

Research Degrees Panel of Education Committee

Approved at the meeting of Research Degrees Panel on 11 June 2019

General Regulations for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Brief note about nature of change: introduction of time limit for reinstatement

Location of change

In *Examination Regulations 2018*, www.admin.ox.ac.uk/examregs/2018-19/grftdodoctofphil/ as amended by the Gazette notice of 25 July 2019.

Effective date

From MT 2019

Detail of change

Amend section 2 (cit. ref. 1.5-1.9) and section 7 (cit. ref. 1.69-1.95) as indicated, new text underlined, deleted text struck through.

§2. Status of Student for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

1. The following may be admitted to the status of Student for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy:

- (i) a member of the University who, having held the status of Probationer Research Student under the provisions of the appropriate regulation, or having held the status of student for another higher degree within the University, or having completed the requirements for another higher degree within the University, has successfully completed the relevant qualifying test for entry to D.Phil. status prescribed in §3 of this section;
- (ii) a member of the University who has been given leave to supplicate for the Degree of Master or Bachelor of Philosophy, or of Master of Science by Research, or of Master of Letters, provided that the subject of the thesis offered by the candidate in the examination for that degree shall be in the broad field of research proposed for the D.Phil.

2. It shall be the duty of the Registrar to keep a Register of those admitted to the status of Student for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

3. A board may grant a student suspension from the Register or deprive a student of his or her ~~their~~ status; and in such cases it shall at all times follow procedures determined by the Education Committee by regulation. ~~A board may also reinstate a student to the Register, provided that the number of terms a student has spent with the status of Student for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy shall not have exceeded eighteen in all in the case of a full-time student, or twenty-seven terms in the case of a part-time student.~~

4. It shall be open to a candidate whose name has been removed from the Register of Students to apply to the Board for reinstatement as a Student for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The application should have the support of their society and supervisor, and such reinstatement fee as may from time to time be prescribed by Council should be paid. Permission for reinstatement to the Register of Students may be granted by the Board provided that:

(i) no more than twenty-four months have passed since the student's name was removed from the Register; and

(ii) the number of terms the candidate spent with the status of Student for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy did not exceed eighteen terms in the case of a full-time student, or twenty-seven terms in the case of a part-time student. (This limit includes any time spent with the status of Probationer Research Student or other relevant status before admission to the status of Student for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy.)

5. Exceptionally, a candidate who is not able to apply for reinstatement within the provisions above may make an application to Council's Education Committee for reinstatement to the Register of Students. Such candidates must meet the requirements for reinstatement by the Board and in addition provide a statement explaining why it is reasonable for Education Committee to permit their reinstatement and outlining the circumstances that have prevented earlier submission. For such applications, Education Committee will consider the length of time since the candidate's name was on the Register of Students, the seriousness of the causes for the delay, and the views of the candidate's department/faculty, supervisor and college.

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§7. Examination of Students for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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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 their 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~~ their 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~~ their 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;~~

No subsequent extension shall be granted, but it shall be open to a candidate whose name has been removed from the Register of Students to apply to the Board for reinstatement as a Student for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The application should have the support of their society and supervisor, a copy of their thesis incorporating the required corrections should have been submitted to the relevant Board, and such reinstatement fee as may from time to time be prescribed by Council should have been paid. Leave to supplicate shall not be granted until this fee has been paid.

Permission for reinstatement to the Register of Students may be granted by the Board

within six months of the date the student was notified of the outcome of their examination.

Exceptionally, a candidate who is not able to apply for reinstatement within that timeframe may make an application to Council's Education Committee for reinstatement to the Register of Students. Such candidates must meet the requirements for reinstatement by the Board and in addition must provide a statement explaining why it is reasonable for Education Committee to permit their reinstatement and outlining the circumstances that have prevented earlier submission. For such applications, Education Committee will consider the length of time since the student was last examined, the seriousness of the causes for the delay, and the views of the student's department/faculty, supervisor and college. Education Committee will not normally consider applications if sixty months or more have elapsed since the notification of the outcome of the examination.

(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~~ the candidate 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~~ their 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 up to three further calendar months in which the candidate may fulfil this requirement before the removal of ~~his or her~~ their 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 six or nine months in total, 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.~~

No subsequent extension shall be granted, but it shall be open to a candidate whose name has been removed from the Register of Students to apply to the Board for reinstatement as a Student for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The application

should have the support of their society and supervisor, a copy of their thesis incorporating the required corrections should have been submitted to the relevant Board along with a separate report indicating the specific changes made, and such reinstatement fee as may from time to time be prescribed by Council should have been paid. Leave to supplicate shall not be granted until this fee has been paid.

Permission for reinstatement to the Register of Students may be granted by the Board within twelve months of the date the student was notified of the outcome of their examination.

Exceptionally, a candidate who is not able to apply for reinstatement within that timeframe may make an application to Council's Education Committee for reinstatement to the Register of Students. Such candidates must meet the requirements for reinstatement by the Board and in addition must provide a statement explaining why it is reasonable for Education Committee to permit their reinstatement and outlining the circumstances that have prevented earlier submission. For such applications, Education Committee will consider the length of time since the student was last examined, the seriousness of the causes for the delay, and the views of the student's department/faculty, supervisor and college. Education Committee will not normally consider applications if sixty months or more have elapsed since the notification of the outcome of the examination.

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~~ the candidate in order that ~~he or she~~ they 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.

(a) 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 sub-section, 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. Accompanying the revised thesis at re-submission should be a separate report indicating the specific changes made. For students in the Humanities, Medical Sciences and Social Sciences Divisions and the Department for Continuing Education, the word limit for the accompanying report shall be 1,000 words; for students in the Mathematical, Physical and Life Sciences Division, the word limit shall be 2,000 words;_

If the student is unable to apply again for the appointment of examiners within six terms, no subsequent extension shall be granted, but it shall be open to a candidate whose name has been removed from the Register of Students to apply to the Board for reinstatement as a Student for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The application should have the support of their society and supervisor, a copy of their thesis incorporating the required changes should have been submitted to the relevant Board along with a separate report indicating the specific changes made, and such reinstatement fee as may from time to time be prescribed by Council should have been paid. Leave to supplicate shall not be granted until this fee has been paid.

Permission for reinstatement to the Register of Students may be granted by the Board within twenty-four months of the date the student was notified of the outcome of their examination.

Exceptionally, a candidate who is not able to apply for reinstatement within that timeframe may make an application to Council's Education Committee for reinstatement to the Register of Students. Such candidates must meet the requirements for reinstatement by the Board and in addition must provide a statement explaining why it is reasonable for Education Committee to permit their reinstatement and outlining the circumstances that have prevented earlier submission. For such applications, Education Committee will consider the length of time since the student was last examined, the seriousness of the causes for the delay, and the views of the student's department/faculty, supervisor and college. Education Committee will not normally consider applications if sixty months or more have elapsed since the notification of the outcome of the examination:

(b) If the board adopts this recommendation and the student chooses leave to supplicate for the Degree of Master of Letters or Master of Science by Research, the examiners may still determine that before the thesis is deposited the candidate should make minor corrections in accordance with the regulations under (i) above.

(iii) that the board should refer the student's thesis back in order that ~~he or she~~ the student may present it for re-examination for the Degree of Master of Letters or of Master of Science, as determined by the examiners (if appropriate), 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~~ the student 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; the examiners may still determine that before the thesis is deposited the candidate should make minor corrections in accordance with the regulations under (i) above.

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

Explanatory Notes

At its meeting in Trinity term 2019, Research Degrees Panel agreed that there should be a time limit for boards to consider requests for reinstatement to a previously held research degree status. Requests received after the time limit will be considered by Education Committee. These regulation changes bring into effect that decision.