorporated in this University are precluded from supplicating for one of the higher doctorates, unless they are also a current member of Congregation or hold a degree of the University.

*Application*

3. A candidate will make an initial application to the relevant Divisional Board or other responsible body as specified in the information published by the University by the

published deadline. The initial application will consist of the materials and application fee specified in the information published by the University. Initial applications will be subject to a screening process to establish whether there is a *prima facie* case for the candidate to be considered for the degree. The nature of the screening process to be followed shall be published by the relevant responsible body. Should a responsible body conclude that there is not a *prima facie* case for consideration the candidate will be notified, a proportion of their application fee as specified in information published by the University shall be returned to them and they will not be invited to make a full application. There is no right of appeal in relation to a screening decision; unsuccessful candidates may re-apply at the next available opportunity.

4. If a responsible body concludes that there is a *prima facie* case for consideration, the candidate will be invited to make a full application. The format required of the full application will be as published by the relevant responsible body and will consist of published papers, books or other materials as specified in the information published by the University. At least one year must have elapsed between the publication of any published paper or book and its submission as evidence in support of an application. For work produced in collaboration, a candidate must state in respect of each item the extent of his own contribution. Any work previously submitted for an award of this or any other institution shall be ineligible for consideration in support of an application for a higher doctorate.

#### *Judgement*

5. The responsible body shall appoint two judges to consider the evidence submitted by the candidate. For applications from current members of Congregation both judges shall be external to the University. For other applications one internal and one external judge may be appointed, or two external judges if an internal judge is not available.

6. If a responsible body is not able to engage judges within a reasonable period of time, they may decline to consider the full application. In this case the candidate shall be refunded the full application fee.

7. For the higher doctorates, excluding the Doctor of Music, the appointed judges shall state whether the evidence submitted demonstrates excellence in academic scholarship and is:

- (a) of the absolute highest quality;
- (b) substantial in scale and in the contribution it has made to knowledge;
- (c) sustained over time and showing current and continued contribution to scholarship;
- (d) authoritative, being able to demonstrate impact on the work of others;
- (e) of global reach and international importance within the field; and
- (f) of such breadth or covering such branches of knowledge appropriate to the field and in line with disciplinary norms and expectations.

8. For the Doctor of Music, the appointed judges shall state whether the evidence submitted demonstrates originality and an outstanding level of technical and aesthetic distinction in music composition and:

- (a) is of the highest quality;
- (b) demonstrates an ability to handle varied musical forces and large-scale structures;
- (c) is substantial in scale, showing current and continued contribution to the artistic, intellectual and cultural environment over a substantial period of time;
- (d) demonstrates evidence of the communication of ideas and the dissemination of work in the global community;
- (e) for acoustic instrumental music, there should be evidence of a range of ambitious structural challenges across varied genres;
- (f) for mixed media, studio, ethnic or community approaches, the work should be of comparable quality in its field.

9. Each judge shall submit an independent report for consideration by the responsible body. Should the two judges diverge in their conclusions as to whether the evidence submitted meets the criteria for the award, the responsible body shall seek the opinion of a third judge, who shall be external to the University.

#### *Outcome*

10. If the responsible body approves the evidence as of sufficient merit for the degree, it shall give leave to the candidate to supplicate for the degree, and shall notify its decision in the University Gazette. One copy of each of the papers and books submitted as evidence shall remain in the possession of the University for deposit in the Bodleian Library, unless the Library already possesses a copy.

11. An unsuccessful candidate may appeal against the decision of the responsible body to Education Committee if they believe there was a procedural irregularity in the decision-making process.

12. Unsuccessful candidates may re-apply at the next available opportunity.

#### **Explanatory Notes**

Education Committee carried out a review of higher doctorates in 2016. As a result of the review, a number reforms to the regulation and administration of higher doctorates were agreed. With Education Committee's approval, the existing regulations were suspended in Trinity term 2016 while these changes were implemented. New regulations for the degrees were approved by Education Committee in Trinity term 2017, to come into effect from Michaelmas term 2018. The regulations for all higher doctorates are being combined into a single set of regulations (as published in this notice). Further information and guidance regarding the application process is available at <https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/higher-doctorates>.