

# **Regulations for the Awards of the University's Degrees of Master of Philosophy and Doctor of Philosophy**

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## **MPhil and PhD**

**Research Degrees Committee**

Revised September 2017

(for students commencing study during the 2017-18 academic year)

**Further information and advice on any aspect of these regulations is available from  
Student Systems and Records (Research Degrees), Registry Services,  
exts. 2045/4047/4053.**

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## **R1 Principles**

### **R1.1 Award titles**

Sheffield Hallam University ('the University') will award the degrees of Master of Philosophy (MPhil) and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) to enrolled/registered candidates who successfully complete approved programmes of supervised research.

### **R1.2 Comparability of academic standards**

The University will ensure that its research degrees are comparable in standard with those conferred throughout higher education in the United Kingdom.

### **R1.3 General requirements for research degree study**

Programmes of research may be proposed in any field of study provided that:

- a) candidates can be expected to meet the University's academic standards;
- b) candidates can be trained and supported within an environment which is supportive of research;
- c) the proposed programme is capable of leading to scholarly research and to its presentation for assessment by appropriate examiners in the form of a written thesis, which may be supplemented by material in other than written form. All proposed research programmes will be considered for approval on their academic merits and without reference to the concerns or interests of any associated funding body.

### **R1.4 MPhil award objectives**

The MPhil will be awarded to a candidate who, having critically investigated and evaluated an approved topic and demonstrated an understanding of research methods appropriate to the chosen field, has presented and defended a thesis by oral examination to the satisfaction of the examiners.

### **R1.5 PhD award objectives**

The PhD will be awarded to a candidate who, having critically investigated and evaluated an approved topic, resulting in an independent and original contribution to knowledge, and demonstrated an understanding of research methods appropriate to the chosen field, has presented and defended a thesis by oral examination to the satisfaction of the examiners.

### **R1.6 Research collaboration**

The University will encourage co-operation with other organisations for the purposes of research leading to research degree awards. Such co-operation may be proposed for one or more of the following reasons:

- a) to encourage user-focused research;
- b) to extend the candidate's own experience;
- c) to provide a wider range of supervisory or advisory experience and expertise to assist the development of the research programme;
- d) to be mutually beneficial;
- e) where appropriate, to enable the candidate to become a member of a research community.

Co-operation may be formalised with one or more bodies external to the University, referred to as Collaborating Organisations. Formal collaboration will normally involve essential access by the candidate to one or more of the following categories of resource at the Collaborating Organisation, without which the research project would not be viable:

- Equipment
- Facilities
- Premises
- Staff
- Data

If formal collaboration occurs, the name(s) of the Collaborating Organisation(s) will appear on the candidate's thesis and degree certificate (see Section R12).

#### R1.7 Research Degrees Committee

The implementation and development of these regulations and their associated procedures will be overseen by a University Research Degrees Committee (RDC) established within the University's academic governance structure (see Appendix B for the Committee's Terms of Reference).

#### R1.8 Review and Development of regulations

These regulations will be subject to regular review. They will seek to embody nationally-recognised good practice as recommended in the policies, codes and regulations of key external agencies such as the Quality Assurance Agency, funding councils, research councils etc.

### **R2 The admission of students**

#### R2.1 Types of degree and study patterns

An applicant may seek admission to study for the University's degrees of MPhil or PhD in full-time or part-time mode. Students undertaking 'Split PhD' study will also either study on a full-time or part-time basis (see R2.6 below).

Students studying for PhD will undertake an interim assessment process as mandatory called Confirmation of PhD according to the timescales set out in R8.1 and R8.2.

## R2.2 General entry requirements

An applicant for MPhil or PhD will normally be expected to hold:

- a) an appropriate Masters' Degree; or
- b) a first or upper second class honours degree of a university or any other institution of higher education in the United Kingdom with degree-awarding powers, or a qualification which is regarded by the University as equivalent to such an honours degree.

## R2.3 Non-standard entry qualifications

An applicant holding qualifications other than those in paragraph R2.2 will be considered on his/her merits and in relation to the nature and scope of the proposed research programme.

In considering an applicant in this category, the University will look for evidence of the applicant's ability and background knowledge in relation to the proposed research. Sources of such evidence may include:

- a) Professional experience, publications, written reports or other appropriate evidence of accomplishment;
- b) (if necessary), the University may require an applicant to pass an externally assessed qualifying examination at final year honours degree level before being admitted;
- c) confidential statements attesting to the applicant's academic attainment and fitness for research provided by referees who should not be proposed as supervisors or advisers for the project.

## R2.4 Management of the selection process

The process of selecting appropriately qualified and/or experienced applicants for admission to a research degree will be managed within the appropriate Faculty. The process will involve the judgement of more than one member of University academic staff with relevant expertise and experience. It will result in a decision to admit/not admit in the light of the following key factors:

- a) the quality of the applicant and his/her ability to achieve the standard of the appropriate degree within the maximum permissible timescales (see R5.1);
- b) the viability of the proposed research programme and its suitability for research degree study;
- c) the availability of supervisors with appropriate expertise, experience of supervision and time to supervise;
- d) the availability of sufficient necessary supporting resources, including as appropriate:

- funding provided by the applicant and/or sponsoring organisation(s)
  - time which the applicant is able to devote to the research programme
  - office space and equipment (including specialist equipment)
  - technical resources such as laboratories, workshops, consumables etc.
  - computing and library/information resources
- e) an assessment, in the light of the above factors, of the risk of failure to complete the research programme within the maximum permissible timescale to the standard required, including:
- the likelihood of the risk
  - the likely impact on the research programme
  - possible countermeasures/contingencies to minimise risk

## R2.5 English Language Competence

As part of the admissions process, the University must satisfy itself that the applicant already has sufficient command of the English language to satisfactorily complete the programme of work and to prepare and defend a thesis in English. Where English is not the applicant's first language, the applicant must show evidence of English language ability in line with equivalences tabulated below. Faculties will set their own minimum level of proficiency which is determined by the requirements of the subject discipline. For example, in more linguistically demanding research areas, the scores may be higher.

If necessary, an offer of a place to read for a research degree may be made subject to successful completion of an appropriate period of pre-sessional English for Academic Purposes training to enhance performance on the research degree programme above the minimum levels of competence set by the Faculty. Completion of such training must be confirmed at the RF1 (Approval of Research Programme) stage as part of the programme of related studies. These minimum University requirements may be supplemented by additional local requirements in Faculties, subject to confirmation by RDC.

<b><i>IELTS Band</i></b>	<b><i>TOEFL Paper-based</i></b>	<b><i>TOEFL Computer-based</i></b>	<b><i>TOEFL internet-based</i></b>
4.0	450	133	39-40
4.5	475	152	49-50
5.0	500	173	59-60
5.5	525	196	69-70
6.0	550	213	79-80
6.5	575	232	90-91
7.0	600	250	100
7.5 - 9.0	625 - 680	263 - 300	113 - 120

## R2.6 Split PhD Programmes

An applicant who is classed as International for fee purposes and who proposes to work mainly outside the UK may be admitted onto a 'Split PhD' programme provided that:

- a. the applicant satisfies the University's normal entry requirements for higher degrees by research (see R2.2 – 2.5);
- b. the applicant's English language capability is established prior to acceptance for admission to the University (see R2.5 above);
- c. admitted candidates are subject to the appropriate normal maximum permissible time for completion (see R5), depending on whether their intensity of study equates to full-time or part-time (see R4.12). However, candidates must also attend the University, **as a minimum of 2 weeks and a maximum of 3 months per academic year** - the pattern of this to be agreed between the applicant and the relevant supervisor and approved by the Research Degrees Committee as part of the process of approving the research programme (see R4 below). The period spent at the University must include sufficient time for the examination to take place and for the candidate to make any necessary amendments to the thesis before returning overseas;
- d. there is satisfactory evidence as to:
  - (i) how the research will be undertaken and developed both at the University and overseas;
  - (ii) the quality and accessibility of local resources/facilities needed to support the research degree programme; depending on the nature of the programme this may need to include access to a research community of active researchers and/or other research students;
  - (iii) robust arrangements for supervision of the candidate at a distance from Sheffield, which must include regular and some direct contact with the Sheffield Hallam-based supervisor, and at least one local supervisor accessible to the candidate whilst studying overseas; the same criteria apply as for approval of a UK-based supervisor (Section R6 of the regulations refers);
  - (iv) how the student's induction and training needs, including research methodology training, will be met;
- e. the oral examination for the award will be held in the United Kingdom following the same procedure as used for all other research degree candidates (Regulations Sections R9 to R16 refer). However, in special cases the Research Degrees Committee may give approval for the examination to take place overseas via video-conferencing.

- f. candidates accepted for a place of study with the university will need to sign a contractual agreement to confirm the arrangements above. The Director of Studies and the sponsoring organisation (if applicable) will also need to sign the agreement.

## R2.7 Recognition of Prior Learning - Admission by Transfer

An applicant seeking to transfer their research degree registration to Sheffield Hallam University from another UK Higher Education Institution is required to provide evidence of their timely progress and attainment at the requisite level. The evidence will include a copy of the applicant's annual progression/assessment report giving details of: the aims and objectives of the research project; the establishment of an appropriate methodology; a literature review and a statement of intended contribution to the relevant subject discipline. This is to ensure the applicant is performing at the appropriate level and is able to complete a successful thesis within the specified regulatory timeframe. A statement of research ethics also needs to be included and evidence provided of any ethics approval already granted.

Any suitable applicant who seeks to transfer to a Sheffield Hallam University research degree programme prior to successfully completing an interim upgrade assessment at their previous institution will be required to undertake such an assessment at the University. The deadline for this assessment will be agreed as part of the admissions process. The purpose of this assessment is to ensure that the applicant is performing at the appropriate level and is in a position to successfully complete their thesis within the specified regulatory timeframe.

An applicant may seek to transfer their research degree registration to the University from a non-UK University. To be considered, applicants will need to provide evidence that they are performing at the appropriate level and are able to complete a successful thesis within the specified regulatory timeframe.

## R3 **Enrolment**

- R3.1 All candidates are required to enrol annually on-line. This process involves payment of the appropriate tuition fee in return for access to the University's facilities and services, including supervision. Failure to re-enrol within 3 weeks of the anniversary of the programme start date may lead to exclusion and failure to progress on the course of study.
- R3.2 As a general principle the University recognises that each student is the owner of the intellectual property he/she creates in the course of his/her studies. This is, though, subject to a published list of exceptions which relate to collaborative research and project funding or sponsorship. In these cases the University requires a student to sign an agreement at Enrolment to vary his/her ownership of intellectual property in such a way as to reflect the individual circumstances of their project.



## R4 Approval of research programme

### R4.1 Timescales for approval

All enrolled candidates are required to seek approval of their research programme, using the appropriate form (see Appendix C), normally according to the following timetable:

- a) Full-time students: within 3 months of enrolment
- b) Part-time students: within 6 months of enrolment

### R4.2 Approved study routes

In the light of his/her qualifications and experience and study ambitions, a candidate may seek approval for either MPhil or PhD.

### R4.3 Scrutiny of research programme proposals

Appropriate academic judgement will be brought to bear on the viability of each research programme proposal normally after enrolment as soon as the candidate and supervisory team are ready, **but normally no later than** the timescales indicated in 4.1 above. This scrutiny will build on the initial pre-admission assessment of the acceptability of the research programme (see R2 above) to address the following issues:

- a) the viability of the research given the proposed aims and objectives and the candidate's ability to achieve the standards of the relevant degree within the maximum permissible timescale;
- b) the content, clarity and feasibility of the proposed workplan, including use of explicit milestones consistent overall with the University's requirements for timely completion;
- c) the suitability/experience of the supervisory team and adequacy of other supporting resources which have been identified as necessary.

The scrutiny will involve one academic 'rapporteur', who should be a subject expert, and based outside the supervisory team. The rapporteur will provide the candidate and team with initial independent constructive advice.

### R4.4 Role of Research Degrees Committee in approving research programmes

All applications for research programme approval will be subject to approval by Research Degrees Committee, acting on behalf of the University. The Committee will satisfy itself that scrutiny at Faculty level has been properly undertaken by monitoring decisions and processes.

#### R4.5 Treatment of funded research

Where a research degree programme is part of a wider programme of funded research, the University must establish to its satisfaction that the terms on which the research is funded do not detract from the fulfilment of the objectives and requirements of the candidate's research degree.

#### R4.6 Supporting programme of related studies

To secure research programme approval, a candidate will be expected to agree with his/her supervisors an appropriate supporting programme of related studies. Wherever possible this should make use, as appropriate, of the range of research methods and other courses established in Faculties or other University departments. In the light of the candidate's prior qualifications and experience and of his/her study ambitions, this programme will serve one or more of the following objectives i.e. to:

- a) develop a broad understanding of the context in which research takes place;
- b) develop an awareness of the philosophy of knowledge underpinning all forms of enquiry;
- c) develop generic, interpersonal transferable skills which will be of value to candidates throughout their careers;
- d) consolidate/acquire a range of analytical and research skills including methodologies appropriate to the research programme;
- e) acquire appropriate detailed subject-specific knowledge.

Where the programme includes learning activities leading to another award and the candidate is registered for that award and fulfils all its requirements, he/she may be recommended for that award in addition to the degree of MPhil or PhD.

Candidates are expected to complete a Development Needs Analysis to highlight skills training needs. The University has licence to use the Vitae Researcher Development Framework (RDF) resource for finding, updating and recording skills development activity. The University requires candidates to complete the 'my actions' and 'my action plan' parts of the planner as a minimum during the induction period and submit these as part of the Approval of Research Programme application (RF1). Any other skills development activity is at the discretion of the candidate, subject to the guidance of their supervisors. Particular care is needed in the case of a part-time candidate to agree an appropriate programme of related studies which is realistically achievable within the time and funding constraints of part-time study.

The RDF Planner is available through Shuspace and can be used by research degree candidates to:

- keep a record of professional development activities
- identify candidate's expertise and capabilities to plan a career
- print reports for discussions with mentors, supervisors, career advisors etc.
- identify learning and development needs and monitor progress

- upload files such as CVs, conference details, testimonials to record achievements.

Candidates will be able to access information on training and development activities and events via Shuspace and the Research Degrees Blackboard Site.

#### R4.7 Treatment of group projects

A candidate whose work forms part of a larger group project may seek research programme approval. In such cases each programme proposal must:

- a) be distinguishable for the purposes of assessment;
- b) be appropriate for the award sought; and
- c) indicate clearly the individual contribution to the larger work and its relationship with it.

#### R4.8 Recognition of previous work

Where a candidate has previously undertaken research as a candidate for a research degree, the Research Degrees Committee may approve a shorter than usual registration period which takes account of all or part of the time already spent by the candidate on such research.

#### R4.9 Practice-based Doctorates

A candidate may undertake a programme of research in which the candidate's own creative work forms, as a point of origin or reference, a significant part of the intellectual enquiry. Such creative work may be in any field (for instance, fine art, design, engineering, technology, architecture, creative writing, musical composition, film, dance and performance), but must have been undertaken as part of the approved research programme. In such cases, the presentation and submission must consist of a "body of work" which includes both creative and explanatory material<sup>1</sup>.

The body of work will advance an original thesis that will be set in a theoretical and critical context, n.b. the relationship between the theoretical and practical aspects should be clearly articulated in the thesis. The body of work will be presented according to the established scholarly standards of the appropriate discipline. The research programme proposal must set out the form of the candidate's intended submission and of the proposed methods of assessment. The final submission must be accompanied by some permanent record of this body of work which is capable of being accessed independently of any exhibition element.

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<sup>1</sup> The 'body of work' could consist of musical compositions and/or recordings, paintings, sculpture, printworks, designs or works of performance (dance, music etc) for example and should include documentation in an appropriate form such as photographs or recordings etc.

#### R4.10 Treatment of scholarly work

A candidate may undertake a programme of research in which the principal focus is the preparation of a scholarly edition of a text or texts, musical or choreographic work, or other original artefacts.

The final submission must include a copy of the edited text(s) or collection of artefact(s), appropriate textual and explanatory annotations, and a substantial introduction and critical commentary which set the text in the relevant historical, theoretical or critical context. The thesis itself must conform to the usual scholarly requirements and be of an appropriate length (see R12).

#### R4.11 Presentation of theses in languages other than English

Permission to present a thesis in a language other than English must normally be sought at the time of research programme approval. Such permission will normally only be given if the subject matter of the thesis involves language and related studies.

#### R4.12 Modes of study

When seeking research programme approval, a candidate must confirm his/her study mode i.e. full-time or part-time. A full-time candidate will normally devote on average at least 35 hours per week to the research; a part-time candidate on average at least 12 hours per week. A candidate may seek approval from his/her Faculty for a change of mode of study at any point in the programme (see List of Forms at Appendix B but also see R5.3 below).

#### R4.13 Concurrent study

The Research Degrees Committee may permit a candidate to register for another course of study concurrently with research degree study provided that either the research degree or the other course is by part-time study and that the dual registration will not detract from the research.

#### R4.14 Confidentiality

Where a candidate or the University wishes the thesis to remain confidential after completion of the programme of research (see R12.11), application for approval must normally be made to the Research Degrees Committee by no later than the time of Approval of Examiners and Thesis title (see List of Forms at Appendix C). The period approved must normally not exceed two years from the date of the oral examination, however in some instances where publication of the thesis would prove detrimental to the candidate or the University, a further period of one year may be approved.

#### R4.15 Ethical Approval of Research Programmes

Any research undertaken by research degree candidates which involves direct contact with patients or healthy participants, whether clinical, biomedical or social

research, or the secondary use of existing human and animal materials or specimens, must be subject to ethical review. Such reviews will be undertaken by Faculty-based research ethics committees<sup>2</sup>. Ethical review, if necessary, must be considered by the candidate at the approval of research programme stage and verified at the Confirmation of PhD stage.

## R5 Timescales for Completion

### R5.1 Normal minimum and maximum permissible timescales

Candidates will normally be expected to complete their research programmes (i.e. have submitted a thesis for oral examination) within the following timescales:

Degree & Mode	Normal minimum permissible time for completion from date of enrolment	Normal maximum permissible time for completion from date of enrolment <sup>3</sup>
<b>MPhil</b>		
Full-time	18 months	24 months
Part-time	30 months	36 months
<b>PhD</b>		
Full-time	24 months	48 months
Part-time	36 months	84 months

*Candidates receiving studentship funding from external sources may be expected to meet different timescales as stipulated by their funding body.*

### R5.2 Shortening the period of registration

Where there is evidence that the research is proceeding exceptionally well, Faculty-level approval may be given for the thesis to be submitted before the normal minimum permissible time for completion indicated in R5.1 above. Application for such approval should be submitted at the same time as the application for approval of examination arrangements (see List of Forms at Appendix B).

### R5.3 Change of mode of study

Where Faculty-level approval is given for a candidate's change of mode of study (see R4.12 above) the maximum permissible time for completion of the degree will be recalculated on the basis of the proportion of time during which the candidate was studying in each mode.

### R5.4 Suspension of study

Where the candidate is prevented, by ill-health or other valid cause, from making progress with the research, Faculty-level approval may be given for study to be

<sup>2</sup> Details of the University Research Ethics Policies are at <https://www.shu.ac.uk/research/ethics-integrity-and-practice>. Candidates requiring ethical approval or who are unsure as to the need for ethical review should contact their Director of Studies in the first instance.

<sup>3</sup> Allowing for any period of enforced interruption of study approved via suspension – see R5.4

suspended, normally for not more than one year at a time (see List of Forms at Appendix B). The period of suspension will not count against the maximum permissible time indicated in R5.1 above.

#### R5.5 Writing-up period

Candidates may seek Faculty-level approval for a writing-up period (1 year for full-time students and 2 years for part-time students), with a reduced tuition fee, to allow for completion of the thesis within the maximum permissible time indicated in R5.1 above. Approval of the writing-up period is subject to several important restrictions:

- a) Eligibility will normally be strictly determined as follows:

Degree	Mode	Eligibility for writing-up status
PhD	Full-time	Normally no earlier than Year 3
PhD	Part-time	Normally no earlier than Year 4
MPhil	Full-time	Normally no earlier than Year 2
MPhil	Part-time	Normally no earlier than Year 3

- b) The writing up period does not automatically apply – the candidate’s Director of Studies must certify that the student is in fact writing up;
- c) Writing up status is **available for one year only** to candidates whose mode of study at the time of research programme approval is full-time; up to **two years** writing-up status is available to those candidates whose mode of study at the time of research programme approval is part-time. If the candidate fails to complete in this period and, exceptionally, additional time has been granted (see R5.7 below) the University’s standard part-time fee will be levied for the duration of the remaining period of the candidate’s registration.

#### R5.6 Timeliness of thesis submission

The candidate may submit a thesis for examination at any time within the minima and maxima indicated in R5.1 above (but see R11.2 below) **and in any event must do so within the maximum permissible time appropriate to the degree and mode of study**. If the candidate has not presented his/her work within this period, s/he may be deemed to have withdrawn from the University or, in exceptional circumstances, may seek approval for additional time to complete (see R5.7 below).

#### R5.7 Exceptional approval of additional time to complete

Faculty-level approval will not normally be given to allow a candidate more than the maximum permissible time specified in R5.1 above. However, a candidate whose mode of study at the time of research programme approval was full-time may, with an **exceptional reason**, seek approval for up to a maximum of **12 additional months** to complete (up to 24 additional months for a candidate whose mode of study at the time of research programme approval was part-time).

The application for approval must be made on the appropriate form (see List of Forms at Appendix B), with the written support of the candidate's supervisor/s. In such cases, Faculty-level approval will be subject to endorsement by the Research Degrees Committee.

Although requests for additional time will be considered on their merits, approval will normally only be given where it is clear that delayed completion is the result of factors which are beyond the control of the candidate and/or supervisor(s) and could not be anticipated or planned for as part of good management of the research programme. Wherever possible, approval for interruptions to the progress of the research which are beyond the control of student and/or supervisor(s) should be sought via an application for suspension (see R5.4 above).

#### R5.8 Withdrawal from study

Where a candidate has discontinued the research, the withdrawal of registration must be notified by Faculty staff to the Research Degrees Committee on the appropriate form (see List of Forms at Appendix C).

### R6 **Supervision**

#### R6.1 Size of supervisory team

A research degree candidate must normally have two and not more than three supervisors. **Exceptionally**, where the proposed Director of Studies has substantial experience of successful supervision to completion at the level proposed, the Research Degrees Committee may approve the appointment of only one supervisor, the Director of Studies.

#### R6.2 Required expertise and experience of supervisory team

A supervision team must have appropriate subject expertise and must normally have a combined experience of supervising no fewer than **two** candidates to successful completion at the level proposed (i.e. Research Masters/MPhil or Doctoral). Successful completion of the University's Research Supervisor Development Programme will be deemed equivalent to a successful completion at Doctoral level for this purpose. However, in all cases at least one supervisor on the supervisory team **must** have successfully supervised at least one student to completion at the level proposed.

#### R6.3 Responsibilities of the Director of Studies

One supervisor will be designated as the Director of Studies with responsibility to ensure supervision of the candidate on a regular and frequent basis, and to act as the principal point of contact for administrative matters. They will also be accountable to the Faculty in the first instance and to the Research Degrees Committee for the proper conduct of the research programme including compliance with relevant University policies, e.g. acting as Project Safety Supervisor under the revised Health and Safety Regulations. The Director of

Studies must be a member of the permanent staff of, or have a contract of employment with, the University. Emeritus and Visiting Professors cannot be Director of Studies but can be first or second supervisors.

#### R6.4 Role of Advisers

In addition to the supervisors, an adviser or advisers may be proposed to contribute specialised knowledge or a link with an external organisation.

#### R6.5 Restrictions on candidates acting as supervisors

A candidate for a research degree of any institution of higher education is ineligible to act as Director of Studies for research degree candidates but may act as a second supervisor or adviser.

#### R6.6 Change in supervisory arrangements

The approval of the relevant Faculty must be obtained for any change in supervision arrangements (see List of Forms at Appendix B).

### **R7 Monitoring and supporting student progress**

#### R7.1 Research Degrees Annual Monitoring Exercise

The University will establish at least annually whether the candidate is:

- a) still actively engaged on the research programme;
- b) maintaining regular and frequent contact with the supervisors;
- c) likely to achieve the academic standards of the degree at the level in question;
- d) likely to complete successfully within the normal maximum permissible timescale (see R5.1 above).

As part of this process, the Research Degrees Committee will, at least annually, consider the outcome of the monitoring process within Faculties. In the light of this consideration, the Committee will take appropriate action.

#### R7.2 Supporting students with long-term health conditions via Learning Contracts

The University offers specific learning support to students with long-term health conditions in order to facilitate adequate progress and to meet the maximum regulatory timescale for completion. Candidates are encouraged to discuss their needs with staff in Disabled Student Support and to secure a Learning Contract. Reasonable adjustments will be agreed to ensure candidates have the necessary adjustments and support in place during their research degree candidature and for the formal assessment points at Confirmation of PhD and final examination.



### R7.3 Student Withdrawal

In line with R7.1 above and/or due to other factors, members of academic staff, who will normally be the supervisory team, may instigate a student withdrawal based on relevant evidence and sound academic judgement. *Some* examples of reasons for instigating a student withdrawal are as follows:

- lack of progress
- lack of engagement
- failing to meet the required standard of academic writing
- failing the Confirmation of PhD assessment process
- not meeting the student responsibilities as outlined in the University's Code of Practice.

Other internal or external factors which impact on candidates' registration status may also be taken into account when instigating a withdrawal. This could be for example where Home Office rules apply and where candidates do not have a valid visa for continuing their study at the University.

### R7.4 Responsibilities of the Faculty Head of Research Degrees and/or Postgraduate Research Tutor

To help the effective monitoring and support of research degree candidates, each Faculty which admits research degree candidates will designate a senior member of staff as Faculty Head of Research Degrees (or equivalent academic role). Faculty support structures also allow for a supporting Postgraduate Research Tutor (or Tutors) to assist the Faculty Lead in supporting the research student community.

## **R8 Confirmation of PhD**

### R8.1 Timing of application for Confirmation of PhD

All candidates registered for PhD must undertake the Confirmation of PhD process. Candidates registered for MPhil may also undertake the process if the supervisory team is able to support an application. The Confirmation of PhD process has both a formal progress and review function. This allows for a formal evaluation of student progress involving assessment by academic staff whom are not the student's supervisors. Candidates are assessed through a two-part process; a presentation/examination of the work produced so far to test the candidate's oral skills, and the submission of a 6000 word report to assess writing ability at Doctoral level. The process is managed in Faculty. Although the decision on the Confirmation of PhD application is recommended by a Faculty Assessment Panel, the decision is approved at University level by the Research Degrees Committee. The stipulated timescale for submitting an application is up to 12

months but within 15 months for a full-time candidate and up to 24 but within 27 months for a part-time candidate.

## R8.2 Timing of Referral applications for Confirmation of PhD

Candidates who fail to meet the timescales stipulated in R8.1 above will miss an assessment opportunity and will automatically be referred. Referral applications must be made within 18 months of the candidate's start date if studying full-time or 33 months if studying part-time. If students make a first attempt within the timescales outlined in R8.1 but do not pass and are referred, they will have 3 months (if studying full-time) or 6 months (if studying part-time) in which to submit a referral application from the date of the Assessment Panel decision. Students who fail to meet this timescale with either be counselled by their supervisory team to write-up for MPhil, depending on adequate progress with the project, or will be withdrawn due to failure.

## R8.3 Scrutiny of Confirmation applications within Faculties

Each Faculty/Research Institute has an approved Procedure for Confirmation of PhD which provides the assessment framework for Confirmation applications (these documents can be found on the Research Degrees Blackboard site). In support of the application form itself, the candidate must prepare a written report on the work undertaken and, either:

- i) be examined orally on the report by two or more assessors, including at least one person external to the supervisory team, who may be the rapporteur at the research programme approval stage (see R4.3), to be approved by the Faculty Head of Research Degrees or appropriate Postgraduate Research Tutor,

and/or

- ii) make an oral presentation of and defend work in progress at a Faculty research seminar or equivalent; the audience must include one person external to the supervisory team, who might normally be the rapporteur at the Research Programme Approval stage, to be approved by the Faculty Head of Research Degrees or appropriate Postgraduate Research Tutor.

In either case, evidence of the candidate's performance in the oral assessment/presentation will be taken into account by the Research Degrees Committee in considering the application.

The written report should normally be no longer than 6,000 words in length and include:

- a) a brief review and discussion of the work already undertaken; and
- b) a statement of the intended further work, including details of the original contribution to knowledge which is likely to emerge.

The submission of the Confirmation of PhD application must be at the sole discretion of the candidate. Whilst a candidate would be unwise to submit the application against the advice of the supervisors, it is his/her right to do so. Similarly, candidates should not assume that a supervisor's agreement to the submission guarantees the successful Confirmation of PhD. Candidates must confirm at this stage which type of thesis they are writing and preparing for final assessment. This could be either a traditional monograph style or an article-based type (see section R12 and Appendix A for further details).

#### R8.4 Role of the Research Degrees Committee in approving Confirmation of PhD applications

All applications for Confirmation of PhD will be subject to approval by the Research Degrees Committee, acting on behalf of the University. The Committee will satisfy itself that scrutiny at Faculty level has been properly undertaken. In particular, before approving, the Committee will look for evidence that the Faculty has established that the candidate has made sufficient progress and that the proposed programme provides a suitable basis for work at PhD standard which the candidate is capable of pursuing to timely completion.

#### R8.5 Unsuccessful applications for Confirmation of PhD

If, under the regulations at R8.1 and R8.2 above, a candidate fails to make a successful application for Confirmation of PhD, the candidate will be counselled as to his/her options; these may include writing up for MPhil, provided that there is reasonable confidence on the part of the candidate and supervisory team that the award objectives for the MPhil (R1.4) can be achieved.

#### R8.6 Change of registration from PhD to MPhil

A candidate who has successfully passed the Confirmation assessment via the process in R8.3 above, may at any time prior to the submission of the thesis for examination, apply to his/her Faculty for the registration to be changed to that for MPhil. This may be due to factors such as taking up employment, financial issues, health matters, visa restrictions etc. For the application to be successful there must be reasonable confidence on the part of the candidate and supervisory team that the award objectives for the MPhil (R1.4) can be achieved.

#### R8.7 Application for Approval of Article-based PhD thesis

If a candidate wishes to submit an article-based thesis (see Appendix A) instead of a monograph style, they must stipulate this on the RF2A and also complete an RFAB form. The chosen assessors will assess the RF2A in accordance with the procedures set out in regulation R8.3. One assessor will also assess the RFAB form. The assessor will make comment on the appropriateness of the outputs and journals/outputs listed for the particular topic of enquiry proposed. They will take account of the journal rankings where these are considered useful for the discipline but also will acknowledge that specialised work may sometimes be more appropriately disseminated in niche publications. All journals in which the candidate has published/is proposing to publish should be peer-reviewed and

should be such as could credibly be included in a REF return. The assessor should also comment on the coherence of the proposed outputs and, where present, the plan of research itself.

## **R9 Examinations - General**

### **R9.1 Stages of the examination**

The examination for MPhil and PhD will have two stages: firstly the submission and preliminary assessment of the thesis by the examiners and secondly its defence by oral examination. For candidates with a disability who have a learning contract, reasonable adjustments will be made to the oral examination based on the individual student's needs.

### **R9.2 Requirement to complete formally assessed coursework**

A candidate whose programme of work includes formally assessed coursework in a programme of work leading to the degree of PhD (see paragraph R4.6) will not be permitted to proceed to the MPhil/PhD examination until the coursework examiners are satisfied with the candidate's performance. The result of the assessment must be communicated to the examiners of the thesis.

### **R9.3 Extenuating circumstances affecting the oral examination**

A candidate will normally be examined orally on the programme of work and on the field of study in which the programme lies. Where, for exceptional reasons of sickness, disability or comparable valid cause **over and above the normal difficulties experienced in life**, the Research Degrees Committee is satisfied that a candidate would be under serious disadvantage if required to undergo an oral examination on the due date and time previously set, the Committee may agree that the oral examination be postponed to a suitable later date.

Requests for consideration of such exceptional extenuating circumstances should be made in writing, as soon as possible before the date of the oral examination. This must be sent to the University's Student Systems and Records Team in Registry Services for consideration by the Chair of the Research Degrees Committee, in consultation with the examiners. The candidate must also provide independent documentary evidence in support of the request, such as medical evidence (see Appendix D for further details). The request should include the following information:

- Summary of the nature of the circumstances;
- Period of time to which the circumstances apply and the candidate's view of the effect of the circumstances on his/her ability to undertake the oral examination;
- An indication of the documentary evidence attached (e.g. medical note, self-certification, or any of the types of evidence noted in Appendix D) in support of the extenuating circumstances;
- Any other effects or anything else which should be taken into account.

The Chair of the Research Degrees Committee and the Examiners will normally disregard circumstances which candidates are expected to cope with as part of the normal difficulties and unfortunately distressing aspects of life which may occur. Their consideration will include the following:

- Severity and timescale of the circumstances
- Extent to which the circumstances can be linked to timing of the oral examination
- Documentary evidence available (as per guidance in Appendix D).

#### R9.4 Location of the examination

The oral examination will normally be held in the UK. Exceptionally, on receipt of a justifiable case by the candidate's Director of Studies, the Research Degrees Committee may give approval for the examination to take place overseas via video-conferencing or similar technology. However, the candidate must be at the same physical location as at least one of the examiners or the Independent Chair (see R9.5) to ensure they are fully supported during the assessment.

#### R9.5 Independent Chair

All research degree oral examinations have oversight by an Independent Chair. In line with the QAA's UK Quality Code for Higher Education (Part B, Chapter 11), the Chair will be a non-examining chair who may not contribute to the assessment judgement. The overarching role of the Chair is to ensure that:

- the viva voce examination process is rigorous, fair, reliable and consistent;
- the candidate has the opportunity to defend the thesis and respond to all questions posed by the examiners;
- the questioning of the candidate by the examiners is conducted fairly and professionally;
- the examiners adhere to the University's regulations and procedures;
- advice is given about the regulations to the examiners and the candidate if required.

Although the Chair will not take part in the formal assessment process, they will normally have the following:

- access to a copy of the thesis during the examination,
- sight of the examiners' preliminary reports before the examination commences, and
- will sign off the examiners' joint recommendation form when the examiners have completed their assessment in order to verify that due process has been followed
- will complete a short report on the oral examination for audit purposes.

#### R9.6 Involvement of supervisors in the oral examination

Supervisors may, with the consent of the candidate, attend the oral examination and speak if called upon, but must not participate in the preliminary private meeting of the examiners, and must withdraw prior to the deliberations of the examiners on the outcome of the examination.

#### R9.7 Recommendations on conferment of the degree

Following completion of the examination, the examiners will make a recommendation on the award of the MPhil/PhD, via Registry Services staff, to the Vice-Chancellor, who acts on behalf of the University in conferring the degree.

#### R9.8 Aegrotat and Posthumous Awards

In cases where a candidate is unable to complete the research through on the grounds of ill health, an aegrotat may be awarded. However, sufficient evidence of the student's achievement at the level in question (Masters or Doctoral) would need to be presented by the candidate's Director of Studies for examination. A thesis or alternative form of submission, such as a collection of published material, papers or reports with a critical introduction and presented as a bound thesis, would be acceptable for this purpose. Candidates will also be assessed on an individual basis by the Research Degrees Committee (on the advice of the supervisory team) to determine whether an oral examination would be necessary for a candidate seeking an aegrotat award, or would need to be dispensed with, depending on their personal circumstances. The degree of MPhil or PhD may be awarded posthumously on the basis of a thesis (or equivalent as stated above) completed by a candidate that is ready for submission for examination. In such cases the Research Degrees Committee will seek evidence that the candidate would have been likely to succeed had the oral examination taken place.

#### R9.9 Procedures for handling allegations of research misconduct

The University's Policy and Procedure for Dealing with Allegations of Research Misconduct against Doctoral and Masters Research Students details the procedures for dealing with allegations of plagiarism, collusion, or any other form of dishonest conduct, which apply to research degree candidates. Details can be found on the University's Rules and Regulations web pages at <https://www.shu.ac.uk/research/ethics-integrity-and-practice>.

#### R9.10 Grounds for declaring examinations null and void

The Research Degrees Committee must ensure that all examinations are conducted wholly in accordance with the University's regulations. If the Committee is made aware of any non-compliance, it may declare the examination null and void and appoint new examiners.

## **R10 Preparation for the Examination**

### **R10.1 Approval of examination arrangements**

The Director of Studies must seek the Research Degrees Committee's approval (see List of Forms at Appendix B) for the candidate's examination arrangements normally **no later than four** months before the expected date of the examination. The examination may not take place until the examination arrangements have been approved. In very special circumstances, the Research Degrees Committee may act directly to appoint examiners and arrange the examination of a candidate.

### **R10.2 Procedure for submitting the thesis**

Registry Services staff will notify the candidate of the procedure for submission of the thesis (including the number of copies to be submitted for examination) and any conditions to be satisfied before the candidate may be considered eligible for examination.

### **R10.3 Notification of date of oral examination**

Faculties are responsible for arranging the date, time, location and hospitality arrangements for the oral examination. These details are sent to Registry Services staff who will formally notify the candidate, the examiners and the Independent Chair of these details.

### **R10.4 Briefing of examiners**

Registry Services staff will send a copy of the thesis to each examiner, together with the examiner's preliminary report form (see List of Forms at Appendix B) and the University's regulations, and will ensure that the examiners receive written guidance on how to conduct the examination. In addition to the written guidance, experienced Faculty staff will brief staff who are new to the role of internal examiner.

### **R10.5 Completion of examiners' preliminary reports**

Registry Services staff will ensure that all the examiners have completed and returned their preliminary reports on the thesis to the University before the oral examination takes place.

## **R11 The Candidate's Responsibilities in the Examination**

### **R11.1 Timely Submission of the thesis**

The candidate must ensure that the thesis is submitted to Registry Services staff within the relevant normal maximum permissible timescale (see R5.1).

#### R11.2 Responsibility for the decision to submit the thesis

The submission of the thesis for examination must be at the sole discretion of the candidate. Although a candidate would be unwise to submit the thesis against the advice of the supervisors, it is his/her right to do so. Similarly, candidates should not assume that a supervisor's agreement to the submission of a thesis guarantees the award of the degree.

#### R11.3 Satisfying conditions of eligibility for examination

The candidate must satisfy any conditions of eligibility for examination required by the University in terms of being enrolled and registered at the time of the assessment.

#### R11.4 Candidate's exclusion from arrangement of the examination

The candidate must take no part in the arrangement of the examination and must have no formal contact with the external examiner(s) between the appointment of the examiners and the oral examination.

#### R11.5 Candidate's declaration

The candidate must confirm their intention for the thesis to be assessed by completing a declaration statement. This must be done at first assessment and also for resubmissions. The declaration will confirm that the thesis has not been submitted for a comparable academic award (for example at another institution) Candidates may include work covering a wider field which has already been submitted for a degree or comparable award, provided that it is indicated in the declaration and where so, which work has been incorporated (for example where some of the work may have been developed from Masters study).

#### R11.6 Required format of the thesis

The candidate must ensure that the format of the thesis, as submitted for examination and as finalised following examination, is in accordance with the requirements of the University's regulations (see section R12).

## **12 Thesis**

### R12. Style of Thesis

The thesis can be presented for examination in either the traditional monograph style or as an article-based thesis (see Appendix A for details).

#### R12.2 Format requirements

The following format requirements must be adhered to in the submitted thesis as follows:



- a) Theses must be submitted in line with R12.3;
- b) Theses must normally be in A4 format; the Research Degrees Committee may give permission for a thesis to be submitted in another format where it is satisfied that the contents of the thesis can be better expressed in that format (normally for practice-based research);
- c) the size of character used in the main text, including displayed matter and notes, must not be less than a font size 12. Preferred fonts are Arial, Calibri and Times New Roman;
- d) the soft-bound thesis for assessment must be printed on the recto side of the page only; the paper must be white and within the range 70 g/m<sup>2</sup> to 100 g/m<sup>2</sup>;
- e) double or one-and-a-half spacing should be used in typescript except for indented quotations or footnotes where single spacing may be used;
- f) pages must be numbered consecutively through the main text including photographs and/or diagrams included as whole pages. Page numbers must be positioned centrally at the bottom of the page 20 mm above the edge; the left (binding edge) for soft-bound theses should have a margin of 40mm;
- g) the title page must give the following information:
  - the full title of the thesis **in a maximum of 12 words**;
  - the full name of the author;
  - that the degree is awarded by the University;
  - the award for which the degree is submitted in partial fulfilment of its requirements;
  - the Collaborating Organisation(s), if any; and
  - the month and year of submission.

### 12.3 Submission of thesis

Candidates are required to submit their thesis prior to examination through Turnitin on the Research Degrees Blackboard site. For the assessment process, candidates are required to print copies of the electronic file for the benefit of the examiners. These will be submitted for examination to Registry Services in a temporary (soft-bound) format which is sufficiently secure to ensure that pages cannot be added or removed.<sup>4</sup> A thesis submitted in a temporary bound form must be in its final form in all respects except for the binding, the incorporation of any amendments required by the examiners and the removal of any previously published material (see R12.8).

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<sup>4</sup> For example, thermal-binding which is a method of binding single pages by gluing them together on the spine of a document.

Following examination and the incorporation of any amendments required by the examiners, the thesis must be submitted in electronic form (PDF/A format) to [rdcadmin@shu.ac.uk](mailto:rdcadmin@shu.ac.uk) together with a Thesis Deposit Form. PDF/A is a standardised version of the PDF format which is suitable for the University's long-term archiving requirements.

The candidate must confirm that the contents of the electronic thesis are identical with the version submitted for examination, except the incorporation of any required amendments.

#### R12.4 Submission of theses in English

Except with the specific permission of the Research Degrees Committee the thesis must be presented in English (see paragraph R4.11). Candidates are advised to seek professional proofreading services if required.

#### R12.5 The Abstract

The thesis must contain an abstract of approximately 300 words which provides a synopsis of the thesis stating the nature and scope of the work undertaken and the contribution made to knowledge in the subject. This should sit after the Title page and be single-spaced. A loose copy of the abstract must be submitted with the thesis. The loose copy of the abstract must have the name of the author, the degree for which the thesis is submitted, and the title of the thesis as a heading.

#### R12.6 Objectives and referencing

The thesis must include a statement of the candidate's objectives and must acknowledge published or other sources of material consulted (including an appropriate bibliography) and any assistance received.

#### R12.7 Presentation of collaborative research

Where a candidate's research programme is part of a collaborative group project, the thesis must indicate clearly the candidate's individual contribution and the extent of the collaboration.

#### R12.8 Inclusion of published work

The candidate is free to publish material in advance of the thesis and reference must be made in the thesis to any such work. Copies of published material may be submitted with the initial soft bound copy of the thesis for examination. However, to respect copyright laws, any such published material must be removed from the final electronic copy of the thesis before it is submitted as the Version of Record.

## R12.9 Maximum word limits

The text of the thesis should normally not exceed the following length (excluding ancillary data):

### ***Monograph style***

PhD in Science, Engineering, Art and Design	40,000 words
MPhil in Science, Engineering, Art and Design	20,000 words
PhD in Arts/Humanities, Social Sciences and Education	80,000 words
MPhil in Arts/Humanities, Social Sciences and Education	40,000 words

### ***Article-based***

PhD in Science, Engineering, Art and Design (excluding the word count of the published material which is expected to be an additional 20,000 words)	20,000 words
PhD in Arts/Humanities, Social Sciences and Education (excluding the word count of the published material, which is expected to be a further 20,000 to 40,000 words)	40,000 words

For **practice-based** monograph submissions where the thesis is accompanied by material in other than written form or the research involves creative writing or the preparation of a scholarly edition, the written thesis should normally be within the range:

PhD	30,000 - 40,000 words
MPhil	15,000 - 20,000 words

## R12.10 Dissemination of research findings

Following the award of the degree, Registry Services staff will send the electronic copy of the thesis in PDF/A format to the University Library. The thesis will be uploaded to the Sheffield Hallam University Research Archive (SHURA) and the metadata will be made available through the Electronic Thesis online Service (EThoS) of The British Library. The Director of Studies will be responsible for sending a link to the thesis to any Collaborating Organisation.

However, in cases where candidates are granted an embargo period, usually of 12 months, to curtail dissemination of their research for other publishing reasons, then the full text of thesis will not be made available until the embargo period expires.

## R12.11 Confidentiality restrictions

The Research Degrees Committee may agree (see R4.14) that a confidentiality restriction is placed on the thesis for a specified period. In such cases, for the duration of the period, the full text of the thesis will not be made available on SHURA. Instead, only the author's name, thesis title, research degree award, year of submission, research centre/department and name of the supervisors will be published.

The Research Degrees Committee may approve an application for confidentiality normally only in order to enable a patent application to be lodged, to protect commercially or politically sensitive material, or to protect material which may result in competitive advantage. However, the thesis must not be restricted in this way in order to protect researchers and research leads. Although the normal maximum period of confidentiality restriction is two years, in exceptional circumstances the Research Degrees Committee may approve a longer period. However, where a shorter period would be adequate, the Research Degrees Committee will not automatically grant confidentiality for two years.

#### R12.12 Copyright

Copyright in the thesis submitted for examination remains with the candidate. The physical copies of the thesis submitted for assessment become the property of the University, whilst other artefacts for assessment remain the personal property of the candidate.

### **R13 Examiners**

#### R13.1 Size and composition of examining team

A candidate must be examined by at least two and normally not more than three examiners (except where paragraphs R14.5, R15.2, or R15.8 apply), of whom at least one must be an external examiner. The examining team must have suitable experience and expertise, be unbiased, and be clearly independent of the supervisor, of the student, and of each other in order that no conflicts of interest arise.

#### R13.2 External Examiners

An external examiner must be independent both of the University and of the Collaborating Organisation and must not have acted previously as the candidate's supervisor or adviser. An external examiner must not normally be a supervisor of another candidate at the University. Former members of staff and former students of the University may normally not be approved as external examiners until three years after the termination of their association with the University. The Research Degrees Committee must also ensure that an external examiner is not approved so frequently that his/her familiarity with the Faculty might prejudice objective judgement.

#### R13.3 Internal examiners

An internal examiner is defined as an examiner who is:

- a) a member of staff of the University; or
- b) a member of staff of the candidate's Collaborating Organisation.

#### R13.4 Exclusion of supervisors from examining teams

Members of the candidate's supervisory team may not be appointed as examiners for that candidate.

#### R13.5 Examiners for candidates who are University staff or staff of collaborating organisations

Where the candidate and the internal examiner are both members of staff of the same organisation, a second external examiner must be appointed. This means that the candidate will have one internal and two external examiners to ensure objectivity in the examination process.

#### R13.6 Examiners' expertise

Examiners must be experienced in research in the general area of the candidate's thesis and, where practicable, have experience as a specialist in the topic(s) to be examined.

#### R13.7 Examiners' experience

At least one external examiner must have substantial experience (i.e. at least several instances) of examining research degree candidates in the field and at the level in question. Where this is not possible, for example in emerging subject areas, the Research Degrees Committee may exercise its discretion by ensuring that the proposed examining team includes an internal examiner who has significant examining experience outside the University.

#### R13.8 Exclusion of candidates from examining

No candidate for a research degree may act as an examiner.

### **R14 First Examination**

#### R14.1 Preliminary assessment of the thesis

Each examiner will read the thesis and submit (see List of Forms at Appendix C), an independent preliminary report on it to Registry Services staff before any oral examination is held. In completing the preliminary report, each examiner must consider whether the thesis provisionally satisfies the requirements of the degree (as set out in paragraphs R1.4 and R1.5), and where possible, make an appropriate provisional recommendation subject to the outcome of any oral examination.

#### R14.2 Examiners' action following the examination

Following the oral examination the examiners must, where they are in agreement, submit to Registry Services staff a joint report and recommendation (see List of Forms at Appendix B) relating to the award of the degree. The examiners' preliminary reports and joint recommendation must together provide sufficiently

detailed comments on the scope and quality of the work to justify the chosen recommendation (see R14.3 below).

**Where the examiners are not in agreement, separate reports and recommendations must be submitted.**

#### R14.3 Recommendations available to the examiners

Following the completion of the examination the examiners may recommend<sup>5</sup> that:

- a) the candidate is awarded the degree; or
- b) the candidate is awarded the degree subject to minor amendments being made to the thesis (see paragraph R14.4); or
- c) the candidate is permitted to resubmit for the degree and be re-examined, with or without an oral examination (see section R15);
- d) in the case of a PhD examination, the candidate is awarded the degree of MPhil subject to the presentation of the thesis amended to the satisfaction of the examiners, and provided that the candidate clearly satisfies the requirements for MPhil as indicated in R1.4 above; or
- e) the candidate is not awarded the degree and is not permitted to be re-examined (see paragraphs R14.8). *This would normally be in cases where research misconduct is proven.*

#### R14.4 Minor amendments to the thesis

Where minor amendments are required (as in options b) and d) above) the candidate must submit the corrected thesis **within four months FTE of the date of the oral examination**. The Research Degrees Committee may, where there are valid reasons for delay, approve an extension to this period.

Where the examiners recommend that the degree is awarded subject to the candidate amending the thesis to the satisfaction of the internal and/or the external examiner(s) (see sub-paragraph R14.3b), they must indicate on the appropriate form what amendments are required. The examiner(s) responsible for checking the amendments should normally respond to confirm their satisfaction with the amendments within a 4 week period.

#### R14.5 Dissenting Examiners

Where the examiners' recommendations are not unanimous, the Research Degrees Committee may:

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<sup>5</sup>Examiners may indicate informally their recommendation on the result of the examination to the candidate but they must make it clear that the final decision rests with the Vice-Chancellor

- a) accept a majority recommendation (provided that the majority recommendation includes at least one external examiner);
- b) accept the recommendation of the external examiner; or
- c) require the appointment of an additional external examiner – especially if the internal examiner(s) disagree(s) strongly with the view of the external examiner; any such appointment must be made in accordance with the approved procedures for the appointment of examiners.

#### R14.6 Use of additional external examiners following examination

Where an additional external examiner is appointed under sub-paragraph R14.5c, he/she must prepare an independent preliminary report on the thesis and, if considered necessary, may conduct a further oral examination. The additional examiner must not be informed of the recommendations of the other examiners. On receipt of the report from the additional external examiner, the examination process will be completed as set out in R9.

#### R14.7 Use of a further examination to supplement the oral

A further examination in addition to the oral examination may be requested by the examiners. In such cases the approval of Research Degrees Committee must be sought without delay. Where such an examination is arranged following an oral examination, it must normally be held within two calendar months of the oral examination unless the Research Degrees Committee permits otherwise. Any such examination must be deemed to be part of the candidate's first examination.

#### R14.8 Outright failure

The Vice-Chancellor may decide, on the recommendation of the examiners, that the degree is not awarded and that no re-examination is permitted. In such cases, the examiners must prepare an agreed statement of the deficiencies of the thesis and the reason for their recommendation, to be forwarded to the candidate by Registry Services staff.

### **R15 Re-examination**

#### R15.1 Requirements for re-examination

One re-examination may be permitted by the Research Degrees Committee, subject to the following requirements:

- a) a candidate who fails to satisfy the examiners at the first examination, including where appropriate the oral (see paragraph R9.3) or any further examination required under paragraph R14.7 may, on the recommendation of the examiners and with the approval of the Research Degrees Committee, is permitted to revise the thesis and be re-examined;
- b) the examiners must provide the candidate, through Registry Services staff, with written guidance on the deficiencies of the first submission; and

- c) the candidate must submit for re-examination **within the period of 12 months from the date of the oral examination**. The Research Degrees Committee may, where there are good reasons to prove a valid delay, approve an extension of this period.

#### R15.2 Appointment of an additional external examiner for the re-examination

The Research Degrees Committee may require that an additional external examiner is appointed for the re-examination; any such appointment must be made in accordance with the approved procedures for the appointment of examiners.

#### R15.3 Forms of re-examination

There are four forms of re-examination:

- a) where the candidate's performance in the first oral examination was satisfactory but the thesis was unsatisfactory; the examiners on re-examination certify that the revised thesis is satisfactory, the Research Degrees Committee will exempt the candidate from a further oral examination;
- b) where the candidate's performance in the first oral examination was unsatisfactory and the thesis was also unsatisfactory, any re-examination must normally include a re-examination of the thesis and an oral examination (but see R15.11);
- c) where on the first examination the candidate's thesis was satisfactory but the performance in the oral and/or other examination(s) was not satisfactory the candidate must be re-examined in the oral and/or other examination(s), **within 6 months**, 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 Research Degrees Committee.

#### R15.4 Preliminary assessment of the thesis on re-examination

In the case of a re-examination under sub-paragraphs R15.3a, b or c, each examiner must read and examine the thesis and submit an independent preliminary report (see List of Forms at Appendix C) on it to Registry Services staff before any oral examination is held. In completing the preliminary report, each examiner must consider whether the revised thesis provisionally satisfies the requirements of the degree (as set out in paragraphs R1.4 and R1.5) and where possible make an appropriate provisional recommendation subject to the outcome of any oral examination.



#### R15.5 Examiners' action following the re-examination

Following the re-examination of the thesis under sub-paragraph R15.3a or following an oral or other examination under R15.3b, c, d or e, the examiners must, where they are in agreement, submit to Registry Services staff, a joint report and recommendation (see List of Forms at Appendix C) relating to the award of the degree. The preliminary reports and joint recommendation of the examiners must together provide sufficiently detailed comments on the scope and quality of the work to justify the chosen recommendation (R15.6).

**Where the examiners are not in agreement, separate reports and recommendations must be submitted.**

#### R15.6 Recommendations available to the examiners following re-examination

Following the completion of the re-examination the examiners may recommend<sup>6</sup> that:

- a) the candidate is awarded the degree; or
- b) the candidate is awarded the degree subject to minor amendments being made to the thesis (see paragraph R15.7); or
- c) in the case of PhD examination, the candidate is awarded the degree of MPhil subject to the presentation of the thesis amended to the satisfaction of the examiners and provided that the candidate clearly satisfies the requirements for MPhil as indicated in R1.4 above; or
- d) the candidate is not awarded the degree and is not permitted to be re-examined (see R15.12).

#### R15.7 Minor amendments to the thesis following re-examination

Where minor amendments are required (as in options b) and c) above) the candidate must submit the corrected thesis **within four months FTE of the date of the oral examination**. The Research Degrees Committee may, where there are valid reasons for delay, approve an extension to this period.

Where the examiners recommend that the degree is awarded subject to the candidate amending the thesis to the satisfaction of the internal and/or the external examiner(s) (see sub-paragraph R15.6b), they must indicate on the appropriate form what amendments are required (see List of Forms at Appendix C).

#### R15.8 Dissenting examiners following re-examination

Where the examiners' recommendations are not unanimous, the Research Degrees Committee may:

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<sup>6</sup>Examiners may indicate informally their recommendation on the result of the examination to the candidate but they must make it clear that the decision rests with the Vice-Chancellor

- a) accept a majority recommendation (provided that the majority recommendation includes at least one external examiner);
- b) accept the recommendation of the external examiner; or
- c) require the appointment of an additional external examiner – especially if the internal examiner(s) disagree(s) strongly with the view of the external examiner; any such appointment must be made in accordance with the approved procedures for the appointment of examiners.

#### R15.9 Use of additional external examiners following re-examination

Where an additional external examiner is appointed under sub-paragraph R15.8c, he/she must prepare an independent preliminary report on the basis of the thesis and, if considered necessary, may conduct a further oral examination. The examiner must not be informed of the recommendations of the other examiners. On receipt of the report from the additional examiner the examination process will be completed as set out in R9.

#### R15.10 Use of a further examination to supplement the oral on re-examination

A further examination in addition to the oral examination may be requested by the examiners. In such cases the approval of the Research Degrees Committee must be sought without delay. Where such an examination is arranged following an oral examination, it must normally be held within two months of the oral examination date unless the Research Degrees Committee permits otherwise.

#### R15.11 Dispensing with the oral examination on re-examination

In the case of a re-examination under sub-paragraph R15.3b, where the examiners are of the opinion that the thesis is so unsatisfactory that no useful purpose would be served by conducting an oral examination, they may recommend that the Research Degrees Committee dispense with the oral examination and not award the degree under sub-paragraph R15.6c (see also paragraph R15.12).

#### R15.12 Failure on re-examination

The Vice-Chancellor may decide, on the recommendation of the examiners, that the degree is not awarded and that no re-examination is permitted. In such cases, the examiners must prepare an agreed statement of the deficiencies of the thesis and the reason for their recommendation, to be forwarded to the candidate by Registry Services staff.

#### R16 Appeals Against the Recommendations of Research Degree Assessors

The University has an Appeals Policy and Procedure which allows research degree candidates to appeal against decisions made by the University Research Degrees Committee on Confirmation of PhD decisions or Research Degree Examiner Panels for final award decisions. Candidates can appeal a decision and request for it to be reviewed on the following grounds:

- There has been an irregularity in the application of the published regulation, policy or procedure which has had an impact on the decision
- There is relevant new evidence or information which the candidate did not provide and the candidate has valid reason why it was not submitted at the time of the assessment.

Further details can be found under the University's Rules and Regulations web pages at [https://students.shu.ac.uk/regulations/appeals\\_and\\_complaints/Appeals%20Policy%20and%20Procedure.pdf](https://students.shu.ac.uk/regulations/appeals_and_complaints/Appeals%20Policy%20and%20Procedure.pdf).

R17 Complaints relating to the quality of the candidate's learning experience

The University has a Student Complaints Policy and Procedure which facilitates investigation and resolution of issues of dissatisfaction raised by students against teaching/supervision or service-related provision. Further details can be found under the University's Rules and Regulations web pages at [https://students.shu.ac.uk/regulations/appeals\\_and\\_complaints/Student%20Complaints%20Policy%20and%20Procedure.pdf](https://students.shu.ac.uk/regulations/appeals_and_complaints/Student%20Complaints%20Policy%20and%20Procedure.pdf).



# Article-based PhD

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## Guidance Notes for Staff and Students

**Student Systems and Records (Research Degrees)  
Registry Services**

The Research Degree Regulations for MPhil and PhD underpin these Guidance Notes

## The Article-based PhD at Sheffield Hallam University

### 1.1 Background

Sheffield Hallam University's Research Degrees Committee has agreed that the research degrees provision of the university would be enhanced by the introduction of an article-based PhD which aligns with the objectives for researcher development in the corporate plan 2008 to 2013. In adopting this approach, Sheffield Hallam is responding to the changing needs of researchers, some of whom are increasingly required to publish at an early stage in their careers. This model of PhD is not meant to supplant the traditional monograph style PhD and indeed, some subject areas may not wish to offer this route, but for some, it will provide an alternative route to gaining a doctorate, particularly for those candidates already in academia and pursuing publishing goals.

***The current research degree regulations relating to PhD award objectives and assessment criteria (outlined in 1.2 and 1.3 below) will apply to the new article-based route but the final submission will look substantially different. See section 1.4 for details.***

### 1.2 Current Award Objectives for the Degree of PhD

Sheffield Hallam University Research Degrees Regulations for PhD candidates outline the doctoral award objectives as follows:

#### R1.5 PhD award objectives

*The PhD will be awarded to a candidate who, having critically investigated and evaluated an approved topic, resulting in an independent and original contribution to knowledge, and demonstrated an understanding of research methods appropriate to the chosen field, has presented and defended a thesis by oral examination to the satisfaction of the examiners.*

### 1.3 Assessment for the award of PhD

In terms of assessment for the award, the criteria are set out in the examiner report form as follows:

- (i) Does the thesis represent an independent and original contribution to knowledge?
- (ii) For practice-based submissions, is the relationship between the theoretical and practical aspects satisfactorily articulated in the thesis (i.e., those consisting of a thesis and some form of accompanying creative output/artefact/scholarly work)?
- (iii) Does the thesis include a critical evaluation of the relevant literature?
- (iv) Does the thesis demonstrate an understanding of research methods in the appropriate field?

- (v) Is the thesis satisfactory as regards presentation and succinctness?
- (vi) Is the abstract an appropriately succinct synopsis of the thesis which states the nature and scope of the programme of research undertaken and the contribution made to knowledge of the subject?
- (vii) In the case of a candidate whose research programme is part of a collaborative group project, does the thesis indicate clearly the individual contribution and the extent of the collaboration?

#### **1.4 New guidelines on the format of the Article-based PhD**

The following text will be added as an appendix to the Research Degree Regulations (PhD/MPhil) which will allow PhD candidates to choose the format by which they present their thesis.

##### **Style of Theses**

PhD theses can be presented for examination in either monograph style or in article-based format (by peer reviewed journals) to the following word lengths:

##### ***Monograph style***

- PhD in science/engineering - 40,000 words
- PhD in social science/humanities - 80,000 words

##### ***Article-based***

- PhD in science/engineering - 20,000 words (*excluding the word count of the published material which is expected to be an additional 20,000 words*)
- PhD in social science/humanities - 40,000 words (*excluding the word count of the published material, which is expected to be a further 20,000 to 40,000 words*)

Monograph style is the conventional style in which theses are presented where the work is laid out as a series of chapters, typically having the following structure: introduction, literature review, method/methodology, results and conclusions.

An article-based thesis refers to the format in which a number of research articles (usually between 3 and 5 depending on the subject area) are produced by the PhD candidate during the period of candidature as a research student. These articles will either already be published or will be accepted for publication in \*peer-reviewed journals at the time of submission. It will usually comprise an introduction including an explanation of the research question(s), the research subject, relevant literature and methodology and a concluding chapter in which the results of the research are summarised and discussed.

\* see section 1.5 below

## 1.5 Guidance for Assessors at the Confirmation of PhD stage

At the RF2 stage, students planning to submit an Article-based PhD thesis should provide a list of proposed outputs and the journals (or other discipline specific appropriate outlets) in which they are hoped / scheduled to appear. Assessors should comment on the appropriateness of these for the particular topic of enquiry proposed, bearing in mind journal rankings where these are considered useful for the discipline but also remembering that specialised work may sometimes be more appropriately disseminated in niche publications. All journals (or other discipline specific appropriate outputs) in which the candidate has published/is proposing to publish, should be peer-reviewed and should be such as could credibly be included in the Research Excellence Framework.

<b>The articles forming the basis of the assessment will be as follows:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the articles will deal with the same research question or set of questions but the material in each one should not be a duplication of the others</li> <li>• the number of articles will depend on the scope of the work and on the candidate's contribution to them</li> <li>• the publications may be jointly written although the candidate must normally be the principal author of a major part of the work</li> <li>• In cases of multi-authored articles, candidates are required to indicate in the thesis appendix, by means of a list, their contribution to each article</li> <li>• <b><i>The articles must either be already published or accepted for publication by the editor in order to qualify for inclusion in the award</i></b></li> <li>• Students are required to seek and obtain copyright permission for their published work and will be required to sign a declaration to this effect which will be included in a thesis appendix</li> <li>• Students should take into account the IP (Intellectual Property) regulations of Sheffield Hallam University</li> <li>• <b>Candidates must agree the final content of the thesis, including the number of published papers and any related matters such as IP, ethics and confidentiality issues that may pertain to industrially sponsored research, with their supervisor(s).</b></li> </ul>

## 1.6 Timing and Suitability

PhD students, with the agreement of their supervisory team, must decide as early as possible, usually by the Confirmation of PhD stage, whether the thesis will take the form of a monograph or an article-based work. In certain instances, academic departments which feel the article-based approach is not appropriate to their academic discipline may decide to preclude students from submitting their PhD thesis in this format. Regardless of which approach is adopted, students are strongly encouraged to publish the results of their research in peer-reviewed journals and other publications in a timely fashion.

## **1.7 Examination**

All PhD candidates will continue to be examined by means of the viva voce examination (the oral assessment, a defence of the material presented) and are subject to the existing examination regulations and criteria for assessment of the thesis as outlined in section 1.3 above.

## **1.8 Change to the Research Degree Regulations**

The academic regulations relating to research degrees were updated from the 2010/11 session onwards to include the new article-based format for the award of PhD. Students registered under the previous regulations may, with the consent of their supervisor(s) and the appropriate Faculty Head of Research Programmes, present their research in this format.

## **1.9 Further Information**

If you have any queries, please contact the Head of Research Degrees or Head of Research Centre.



Research Degrees Committee

Terms of reference 2017-18

SHEFFIELD HALLAM UNIVERSITY

RESEARCH DEGREES COMMITTEE

TERMS OF REFERENCE

<b>1. Purpose</b>
To be accountable to the Creating Knowledge Board for delivery and development of the University's Research Degree Provision (PhDs, Professional Doctorates, MPhils and Masters by Research).
<b>2. Role</b>
<p>a. <b>Shaping and direction:</b> Establishing overall direction, prioritisation and coherence of research degree provision.</p> <p>b. <b>Oversight of delivery:</b> Ensuring that strategic plans and programmes of activity are in place, reviewing delivery of these, and ensuring that emerging difficulties and questions are resolved.</p> <p>c. <b>Resourcing:</b> Prioritising and allocating of strategic resources, and identifying external resources to support delivery of strategic outcomes.</p> <p>d. <b>Risk identification and management:</b> Identifying and reviewing strategic risks and agreeing and monitoring actions to address them.</p> <p>e. <b>Communication and engagement:</b> Overseeing plans and activities to communicate with and engage internal and external audiences with work under the committee.</p> <p>f. <b>Equalities:</b> Ensuring that the equality and diversity impacts of decisions and actions are reviewed and addressed.</p>
<b>3. Specific responsibilities</b>
<p>1. Academic governance of research degree regulations, policies and procedures regarding research student progression, assessment, and supervision (including authority to approve changes to regulations; institutional oversight of research degree examinations, supervisory capacity and workplanning, and research student learning contract content)</p>

2. Research degree quality and standards, external and internal audits and reviews (e.g. Research Excellence Framework, QAA audit)
3. Home and International research student recruitment strategies, including marketing, portfolio of provision, and collaborations (including oversight of student numbers, income streams, conditions of award, CMA compliance, and E&D monitoring)
4. Student experience and voice (including research student and supervisor training and development, community activities, retention, employability, opportunities for feedback, relations with the Students' Union regarding the student experience, and external assessments e.g. Postgraduate Research Experience Survey)
5. Fees policy, scholarships, and external funding (including oversight of collaborative partnerships, and relationships with external funders.)

#### 4. Membership

<b>Chair</b>	Doug Cleaver, Director, Doctoral School		
<b>Members</b>	PGR Lead from each of the 4 faculties	Chair of Research Ethics Committee	Head of Doctoral Training
	A Professional Doctorate Programme Lead	Head of Library Research Support	Lead of Student Systems and Records (Research Degrees)
	A Masters by Research Programme Lead	Representatives from Teaching Committee	Doctoral School Manager

- The Committee and its constitution will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains necessary and fit for purpose. The Chair will lead the review.
- Secretarial support for the Committee will be provided by Students Systems and Records (Research Degrees)

#### 5. Meetings

- Meetings to initially be held monthly
- Meetings to last no longer than 2 hours
- Quoracy of 6 members.

#### 6. Operational groups reporting to the Research Degrees Committee

- Task and finish groups established as and when required

**CURRENT LIST OF RESEARCH DEGREE FORMS 2017-18**

<b>Form</b>	<b>Description</b>
RF1	<i>Application for Approval of Research Programme</i>
RF2A	<i>Application for Confirmation of PhD</i>
RF2R	<i>Referred Application for Confirmation of PhD</i>
RF2P	<i>Assessors' Report for Confirmation of PhD</i>
RF2B	<i>Application for Transfer of Registration from PhD to MPhil</i>
RF3	<i>Application for Approval of the Examiners and Thesis Title</i>
RF4	<i>Notification of the Arrangements for the Oral Examination</i>
RF5M or RF5D	<i>Examiner's Preliminary Report and Recommendation on a Candidate for the Degree of MPhil or PhD</i>
RF6M or RF6D	<i>Examiners' Final Recommendation on a Candidate for the Degree of MPhil or PhD</i>
RF7M or RF7D	<i>Examiner's Preliminary Report and Recommendation on the Re-examination of a Candidate for the Degree of MPhil or PhD</i>
RF8M or RF8D	<i>Examiners' Final Recommendation on the Re-examination of a Candidate for the Degree of MPhil or PhD</i>
RF9	<i>Application for Changes to Registration (Additional Time to Complete, Suspension, Change in Mode of Study, Change of Supervisory Arrangements, Shortening of Period of Registration, and Notification of Withdrawal of Registration)</i>
RF10	<i>Application for Transfer of Registration between Institutions</i>
RFConf	<i>Application for Confidentiality of Thesis</i>
RFAB	<i>Application for Approval of Article-based PhD</i>

**This guidance has been adapted from the 'Evidence to support a Request to Repeat an Assessment Attempt (RRAA) application' for Taught Students under the Extenuating Circumstances Policy**

If your circumstances are having a detrimental impact on your ability to undertake an oral examination for a research degree award, you will need to make a case to the Chair of the University Research Degrees Committee in line with Regulation R9.3.

Your request needs to be accompanied with evidence to enable us to understand your situation fully. The evidence should confirm the circumstances that have affected you, confirm the start and end dates of when you have been affected, and be from an independent and authoritative third party.

**Independent** means that they are not personally connected with you in any way. **Authoritative** means that they are a recognised expert for the evidence they are providing. All medical certificates or statements should be:

- written by appropriately qualified professionals who are independent to you;
- original, on headed paper and signed by the author;
- dated, to confirm that the date of the illness is around the dates of assessment;
- in English with any translation of supporting documentation undertaken by an authorised translator (which you will be required to organise and, if required, pay for).

**Evidence Requirements:**

The table below gives examples of the type of evidence the Chair of the Research Degrees Committee, in consultation with the examiners, would expect to see to support your request to postpone an oral examination. The examples of how these circumstances can be evidenced are illustrative and should not be read as exhaustive:

Bereavement of a family member/friend	<p><u>Purpose:</u> to confirm the death. Should include the name of the deceased, and either the date of the death or the ceremony/service.</p> <p><u>Evidence:</u> death certificate; order of service; letter from a minister of religion, medical practitioner<sup>7</sup> or officer of the law; obituary notice; newspaper announcement.</p>
Ongoing impact from a bereavement	<p><u>Purpose:</u> to support the impact of the bereavement.</p> <p><u>Evidence:</u> letter of confirmation from a relevant support organisation or network; letter from a medical practitioner<sup>1</sup> or accredited counsellor. This must contain your name.</p>

<sup>7</sup> Medical practitioner can be a GP, specialist, or a registered professional in a psychiatric practice.

Hospital admission	<p><u>Purpose:</u> to confirm the date of admission, length of stay and nature of the treatment.</p> <p><u>Evidence:</u> an appointment or discharge letter from the hospital, outpatient's appointment or A&amp;E attendance. This must contain your name.</p>
Worsening of an ongoing condition	<p><u>Purpose:</u> to confirm the exacerbation of the circumstances (not just the circumstances themselves).</p> <p><u>Evidence:</u> letter from a medical practitioner<sup>1</sup>. This must contain your name.</p>
Symptoms of an illness or condition awaiting a formal diagnosis	<p><u>Purpose:</u> to confirm the treatment attendance dates, when tests were undertaken and when a diagnosis is expected. Note: this should not solely be related to routine tests.</p> <p><u>Evidence:</u> letter from a medical practitioner<sup>1</sup>. This must contain your name.</p>
Personal illness or impact of prescribed medication	<p><u>Purpose:</u> to confirm the dates when the illness affected the student and how.</p> <p><u>Evidence:</u> letter from a medical practitioner<sup>1</sup>; doctor's notes; hospital letter; hospital appointment letter; image copy of prescription medication (date of prescription must be visible) and noted side effects. This must contain your name. To account for absence from an examination, you can submit a self-certification medical form (found on Shuspace) as evidence.</p>
Illness of a close family member/dependent or friend	<p><u>Purpose:</u> to confirm the dates and nature of the illness.</p> <p><u>Evidence:</u> letter from a medical practitioner<sup>1</sup>; doctor's notes; hospital letter; hospital appointment letter; letter of confirmation from a relevant support organisation.</p>
Serious personal accident or injury of self or close family member/friend	<p><u>Purpose:</u> to confirm the date of the accident or injury.</p> <p><u>Evidence:</u> a copy of an accident report provided by a police officer, Magistrate or Magistrate's Clerk; a formal insurance claim; or a letter from a medical practitioner<sup>1</sup>. This must contain the name of the person concerned.</p>
Significant adverse personal or family circumstances	<p><u>Purpose:</u> to confirm the circumstances being reported, time when they occurred and whether they are continuing.</p> <p><u>Evidence:</u> letter from one or more of the following: a medical practitioner<sup>1</sup>, a social worker, a registered psychological therapist, a registered professional in a psychiatric practice, an officer of the law, a teacher outside of the University, a minister of religion.</p>
Impact of natural disaster (e.g. severe weather which prevents attendance or submission, major breakdown in transport system)	<p><u>Purpose:</u> to confirm the incidence in terms of its nature and severity.</p> <p><u>Evidence:</u> letter from the police or other authority (depending on the nature of the incidence); newspaper article; evidence of flight cancellations or local conditions with supplementary evidence to link the delays to the disaster.</p>

<p>Serious personal disruption (e.g. victim of crime, court attendance, breakdown of a long term relationship, service with reserve forces)</p>	<p><u>Purpose:</u> to confirm the events reported.</p> <p><u>Evidence:</u> letter of confirmation from a relevant organisation; solicitor's letter; letter from courts; divorce petition; written evidence from: the police (including, but not limited to, a crime reference number), counsellor, social worker, victim support, etc. This must contain your name.</p>
<p>Evidence of a requirement for reasonable adjustments provided too late to be taken into account in the delivery or assessment of a module.</p>	<p><u>Purpose:</u> to confirm the situation regarding a recently disclosed medical condition/disability.</p> <p><u>Evidence:</u> statement from a SHU Disability or Wellbeing Advisor.</p>
<p>Personal participation in activities at a national/international level (e.g. sport, drama, art and design, writing)</p>	<p><u>Purpose:</u> to confirm the requirement for the student to be available on specified dates.</p> <p><u>Evidence:</u> official correspondence from the relevant organisation.</p>
<p>Work commitments for a part time student</p>	<p><u>Purpose:</u> to confirm the unexpected and higher than usual workload for the student which has reduced the time available for study.</p> <p><u>Evidence:</u> letter from employer on company headed paper.</p>

*Assessment, Awards and Regulations  
Registry Services*