

Code of Practice for Research Degree Students

Incorporating:

Research Degree Regulations
Research Degree Procedures
Guidance Notes for Examiners
Guidance Notes for Annual Review Panels

DE MONTFORT UNIVERSITY

2010

Code of Practice for Research Degree Students

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Code of Practice - Introduction

This code is issued in accordance with the QAA Code of Practice for the assurance of Academic quality and standards in higher education, with particular reference to Section 1: Postgraduate research programmes – September 2004.

De Montfort University aims by production of this Code to put in place effective arrangements to maintain appropriate academic standards and to enhance the quality of postgraduate research programmes.

All documentation in relation to the Code of Practice is readily available to students and staff through the website and in hard copy. These documents will be reviewed from time to time by Higher Degrees Committee, which is a Standing Committee of the Academic Board of the University.

The academic authority for this Code of Practice is provided by the Academic Board of the University and is executed on its behalf by the Higher Degrees Committee. The Higher Degrees Committee will monitor the success of its postgraduate research programmes against appropriate internal and/or external indicators and targets.

Academic Registrar
De Montfort University

Research Degree Regulations

De Montfort University

2010

Research Degree Regulations

1. Introduction

1.1 These Regulations come into force on 1st September 2010, and their provisions replace all earlier Research Degree Regulations in force up to that date. These regulations shall apply to all research degree students still registered at this time and beyond.

1.2 The Regulations prescribe the conditions under which applicants are able to qualify for the award of the research degrees of Master of Philosophy (MPhil) and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) of De Montfort University.

- a) Students studying for these awards have a legal commitment to all relevant De Montfort University research degree student Regulations and Procedures.
- b) Research degree students will only be accepted into an environment that provides support for doing and learning about research and where high quality research is occurring.
- c) Research degree students will be registered in a subject area which has a critical mass of research activity within it.
- d) Sufficient facilities for the research project, including library and IT facilities will be available.
- e) The award of the degree will be based on work conducted during a period of registration under an approved supervisory team, under such conditions as prescribed by the Regulations. (Except for students registered under Regulation 11.3.

1.3 The Degree of Master of Philosophy (MPhil) and the Degree of MA/MSc by Research

The degree of MPhil is awarded to recognise the successful completion, under such conditions as are prescribed by Regulations, of a supervised programme of individual research, the results of which have been satisfactorily embodied in a thesis (together, under certain circumstances, with another form of presentation as defined in paragraph 1.7 below), and which:

- a) demonstrate an understanding of research methods appropriate to the field of study; and
- b) demonstrate critical investigation and evaluation of the topic of research.

1.4 The Degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

The degree of PhD is awarded to recognise the successful completion, under such conditions as are prescribed by Regulations, of a supervised programme of individual research, the results of which have been satisfactorily embodied in a thesis (or other presentation as defined in paragraph 1.7 below), and which:

- a) demonstrate an understanding of research methods appropriate to the field of study; and
- b) demonstrate critical investigation and evaluation of the topic of research; and
- c) constitute an independent and original contribution to knowledge; and
- d) demonstrate the candidate's ability to undertake further research without supervision.

1.5 Candidates enrolled at another Institution to study for a research degree are not eligible for admission, enrolment or registration for a research degree at De Montfort University, unless their enrolment elsewhere is terminated.

1.6 Except where the Higher Degrees Committee Sub-Committee has allowed otherwise at registration stage, the thesis must be presented and defended in the English language. (See Regulation 11.2).

1.7 When permitted at the time of registration the thesis may be augmented by the presentation of work relating to an exhibition, performance or other creative work; or the submission of published work, together with a substantial commentary. More detailed Regulations relating to these approaches are given in Regulation 11.

2. Admission Requirements and Processes

2.1 Students can be admitted as candidates for:

- a) MPhil
- b) MA /MSc
- c) MPhil with possibility of transfer to PhD (MPhil/PhD)
- d) PhD
- e) PhD by Published Works

2.2 An offer of admission to a programme of supervised research shall be linked to a specified research topic, and to two named supervisors for the probationary period from enrolment. These can be changed at registration. Research degree students will only be accepted into an environment that provides support for doing and learning about research and where high quality research is occurring

- 2.3** Whilst any offer of admission can be made only by the Academic Registrar (or nominee), it must bear the recommendation of the relevant Dean of Faculty/Head of Independent Research Centre (or nominee), who thereby undertakes to arrange the necessary facilities and supervision if the offer is accepted. Such recommendation must also make clear which aspects of the programme, if any, will be undertaken outside University premises.

An offer of admission shall be made on fixed entry points agreed by the University. These are: 1st October; 1st January; 1st April & 1st July.

- 2.4** The maximum period of probation is six months for full-time students and twelve months for part-time students. For students following the MA/MSc by Research programme only, the maximum period of probation is three months for full-time and six months for part-time. Students whose probationary period has expired before registration is approved by the Higher Degrees Committee Sub-Committee will be deemed as unsatisfactory and the University has the right to terminate the student's enrolment. Exceptionally application can be made to extend the probationary period. Applications should be made to the Chair of the Higher Degrees Committee.

- 2.5** In order to be admitted as a candidate for MPhil, MA/MSc with or without the possibility of transfer to PhD, an applicant shall normally:

- a) possess a UK Honours degree with at least an upper second class honours, or an academic or professional qualification which the Higher Degrees Committee Sub-Committee deems to be equivalent; and
- b) demonstrate competence in the use of the English language to the satisfaction of the Higher Degrees Committee Sub-Committee. Normally required is a minimum score of 6.5 in an International English Language Test Score (IELTS or equivalent) test. This shall have been taken not more than two years prior to entry.

Guidance on the equivalence of qualifications is available from the Academic Registry.

- 2.6** In order to be admitted directly as a candidate for PhD, an applicant shall normally possess, **in addition to the requirements of 2.5**, a UK Master's degree in a relevant subject. This shall normally have been awarded within five years of the date of application; exceptions may be allowed when there is evidence of continuing scholarship. Alternatively an academic or professional qualification which the Higher Degrees Committee Sub-Committee deems to be equivalent may be considered. Applicants without an undergraduate degree but who have been awarded a UK Master's degree may also be considered.

It should be noted that the above reference to a UK Master's degree relates to a

Master's qualification that is postgraduate rather than undergraduate in level.

- 2.7** Applicants without the normal qualifications outlined above will be considered for registration by the Higher Degrees Committee Sub-Committee on the student's merits in relation to the nature of the proposed research programme.
- 2.8** A condition of admission for applicants without normal qualifications is the provision of at least two reference(s), concerning the applicant's academic ability and fitness to conduct research.
- 2.9** Applicants wishing to pursue a non-standard programme of research (e.g. by published works) are subject to the same admission protocols and procedures.
- 2.10** Students admitted onto the MA/MSc by Research cannot transfer to MPhil or PhD
- 2.11** An applicant whose work forms part of a group project may be registered for a Research Degree, provided that the Higher Degrees Committee Sub-Committee is satisfied that the applicant's part of the project is distinguishable for the purposes of assessment, and is appropriate for the award sought. In such a case, the application for admission must indicate clearly the individual's contribution and its relationship to the group project.
- 2.12** EU and International applicants proposing to conduct their research at a remote location outside the UK are eligible for consideration for admission and subsequent registration on the International PhD Programme, provided that the following conditions are fulfilled:
- a) In addition to the Regulation 5 regarding the appointment of the supervisory team, only persons who are members of academic staff of the University with relevant research expertise for the applicant's research programme are eligible to be First and Second supervisors. In addition, normally a local advisor/supervisor shall be nominated. The relevant HDC sub-committee will require a written case to be made for the absence from the supervisory team of a local advisor.
 - b) there is evidence that appropriate and adequate facilities are available for the student to conduct their research in the remote location and within the University
 - c) the arrangements proposed for supervision must enable frequent and substantial contact between the student and the UK-based supervisor(s). These arrangements must be approved during completion of a Study Protocol document which will take place within 3 months of enrolment for Full Time students and 6 months for Part Time. This contact should be by the most appropriate means such as face-to-face and/or email and/or video-conferencing. The student should normally prepare for and undergo the final oral examination at the University

- d) student and supervisor must meet together at least once per year, normally at the DMU Leicester Campus. All students must attend the DMU Leicester campus at least once prior to submission of their examinable thesis.
- e) Students on the International PhD Programme cannot attend the DMU Leicester campus for more than 12 weeks in any one year; in this instance they will be transferred to Full Time based in the UK.

2.13 Faculties must ensure that their procedures for the selection and admission of research students show the ability to demonstrate that:

- a) admissions procedures are clear and consistently applied;
- b) only appropriately qualified and/or prepared students are admitted after a scrutiny of the appropriate references;
- c) admissions decisions involve the judgement of more than one of the institution's staff with relevant expertise and appropriate training;
- d) admissions procedures promote equality of opportunity;
- e) appropriate supervision in the research area applying to a prospective candidate is available;
- f) language proficiency has been appropriately assessed and, if not yet at the required Institutional level, the admission will be conditional on reaching that level;
- g) applicants are interviewed. Appropriate measures and records must be put in place for overseas students who may be unable to attend an interview at the institution. The "interview conducted" box on the Application Form for Admission to a Research Programme (e.g. MPhil/PhD) must carry the signature and printed name of an appropriate person in the faculty involved with the lodging of the application/interview papers in the records;
- h) confidentiality has been maintained through the process;
- i) the student is aware of facilities and space to be made available to them;
- j) the student is aware of the choice of supervisory team, nature of the supervisory arrangements and 'contract', and that the supervisors have attended the Certificate in Research Supervision course;
- k) the expectations of the student in relation to academic and social conduct

and performance are clear;

- l) the student is aware of the requirements and availability of training;
- m) applicants have been made aware of any relevant institutional funds/bursaries to support students;
- n) the Institution can be assured that the student has sufficient financial support to complete the Research Degree Programme.

These criteria must be capable of being demonstrated at audit by appropriate Faculty records. The procedures are to be applied to all prospective research students including those who are self-funded.

2.14 An applicant who has been granted admission becomes a candidate.

3. Enrolment and the Payment of Tuition Fees

- 3.1** A candidate cannot commence his/her programme of study until they have enrolled as a student studying for a Research Degree. He/she will then **automatically** be re-enrolled at the start of each academic session throughout the programme. This means that, unless good reason has been provided for registration to be interrupted or terminated, fees will continue to be charged. Students enrolled on MPhil or PhD and based in the UK are required to attend the Induction Programme within six months of enrolment and must refer to the Research Training Handbook for information regarding the completion of other relevant compulsory courses. Students enrolled on MA or MSc and based in the UK are required to attend the Faculty Induction Programme within three months of enrolment and must refer to their Faculty Research Training Handbook.
- 3.2** Students will normally be expected to enrol at one of the fixed entry points outlined in 2.2 above. Continued enrolment and registration is subject to the payment of annual fees, their level to be defined by the University.
- 3.3** Candidates who enrol during an academic session (i.e. not at its start) are liable to pay a proportion of the fee for the whole session. In subsequent sessions, they shall be liable for the full annual fee.
- 3.4** There may be an opportunity to pay by instalments. (Further information can be obtained from the Finance Office or the Academic Registry.)
- 3.5** At the end of the student's research work he/she is entitled to a six month writing-up period, during which no fees are paid. MA/MSc by Research students are entitled to a three month writing up period. However, notification to the Graduate School Office of the start of this period must be made, with the support of the First Supervisor. Should a student fail to complete during his/her writing-up period, liability for a continuation fee will apply until the thesis is submitted to the

Graduate School Office for examination. If Regulation 17.3 is invoked the student will also be liable to pay continuation fees.

- 3.6** Probationary Students wishing to interrupt their studies during the probationary period following enrolment should complete the INT1 form. Interruptions will require the approval of the First Supervisor and the Chair of the Faculty's Research Degrees Committee. If the First Supervisor is also the Chair of the Faculty's Research Degrees Committee the second signatory must be a senior member of the Faculty's Research Degrees Committee.

4. Probation, Registration, Confidentiality, IPR

- 4.1** A candidate shall be enrolled on a probationary basis for MPhil, MA/MSc by Research, MPhil/PhD or PhD at enrolment for his/her supervised programme of research and/or any other studies, which may be required.
- a) During that time the student will be supervised by the first and second supervisor allocated to them at the time of admission unless a change in probationary supervision has been authorised by the Chair of the Higher Degrees Committee. The student's status shall remain probationary until the Higher Degrees Committee Sub-Committee has approved registration. Registration is approved by the appropriate Faculty Research Degrees Committee.
 - b) MPhil and PhD probationary students shall carry out a Training Needs Analysis in conjunction with their probationary supervisory team. MA/MSc by Research probationary students will complete a Training Needs Statement in conjunction with their probationary supervisory team. Documentation must be completed within three months of enrolment for full-time students and six months for a part-time student. Upon completion the Training Needs Analysis/Statement forms shall be returned to the Graduate School Office to determine the student's research training programme profile.
 - c) A probationary MPhil or PhD student must attend an induction component of the Research Training Programme at which the nature and operation of the Personal Development Planning (PDP) process will be outlined. Probationary students based overseas should refer to their Study Protocol document for guidance on completing the training programme. Students are normally expected to elect to participate in the ensuing stages of the PDP process which take place across the full duration of their project..
- 4.2** As stated in Regulation 2.4, application for approval of registration **must** be made to the Higher Degrees Committee Sub-Committee normally at the next available meeting and in any event within six months of enrolment for full-time students and within twelve months of enrolment for part-time students. Those enrolled on the MA/MSc by Research must complete their applications within three months of enrolment for full-time students and within 6 months of enrolment for part-time

students. The application must be made with the authority of the Dean of Faculty/Head of Centre (or nominee) on the appropriate form.

- 4.3** If an application for registration is not made jointly by the probationary student and supervision team to the relevant Higher Degrees Committee Sub-Committee within the period specified above the University has the right to terminate the probationary enrolment. Unless a case for extending the probationary period is approved by the Chair of the relevant Higher Degrees Committee Sub-Committee.
- 4.4** An Application to Register cannot be considered by a Higher Degrees Committee Sub-Committee until the candidate has completed the enrolment procedure.
- 4.5** Applications, even after they have received approval by the faculty assessor, will be returned by the Graduate School Office to the Supervisor if there are omissions or contain incorrect information.
- 4.6** Exceptionally, the thesis may be classified as confidential for a period of up to two years from the conferment date. Approval of such restriction must, whenever possible, be sought at the time of initial registration but approval at a later stage is possible if change in circumstances or research direction dictate such a need.

Applications must give precise and relevant reasons for seeking restriction of access. The Higher Degrees Committee Sub-Committee will normally only approve an application for confidentiality in order to enable a patent application or similar protection of Intellectual Property to be lodged or to protect commercially sensitive material.

- 4.7** The copyright and other intellectual property rights in relation to theses and other work prepared and submitted by students in the course of their studies shall belong to the University, except where specifically agreed otherwise by the University in writing. However, nothing in the Regulations shall be considered to be a waiver of the moral rights of the students.

Material such as laboratory notebooks, computer coding and studio maquettes produced as a necessary part of the project remain the property of the University and must be passed to the first supervisor by the end of the examination procedures and before graduation. If appropriate, the supervisor may authorise, on behalf of the University the production of copies of such material for the student's subsequent use.

Unless approval for restriction is given the thesis will be lodged via hard copy and electronically with the De Montfort University Library. Through the British Library Electronic Theses On-line System (EThOS) information is automatically passed onto the British Library.

For information relating to Intellectual Property Rights, refer to the General Regulations and Procedures affecting students.

4.8 Ethical Approval shall be part of the Registration process:

- a) All research undertaken towards the completion of a research degree at De Montfort University should be conducted:
 - i) within the law
 - ii) with academic integrity
 - iii) in accord with a relevant code of research ethics.
- b) Students, staff, research students and their supervisor must seek ethical or statutory approval for research involving human or animal subjects, lasers, biological and/or radiological hazards prior to commencement of work that falls within such approvals. Details of procedures for these are included in 'The Research Degree Procedures of De Montfort University'.
- c) Responsibilities of students are detailed below:
 - i) Research degree students have personal responsibility for the maintenance of high standards of ethics in the conduct of their research.
 - ii) Research degree students must familiarize themselves with a relevant code of research ethics and conduct their enquiry in accord with the recommendations and requirements of that code.
 - iii) Where research is given approval by a relevant Research Ethics Committee of De Montfort University, this does not absolve the student from personal responsibility with regard to the continued observance of high standards of research ethics throughout the duration of the research.
 - iv) Codes of ethics do not provide researchers with rules that cover all circumstances. Sometimes decisions need to be made that involve matters of academic, professional and moral judgement. In such circumstances, there needs to be a conscious consideration of the issues and explicit justification for the decisions taken.
- d) Responsibilities of the University with regard to the ethical approval of research undertaken as part of a research degree are specified in Section 4 of the University's Research Degrees Procedures.

4.9 On receipt and consideration of an application for registration, the Higher Degrees Committee Sub-Committee shall seek to satisfy itself that:

- a) That Group A Generic research training programme courses have been satisfactorily completed and ensuring that all stages of the programme will

be undertaken, including faculty based elements;

- b) the area of study can be investigated to the depth required to obtain the degree which the student seeks;
- c) it might reasonably be expected that the work can be completed within the designated time scale;
- d) the necessary resources (e.g. library, computing, laboratory facilities, technical assistance) will be available;
- e) any requested confidentiality will be considered;
- f) there is provision for a supervisory team consisting of at least two members of academic staff, one of who shall be designated as the First Supervisor with overall responsibility for the student and that this can be maintained throughout the research period;
- g) at least two members of the supervision team should be demonstrably research active academics with relevant knowledge and skills to supervise;
- h) the proposed working title does not include acronyms;
- i) in the case of MPhil/PhD registration, a draft of the intended direction of the PhD work is provided and is adequate for PhD level work.

4.10 The Committee shall:

- a) confirm registration; or
- b) confirm the registration on condition that certain requirements as requested by the Higher Degrees Committee Sub-Committee are met; and/or recommend special scrutiny at the transfer stage; or
- c) defer the application; refer back to the First Supervisor and student for revision and re-submission, during which time the student continues under probation; or
- d) dismiss the application, in which case the registration of the student shall not be approved, and the student's probationary enrolment shall end. If the decision to dismiss the application is on academic grounds the provisions of Regulation 20 below shall apply. Dismissal on academic grounds will require evidence of monitoring as detailed in regulation 6.2 (k) below, including evidence of due warnings to the student.

Conditions noted in the minutes shall, whenever possible, be addressed by the time of the next meeting of the Higher Degrees Committee Sub-Committee.

- 4.11** Probationary students for registration without the normal qualifications outlined in Regulation 2.5 and 2.6 will be considered by the Higher Degrees Committee Sub-Committee on their merits in relation to the nature of the proposed research programme. Professional experience or publications, written reports or other appropriate evidence of accomplishment will be taken into consideration. As a condition of registration, the Higher Degrees Committee Sub-Committee may require such a probationary student to pass a specified examination or test and/or complete a probationary period of set studies involving formal assessment.

5. Nomination and Appointment of Supervisors

- 5.1** When a student is admitted for a research degree and enters the probationary period, the Dean of Faculty (or nominee) or Head of Independent Research Centre shall nominate two supervisors. Once supervisory arrangements have been approved by the Higher Degrees Committee Sub-Committee, any future proposed changes to supervisory arrangements shall be submitted by the First Supervisor (or nominee) for approval by the Committee.
- 5.2** The University will require a supervisory team to have a combined experience of supervising at least one research degree student to successful completion. In the case of a PhD, one of the supervisors must normally have successfully supervised to PhD level.
- 5.3** All decisions of the Higher Degrees Committee Sub-Committee are sent to the First Supervisor whose responsibility it is to inform the student and other members of the supervision team.
- 5.4** A person who is registered for a research degree is normally ineligible to act as a First Supervisor for another research degree student, but can act as a second supervisor or advisor. A member of staff registered for PhD by Published Works may also, in exceptional circumstances, be appointed by the relevant Higher Degrees Committee Sub-Committee as a First Supervisor for a research degree student. Cases must be supported by a written statement signed by both the student and the supervision team involved.
- 5.5** Only persons who are members of academic staff of the University are eligible for appointment as first supervisors.
- 5.6** In addition to the supervisors, an adviser or advisers may be proposed, in order to, for example, contribute some specialised knowledge or provide a link with an external organisation.
- 5.7** A member of academic staff should normally be first supervisor to no more than six students for a research degree at any one time. When a supervisor wishes to be supervisor for more than eight students in total then an application can be made with the approval of the Dean of Faculty/Head of Independent Research Centre to a

Working Party of Higher Degrees Committee for an individual to take on an additional supervisory load for a specified period.

- 5.8** All nominated supervisors must have attended the Certificate in Research Supervision course. A CRS ‘Sharing Good Practice’ course will be available for all supervisors who have not attended the full CRS recently. Supervisors will be expected to attend this course when required.

6. Responsibilities of Supervisors and of Students

6.1 The principal responsibilities of the Supervisors are:

- a) To read and comply with the current versions of the *Research Degree Regulations and the Research Degree Procedures of De Montfort University* and such University documents as are relevant to the work including those dealing with ethics, intellectual property rights and health and safety. They must ensure that the student is aware of regulations which affect his/her conduct and/or work.
- b) To ensure that a student on initial enrolment, i.e. during his/her probationary period is introduced to staff and the local environment; local facilities, both technical and social; other University facilities such as the library, the Student’s Union, the Health Centre and refectories and is made aware of safety procedures and fire evacuation routes.
- c) To give assistance to students in defining and planning the research topic and the associated timetable. Be part of the probationary supervisory team which undertakes the Training Needs Analysis with the student within three months of enrolment for full-time probationary students and six months for a part-time probationary student. This will help determine the content of the individual Student’s Research Training Programme.

Supervisors are also expected to reinforce advice and guidance on the nature of research evident in the Research Training Programme, including: research design and planning; research methods, literature searches, sources and referencing; the presentation of academic work; ethical and legal matters including plagiarism and intellectual property rights.

- d) To ensure that the student attends and fulfils any requirements in terms of the Generic and Faculty Research Training Programme.
- e) To assist students in the preparation of Form RDC: R Application to Register for a Research Degree.
- f) To maintain regular contact through formal, scheduled meetings held with students which should be set at the start of each academic year. (See Regulation 6.4 below). The whole supervision team should meet with the

student at least once a year.

- g) To attend the University supervisor-training course leading to the Certificate in Research Supervision. Details of this can be gained from the Graduate School Office. It is expected that all research supervisors in the University will have attended the course. No supervision team will be approved unless at least one member has successfully completed the course. Also members should attend the CRS Refresher 'Sharing Good Practice' course when required.

6.2 The distinct responsibilities of the First Supervisor principally are:

- a) To make certain that all the necessary documentation and procedures concerning the approval of successive stages of the student's progress from registration to the final degree are dealt with. All documentation needs to be accurate and complete. The First Supervisor must confirm that it is and ensure that it is submitted to the Faculty Assessor in good time for onward transmission to the Graduate School Office and the Higher Degrees Committee Sub-Committee.
- b) To liaise with the student to ensure that the Graduate School Office is kept informed of any changes in a student's enrolment or registration details.
- c) To take overall responsibility for providing academic leadership for the student's programme of research work via constructive criticism at the appropriate stages in the work, with an overall objective of attempting to inculcate progressively greater independence in the student as the project progresses. The First Supervisor must ensure that any weaknesses are drawn to the student's attention in a timely manner and that the student is given the opportunity to take remedial action with guidance. See 8.2 below.

Where a candidate has to make revisions to a transfer report it should be recognised that an intensive period of supervision may be required to ensure prompt submission of the revised document.

- d) Prior to admission, to liaise with the Faculty staff member responsible for the commitment of funds to research projects to ensure that appropriate funding is available for the research project.
- e) To aid the Graduate School Office in keeping the external sponsors of a research student, where applicable, informed of the progress made by the student on his/her project on a regular basis.
- f) To take an active role in introducing the student not only to fellow workers and staff in the institution but also to external researchers in the field and to the appropriate academic bodies and societies.

- g) To ensure the continuity of supervision of his/her students. This will include co-ordinating the contributions to the supervision by Second Supervisors and Advisors. To make alternative arrangements if any member of the supervisory team is unavailable for a significant period of time.
- h) To maintain regular and appropriately frequent contact with the student. This should be both by an established schedule of formal meetings and via ad hoc and informal interactions. The scheduled meetings must be largely free of interruptions and of sufficient duration to allow for detailed discussion of the student's work. Their frequency should be tailored to suit the current stage of the research programme but normally be once per month for full-time students and once every two months for part-time students.
- i) There shall be a formal Annual Review Panel held to monitor the progress of the student on his/her research and to monitor Research Training Components and schedule set out in the Training Needs Analysis. (For students enrolling from October 2005) This will be organised by the First Supervisor (or nominee). Please refer to the 'Guidance Notes for the Annual Review Panel'.
- j) To seek independent advice, as appropriate, from the Chair of the Faculty Research Degrees Committee or Chair of Higher Degrees Committee on supervisory issues. This is likely to be especially relevant where the supervisor has concerns about a student's ability or application to the Research programme.
- k) To ensure the student makes notes of scheduled formal meetings via the 'Progress Report' form. This process must be completed via MyDmu. These will contribute to the monitoring and assessing of a student's progress in relation to the agreed schedule of work. It is also to be expected that Second Supervisors would contribute to these scheduled meetings on a regular basis to ensure that Second Supervisors provide support services as appropriate. A meeting of the whole supervision team should take place at least once a year.
- l) To ensure that the student is aware of the need to exercise probity and conduct his/her research according to ethical principles, and of the implications of research misconduct.
- m) To make the student aware of any unsatisfactory work or progress and as appropriate to suggest such action as might be taken on a remedial basis.
- n) To ensure the participation of their students in internal research seminars. This will include the presentation to research colleagues of their current

research findings.

- o) To encourage students to submit papers for publication when appropriate parts of the research are completed.
- p) To keep the student informed of the necessary completion dates of various stages of the work particularly, if applicable, the transfer from MPhil to Ph.D, in order to ensure timely completion.
- q) To provide relevant advice for students whose first language is not English. This should include arranging a referral to appropriate support services, so that the student can continue to improve his/her spoken English throughout the programme in order to prepare and defend the thesis effectively in English.
- r) To comment on the material in the final draft of the thesis within two months, unless good reasons are put forward to the Chair of the Higher Degrees Committee for a longer period, giving advice on its suitability for submission. Guidance on preparation for the oral examination must be given and the desirability of a practice examination discussed with the student.
- s) To co-ordinate the examination process (with delegation to the Second supervisor where necessary) as follows:
 - i) To complete the “Approval of Examiners” form three months prior to the proposed date of the examination and to submit the form to the Higher Degrees Committee via the Graduate School Office.
 - ii) To inform the examination team of their nomination and subsequent approval.
 - iii) Normally, if the student requests, to hold a mock viva. This is to be organised by the supervisor(s).
 - iv) On behalf of the Dean of Faculty/Head of Independent Research Centre concerned, to make the administrative arrangements for the oral examination. This involves consulting the external and internal examiners as appropriate, notifying all concerned of the date, time and place of the oral examination and attending the examination to answer questions unless the student has expressed a wish to the contrary.
 - v) To complete Section B of the “master copy” of the Examiners Report Form and to pass this to the internal examiner immediately before the examination. The report must provide contextual information on the student’s work, e.g. mentioning any technical problems experienced during the research or any personal difficulties faced by the student.

vi) Following an examination where examiners require minor corrections or major revisions to be made to the thesis, to obtain details of these from the examiners and to pass them on to the student. This should be done as soon as possible and within one week of the date of the examination at the latest.

t) To enable the student to comment on the choice of examiners.

6.3 The principal responsibilities of the student are:

a) To study the current versions of the *Research Degree Regulations and the Research Degree Procedures of De Montfort University* and such University documents as are relevant to his/her work including those dealing with ethics, intellectual property rights and health and safety. Students must comply with these documents.

b) As soon as possible after enrolment to discuss and agree with his/her First and Second Supervisors* (who are allocated to the student by the Dean of Faculty or nominee, subject to approval by the Higher Degrees Committee Sub-Committee on registration) the following aspects of his/her work:

i) The general area and specific topic or focus of the proposed work and its aims and objectives.

ii) The schedule of work and associated broad timetable, taking into account holidays and any proposed times of absence from the institution. In particular paying attention to the timing of the transfer report in line with Regulation 13.

*NB The appropriate Dean of Faculty or nominee will play a role here in ensuring the transition from enrolment to registration is covered smoothly.

iii) The methodology to be employed for the work recognising the need for this to be kept under review as the project proceeds.

iv) The attendance at the Generic and Faculty Research Training Programme and for students enrolling after 1st October 2005 completion of the Training Needs Analysis/Statement within three months of enrolment (six months for part-time students)

v) The broad programme of attendance required at internal seminars as well as external conferences, which are relevant to the area of work.

vi) The constitution of the supervisory team for the research degree programme, identifying the First Supervisor, Second Supervisor(s)

and any Advisors.

- vii) The completion of the form RDC:R *Application to Register for a Research Degree* within the time stipulated in the regulations.
- c) To inform the University Graduate School Office of any alterations or amendments to the enrolment or registration details in consultation with the First Supervisor.
- d) To ensure that the institution through the University Graduate School Office, Faculty and First Supervisor is able to make contact with him/her when he /she is not on campus.
- e) To take ultimate responsibility for his/her research activity and candidacy for the degree and to appreciate that this will require a commitment to give sufficient time and effort to the research programme until it is completed. The student must maintain the progress of the work in accordance with the stages agreed with supervisors, including, in particular, the presentation of written material as required in sufficient time to allow for comments and discussion before proceeding to the next stage. This will include providing reports on his/her work as required.
- f) To work to the highest professional and ethical standards, seeking guidance from ethical codes where appropriate via the First Supervisor. See Regulation 6.3 l).
- g) To have regular interactions with the Supervisors (especially with the First Supervisor) throughout the programme of work, having established at the outset a schedule of formal meetings. The frequency of these should be in accord with the stipulated University minimum values (normally once per month for full-time students and once every two months for part-time students). A thorough preparation for these meetings is expected from students. They should heed the advice and any matters which arise from such meetings and accept the importance of being frank and honest about perceived difficulties as and when they occur. One of the objects of such meetings is to prevent more serious problems from arising later in the research programme. Students must therefore take the initiative in raising problems or difficulties, however elementary they seem; Student and supervisors will also be in contact via ad hoc and informal discussions as the need arises.
- h) To ensure the student keeps a detailed, full record of the regular progress meetings via 'Progress Reports'. This process must be completed via MyDmu. Supervisors will require these records as part of their monitoring of the student's progress. Faculty Offices, University Graduate School Office, The UK Border Agency and any funding body can require to see such records.

- i) Full-time students are expected to undertake a minimum of at least 35 hours of study per week throughout the year. Part-time students are expected to undertake 12 hours. Students are normally not expected to take more than eight weeks leave each year (including statutory holidays and the period when the University is closed over Christmas & New Year). You are expected to schedule leave so that it does not conflict with your research. All leave should be notified to a member of your supervisory team.
- j) If applicable, to complete the form RDC:T *Application to Transfer from MPhil to PhD*, at the appropriate time and the transfer documentation prepared in accordance with the regulations and in consultation with the First Supervisor.
- k) To decide the time for the submission of the thesis for examination in consultation with the First Supervisor within the time stipulated by the regulations.
- l) To pass to the first supervisor by the end of the examination procedures and before graduation, material such as laboratory notebooks, computer coding and studio maquettes produced as a necessary part of the project, which remain the property of the Institution. If appropriate, the supervisor may authorise, on behalf of the University the production of copies of such material for the student's subsequent use.

6.4 Progress meetings between Research students and supervisors

- a) Research students and their supervisors must discuss their work regularly as an essential part of the teaching and learning contract between the student and the University.
- b) Research supervisors must be able to show evidence that not only have regular progress meetings taken place, but also that the main points of discussion have identified the present stage of a student's research programme and advice has been given upon how to proceed.

The Progress Report form identifies the important parameters for such discussion. Such formal discussions should occur normally at intervals no longer than one month for full-time research students and normally no longer than two months for part-time students. It is expected that a full-time student will complete at least 10 records per annum and part-time students shall complete at least 5.

6.5 A Progress Report must be completed by the student and signed off by a member of the Supervisory Team. The Supervisory has an opportunity to amend/update the record. This process must be completed via MyDMU.

The Faculty/Independent Research Centre Research Committee (or Faculty

Research Degrees Committee if appropriate) will review the progress of the research students and check that regular discussions between supervisors and their students have been taking place.

7. Lengths of Registration and Maximum Periods of Time Before Submission

7.1 The minimum and maximum periods of registration, shown both in months and calendar years, are as follows:

<u>MPhil</u>	<u>Minimum</u>	<u>Maximum</u>
Full-time	12 months (1 year)	24 months (2 years)
Part-time	24 months (2 years)	48 months (4 years)

PhD (via transfer from MPhil registration)

Full-time	36 months (3 years)	48 months (4 years)
Part-time	48 months (4 years)	72 months (6 years)

PhD (direct)

Full-time	24 months (2 years)	36 months (3 years)
Part-time	36 months (3 years)	72 months (6 years)

PhD by Published Works

Part-time	12 months (1 year)	24 months (2 years)
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MA/MSc by Research

Full-time	12 months (1 year)	15 months (1 ¼ years)
Part-time	24 months (2 years)	30 months (2 1/2 years)

Extensions beyond the maximum period are solely at the discretion of the Higher Degrees Committee. Application for an extension must be made to the Committee, on the appropriate form and with the support of the student's First Supervisor, **before** the approved period of registration has expired.

Approved interruptions will be taken into account when a student submits an 'Application for Extension to Period of Registration'.

When submitting an 'Application for Extension to Period of Registration' form the student must produce a thesis outline agreed with the supervisor and can present such evidence as to help his/her case. The form shall be submitted to the Higher Degrees Committee for consideration. It is permissible to request subsequent extensions. In these cases there shall follow a 15 minute interview, either face-to-face or over the telephone, with an experienced internal assessor appointed by the faculty assessor. It is permissible to request subsequent extensions but the

University will scrutinise additional requests carefully.

The criteria for the internal assessor to support the application are as follows:

- a) Substantial progress with respect to an agreed thesis outline,
- b) Whether the work is still timely,
- c) Availability of time and resources to complete the work.

The assessor shall express a view as to whether; in his/her opinion the resulting period of extension is sufficient.

7.2 Submissions after the approved period of registration are not permitted unless with the approval of the Higher Degrees Committee on exceptional grounds.

7.3 Students exceeding a period of study longer than six years from the initial date of registration for full-time students and eight years from registration for part-time students may do so only in exceptional circumstances and with the express approval of the Higher Degrees Committee. Applications for such exceptions will only be considered if a case is made six months before the last Extension has expired.

These periods of time will not be changed by introduction of an interruption of Registration under Regulation 9.

8. Continuation and Termination of Registration

8.1 Continued registration shall be subject to annual monitoring see Regulation 12.8.

8.2 If a supervisor considers that a research student's performance or progress is unsatisfactory the concerns should be specified in writing to the student normally using the appropriate 'Progress Report ' form.

A student who is notified of unsatisfactory performance or progress has the right to seek advice from the Chair of his/her Faculty's Research Degrees Committee (or Head of Postgraduate Studies in the case of Faculties without devolved powers from HDC).

Supervision of the research should continue following the notification.

If a supervisor considers that a student's performance or progress continues to be unsatisfactory, action may be taken to terminate the registration of the student. However, the action to terminate registration may only be taken after a period of time that allows the student to remedy the specified problems. In the case of full-time students, any action to terminate registration must be taken no sooner than three months and no later than six months following the formal notification of unsatisfactory performance or progress. For part-time students any action to

terminate registration must be taken no sooner than six months and no later than twelve months following the formal notification of unsatisfactory progress.

If termination is chosen as the action to be taken, the appropriate form should be used. The final decision to terminate will be taken by the Chair of the Higher Degrees Committee upon receipt of the necessary signatures.

If the registration of a student is terminated under this provision, the Graduate School Office will notify the student in writing of his/her termination of registration from a certain date and that the student has the right to request a reconsideration of the decision provided the request reaches the Academic Registrar within 14 days of the notification.

- 8.3** A student can request withdrawal from the programme at any time. Students will be subject to an exit interview which will normally be carried out by the First Supervisor. The Graduate School Office will ensure that the Academic Registry are informed, by completion of a P63, so that an adjustment can be made to the fees, where relevant.
- 8.4** A withdrawal application will not be accepted in the instance that a student is suspected of committing an Academic Offence. In such circumstances the University shall proceed as outlined in the General Student Regulations'

9. Interruption of Registration

Where a student is prevented from carrying out all aspects of the research, by a good cause, he/she can apply for his/her registration to be interrupted. Because the approved registration period exceeds the expected duration, short interruptions are not necessary and will not be granted; short breaks due to illness will not warrant the granting of a formal interruption.

Applications must be made to the Higher Degrees Committee Sub-Committee, using the appropriate form and with the authority of the First Supervisor (or nominee). The application shall be considered by the Committee, which may grant an interruption of study normally for not less than six months or more than one year in the first instance. Those students enrolled on the MA/MSc by Research may request an interruption of normally not less than three months.

The Committee will consider up to six months retrospective interruptions and no longer.

Fees are not payable during an interruption of study because it is assumed that resources, such as library study and/or lending access and access to the supervision team are not being used. If supervision continues, then the student status reverts to active fee paying.

Should an interruption of study be granted, the Graduate School Office will ensure that the Academic Registry is notified, by the completion of form P63, so that the student's enrolment is also interrupted and adjustment made to fees.

Students still in their probationary period who wish to interrupt their studies should complete form INT1; the minimum period to be granted during the probationary period shall be two months. See Regulation 3.6.

Please note 'Interruption of Registration' was previously called 'Suspension of Registration'.

10. Change in Approved Mode of Study

Where a student wishes to request a change in mode of study between full and part-time, he/she can apply to the Chair of the Higher Degrees Committee Sub-Committee, with detailed reasons. Such applications should be made using the appropriate form and with the authority of the first supervisor (or nominee).

Should the change be approved the Graduate School Office will ensure that the Academic Registry are informed, by completion of form P63, so that adjustment can be made to fees, where relevant.

No change of mode shall be considered following the commencement of the Writing-Up Period. This is to ensure that University statistics more accurately reflect the mode under which the work was carried out. There is no negative implication for the student with respect to fees.

11. Variations from the Standard Research Programme

The following variations from the standard research programme are permissible provided that the approval of the Higher Degrees Committee Sub-Committee is obtained **at registration**.

11.1 Exhibition, Performance, Creative Writing or Similar Work

A student may undertake a programme of research in which the student's exhibition, performance, creative writing or other similar work, forms as a point of origin or reference, a significant part of the intellectual enquiry. Such work may be in any field but **must have been undertaken as part of the registered research programme**. In such cases, the presentation or submission of work relating to exhibition, performance or other creative writing or similar work must be supported by documentation in the form of a thesis which sets the work in its relevant theoretical, historical, critical and/or design context. The thesis must itself conform to the usual scholarly requirements and be of the correct length as defined in Regulation 15.

The final electronic and hard copy of the submission must be accompanied by some permanent record (for instance, computer disk, video, photographic record, musical

score, choreographic notation, diagrammatic representation) of the exhibition, performance or other creative work where practicable, this shall be submitted at the same time and bound with the thesis. The electronic version must include this record.

The application for registration must set out the form of the student's intended submission and of the proposed methods of assessment.

11.2 Submission of Theses in Foreign Languages

Regulation 1.6 of the Research Degree Regulations indicates that "except where the Higher Degrees Committee Sub-Committee has allowed otherwise, the thesis must be presented and defended in the English language". The procedure for making an exception to the norm is as follows:

- a) The case must be made and accepted by the Higher Degrees Committee Sub-Committee before, registration so that the student and the supervisors are clear from the outset of the language(s) in which the thesis is to be written and the viva voce is to be conducted.
- b) The case must be fully supported by the First Supervisor.
- c) At least one supervisor must be sufficiently expert in the language used to offer constructive criticism concerning style, structure and content.
- d) Approval must not be likely to prejudice the subsequent selection and appointment of examiners. Examiners must be competent in the language used.

Criteria for approval must include identification of positive benefits to the thesis being written in a particular language. A student's lack of ability to write in English is not a valid reason for making a proposal; as such a student would not meet the University's admission requirements. Accordingly approval will only be granted in the most exceptional cases.

The thesis must contain an extended abstract in English, not normally exceeding 3,000 words, bound in with the thesis.

11.3 Submission of PhD by Published Works

A member of staff may be permitted by the Higher Degrees Committee Sub-Committee, to present published work for examination, provided that he/she is able to fulfil the following:

- a) demonstrate a thorough knowledge of the relevant literature;

- b) demonstrate a sufficient original contribution to the literature;
- c) demonstrate a sustained research effort in the work represented by the publications;
- d) satisfy the conditions of Regulation 1.4 in that the submitted work should:
 - i) represent a substantial, continuous and coherent body of work on a particular theme; and
 - ii) demonstrate critical investigation and evaluation of the topic of research; and
 - iii) constitute an independent and original contribution to knowledge; and
 - iv) demonstrate the student's ability to undertake further research without supervision
- e) the applicant is either a permanent member of staff or on a fixed term contract of at least three years duration and is either full-time or pro-rata normally of at least 0.5 full-time equivalent. The applicant must have been a member of staff for not less than two years at the time of registration;
- f) if in the opinion of the Dean of Faculty, Head of Support Department, Head of an Independent Research Centre, or, for a member of the Executive, the Vice-Chancellor, is that it would be wasteful of effort and detrimental to the applicant's other responsibilities to require him/her to undertake a standard research degree programme;
- g) the student must provide a declaration at the time of registration that none of the material to be submitted has been used previously as part of a submission for an academic award, whether successful or otherwise.
- h) A student for PhD by Published works must register for a research degree **at least one year before submission**. A completed application form RDC: PW should be submitted to the relevant Faculty Assessor who will forward it to the Higher Degrees Committee Sub-Committee in the normal way.
- i) Students studying for a PhD by Published Works are eligible to apply for exemption from any or all of the Research Training Programme components if so indicated by the Training Needs Analysis.
- j) The student's submission for PhD by Published Works shall include:
 - i) the publications presented; which shall be:
 - a) material of a suitable quality to be acceptable by the University for RAE/REF submission; and
 - b) substantial and sufficient to demonstrate an advancement of

knowledge,

- ii) an exposition and analysis, of approximately 10,000 words, of the work contained in the publications. The exposition document is regarded as central in enabling the student to demonstrate achievement in relation to the following criteria:
 - it shall identify the main problems or issues under discussion; and
 - it shall indicate the direction and thematic consistency of the publication(s); and
 - it shall provide an authoritative critique of the work; and
 - it shall locate the work in the context of the relevant literature; and
 - describe and assess the original contribution represented by the publications submitted;
 - in the case of conjoint publications, detail the extent and scope of the student's contribution in relation to the other authors. In the case of conjoint work, the contribution of a student will be rigorously scrutinised, particularly in the oral examination;
 - indicate a sustained contribution in a coherent field of research.
- k) The criteria for assessing a student in this situation are the same as for a student submitting a conventional thesis under the Research Degree Regulations.

11.4 Integrated Programme

Students for PhD, whether registered for PhD direct or for MPhil with possibility of transfer to PhD (this regulation does not apply to the MPhil degree), may undertake an integrated programme of work which includes a programme of postgraduate study on which their performance is formally assessed, as well as the research element. Such a course of study must not occupy more than one third of the total period of registration and must complement the research.

A student on an integrated programme may not submit a thesis for examination until the assessment of the programme of postgraduate study has been completed to the satisfaction of its examiners.

12. Monitoring of Research Student Progress and Feedback

- 12.1** Progress for research degree students (excluding MA/MSc by Research) is subject to annual review by a panel of at least three research active and relevant academics, including representation of the supervisory team and at least one member who is independent of the supervisory team. Feedback shall be part of this process. If a student is transferring or requires an extension at the time that annual review is due then this shall form part of the discussion.

Full-time students who are registered on the MPhil with possibility of transfer to PhD route will not be required to have an annual review in year one, and part-time students on this route will not be required to have an annual review panel meeting in year two. It is expected students will concentrate on transfer submission during this time.

The annual review shall also include consideration of:

- a) the student's progress with the Research Training Programme, as informed by the initial Training Needs Analysis. (See regulation 4.1)
- b) any necessary change in the Training Needs Analysis consequent on the progress of the project.
- c) where applicable, a review of the student's Personal Development Plan.

For further guidance on the Annual Review Panel please refer to the 'Guidance Notes for Annual Review Panels'.

12.2 The 'Progress Report' form outlined in section 6.4 and 6.5 provide an additional means by which progress can be monitored and should be used to determine whether actions agreed by supervisor(s) and the student are satisfactorily carried out.

If a student feels that the project is not proceeding satisfactorily for reasons outside his/her control, or that he/she does not have an effective working relationship with the supervisor(s), he/she could feel it is inappropriate or undesirable to wait for the annual monitoring process. In this case, the student is advised to contact the Graduate School Office for guidance. It would normally be expected that the student discuss the matter with the First Supervisor (if possible). Failing this, he/she should approach the relevant Director of Postgraduate Studies, Head of Department, Faculty or Centre. Should the matter still not be resolved, he/she should report his/her concerns to the Chair of Higher Degrees Committee. If the Chair of Higher Degrees Committee is unable to resolve the problem, the matter shall be referred to the Higher Degrees Committee, which shall make a final decision.

13. Transfers of Registration between MPhil and PhD and Formal Progression for PhD students

- 13.1** Students who registered initially for MPhil with the possibility of transfer to PhD and who wish to apply for transfer shall apply on the appropriate form to the Higher Degrees Committee Sub-Committee.

All research degree students who are due to submit transfer reports after 1st September 2009 shall submit a transfer report between 12 and 15 months of full-time registration or 18 months and 24 months of part-time registration. These deadlines are calculated from the original enrolment date.

It is imperative that the 15 month (or part-time equivalent) deadline is adhered to. Students who miss this deadline must submit the transfer report in month 17 (full-time) or month 28 (part-time). Failure to do will result in the registration reverting to Registration for Master of Philosophy.

There might occasionally be cases of mitigation which could justify extension of the deadline. These should be requested in good time by the student and supervisory team on the appropriate form to the Chair of the Higher Degrees Committee for consideration.

- 13.2** The transfer from MPhil to PhD must, except in exceptional circumstances take place at least one year before examination.
- 13.3** The supervision team shall nominate an internal assessor, (two shall be nominated if the student is registered subject to special scrutiny) and obtain the consent of the internal assessor prior to his/her possible appointment and in advance of submission of the transfer report and form. The Chair of the Faculty Research Degrees Committee will approve the proposed appointment. **The Graduate School Office will dispatch all paperwork to the assessor.**
- 13.4** Where it is not possible to appoint a single internal member of staff, two assessors shall be appointed. One will assess the quality of the specific content of the report and the other will give guidance on the overall suitability of the project in terms of achieving research degree standards. One joint report will be produced by the subject expert in conjunction with the experienced assessor. Both assessors will sign the report form.
- 13.5** A member of staff registered for a research degree cannot be nominated to be the internal assessor for a transfer from MPhil to PhD.
- 13.6** Where a transfer report has been referred for revision it is expected that the student with guidance from the supervisor will spend an intensive period putting together the revised document so that re-submission can take place in a timely manner.

13.7 A selected internal assessor(s) **should not normally** be nominated to be the internal examiner for the final examination.

13.8 Students whose registration was approved subject to special scrutiny at the transfer stage shall have their progress report assessed by two Internal Assessors independently. Both reports will be considered at the same Higher Degrees Committee Sub-Committee meeting.

13.9 Students submitting their application to transfer, from 1st September 2009 will be required to undergo a formal interview with the assessor and at least one member of the supervisory team in order to inform the decision of the internal assessor(s). , The student will be informed of the arrangements for the interview by the supervisor.

13.10 In support of the application for transfer, the student shall prepare for the Higher Degrees Committee Sub-Committee two copies of a full progress report on the work undertaken. The progress report should be between 5,000 to 10,000 words in length and include:

- a) i) a brief review and discussion of the work already undertaken including a review of relevant sources and methodologies as well as a plan of further work
- or
- ii) an annotated list of chapter headings, indicating the overall thesis structure; a provisional timetable for the completion of each draft chapter; one or two draft chapters, or, in the case an exhibition, performance or other creative work, a presentation of work, recorded or live; a statement outlining the rationale, methodology and theoretical perspectives of the thesis, including details of the original contribution to knowledge which is likely to emerge.
- b) A student registered for a research degree exhibition, performance or other creative work shall also present, in an appropriate form, examples of the exhibition, performance of creative work in support of the Transfer Report, which in this case will appropriately be within the range of 3,000 - 5,000 words. At the discretion of the Internal Assessor(s), the student can be required to be present when such work is being considered and respond to questions.

Progress reports, which are under or over the word length, will be returned for amendment.

13.11 A student registered for MPhil only may exceptionally; apply to transfer registration to PhD. Such an application must normally be made by no later than 12

months of full-time registration and 21 months of part-time registration.

- 13.12** Before approving transfer from MPhil to PhD, the Higher Degrees Committee Sub-Committee must be satisfied that the student has made sufficient progress and that the proposed programme provides a suitable basis for work at PhD standard which the student is capable of pursuing to completion. An oral assessment can be used by the Higher Degrees Committee Sub-Committee in appropriate circumstances as part of its assessment of the case for transfer. The Higher Degrees Committee Sub-Committee may approve a transfer unconditionally or conditionally, may refer the application back for further work or may decline to approve the application.
- 13.13** Where application for transfer from MPhil to PhD is not approved, the student may seek reconsideration of the Higher Degrees Committee Sub-Committee's decision subject to the circumstances and procedures set out in Regulation 20.
- 13.14** A student who is registered for PhD may, in consultation with his/her supervisory team, at any time prior to submission of the thesis for examination, apply to The Graduate School Office for the registration to be transferred to registration for MPhil. This will be subject to the approval of the Higher Degrees Committee Sub-Committee.
- 13.15** All students on the PhD direct or MPhil route shall be expected to pass the usual annual review stage. Students should be aware that failure in performance at the annual review could result in termination of their registration or the requirement for a PhD student to submit for MPhil.

14. Submission of Thesis and any other work

- 14.1** The thesis must be presented in accordance with the requirements of Regulation 15.
- 14.2** It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that the thesis and/or any other work is submitted to the Graduate School Office within the maximum period permitted to the student under Regulation 7.1.
- 14.3** The thesis must be the result of the student's own work. The requirement does not preclude a student obtaining limited assistance with proof reading. When such help is obtained it must be with the prior approval of the supervisor who must be satisfied that the spirit of the 'own work' requirement is not breached.

If a student employed a professional proof-reader for their research thesis the following definition applies:

‘A proof-reader may only ensure that the meaning of the author is not misrepresented due to the quality and standard of the English used. This can include correcting spelling and basic grammar errors. Inaccuracies in academic content should not be corrected.’

- 14.4** For the oral examination, the student should forward onto the Graduate School Office as many identical copies of the glue-bound thesis as there are examiners, and must bring to the oral examination a further identical copy for his/her own use. If under Regulation 17.4 the student has requested his/her supervisor to be present then a further copy shall be provided to them. The theses shall adhere to Regulation 15.6 c) - j).
- 14.5** The submission of the thesis shall be accompanied by a statement on form VIVA DECL, which covers the originality of the work and its compliance with the requirements regarding registration.
- 14.6** It is the right of the student to submit their thesis for examination against the advice of their supervisory team. However, in such circumstances it is likely the University will seek advice from an independent internal assessor prior to dispatching to the Examination team. The Chair of Higher Degrees Committee upon advice from the Chair of the relevant Faculty Research Degrees Committee holds the right to decide the thesis is not ready for examination or to allow the thesis, in the case of PhD theses to be examined for MPhil. In such circumstances the student may be given a final opportunity to revise the thesis.
- 14.7** No student shall attempt to contact examiners or potential examiners concerning the examination or concerning any matter which could affect the examination.
- 14.8** After successful completion of all stages of the examination, one hard bound copy and an electronic copy of the thesis shall be submitted to the Graduate School Office in partial fulfilment of the conferment requirements and this shall adhere to all the requirements of Regulation 15.6.
- 14.9A** student must include in the submission the text of any published work produced as part of the programme of work, of which he/she is the author, provided that;
- a) the work is relevant to the submission; and
 - b) the text contains details of the publication.

Reports on work relevant to the submission, which had been carried out before a student's registration for the degree, can be appended to the submission, appropriately annotated, if this is necessary to make the submission complete and understandable.

15. Presentation of Thesis

- 15.1** The thesis must include a statement of the student's objectives and must acknowledge published or other sources of material consulted (including an appropriate bibliography and/or list of references, in an academically recognised format) and any assistance received.
- 15.2** There must be an abstract (of approximately 300 words) bound into the thesis which provides a synopsis of the thesis stating the nature and scope of the work undertaken and of the contribution made to the knowledge of the subject treated.
- 15.3** With the exception of PhD by Published Works material produced during the MPhil or PhD and already published shall be referred to explicitly in the thesis. If desired, copies of the published material can be bound in with the thesis or attached in some appropriate way. For PhD by Published works Regulation 11.3 j) i) applies.
- 15.4** Theses must normally be submitted in A4 format. The Higher 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.
- 15.5** The text of the thesis should not normally exceed the following length (excluding ancillary data):

PhD

In Science and Engineering and Practice based Art and Design	40,000 words
In Humanities, Social Sciences and Education for PhD	80,000 words

MPhil

In Science and Engineering and Practice based Art and Design	20,000 words
In Humanities, Social Sciences and Education	40,000 words

MA/MSc by Research

In Science and Engineering and Practice based Art and Design	20,000 words
In Humanities, Social Sciences and Education	30,000 words

Where the presentation or submission consists substantially of material in other than written form or the research involves creative writing or the preparation of a scholarly edition, the written dissertation or thesis should normally be within the range:

for PhD	10,000 - 12,000 words
for MPhil/MA/MSc	6,000 - 8,000 words

Where the submission is made for the award of PhD by Published Works the thesis should normally be approximately 10,000.

Exceptionally alternative word lengths may be considered, any changes to those set

out above shall be considered by the Chair of Higher Degrees Committee.

15.6 The following requirements must be adhered to in the format of the thesis.

- a) The binding shall be of a fixed type so that leaves cannot be removed or replaced. The front and rear boards of the final bound copy shall have sufficient rigidity to support the weight of the work when standing upright. A spiral bound document **will not** be accepted.
- b) For examination the front cover may be in any colour and shall bear the title of the work in at least 24pt type. The name and initials of the student, the qualification and the year of submission shall also be shown on the front board. The same information (excluding the title of the work) shall be shown on the spine of the work on the final bound copy.
- c) Copies of the thesis shall be presented in a permanent and legible form either in typescript or print. Where copies are produced by photocopying, these must be of a permanent nature.
- d) A student can opt to print text on both sides of the paper provided that the paper is of sufficient weight to ensure that the text is perfectly legible.
- e) The recommended standard for page margins is as follows:

Left Margin: 4cm	Right Margin: 2cm
Top Margin: 2cm	Bottom Margin: 4cm
- f) Double or one-and-a-half spacing must be used in typescript except for indented quotations or footnotes where single spacing can be used. A further half space must be allowed between paragraphs.
- g) Pages shall be numbered consecutively throughout the thesis, including any appendices, photographs, and/or diagrams which are included as whole pages.
- h) The title page shall give the following information:
 - i) the full title of the thesis; this must be the title approved when examination arrangements were made unless subsequently approved by the Chair of Higher Degrees Committee;
 - ii) the full name of the author;
 - iii) the award for which the thesis is submitted in partial fulfilment of its requirements;
 - iv) that the degree is awarded by De Montfort University;

- v) Sponsor of research where appropriate and Collaborating Establishment, if any;
- vi) the month and year of submission,
- vii) the number of volumes, if more than one.
- i) Theses must be submitted in glue bound binding for the purposes of the examination. The final bound thesis is required to be submitted in a hard cover and electronically.

15.7 All final bound theses will in due course be kept in the University Library. The electronic copy of the thesis will be submitted to the Institutional Repository.

15.8 Where the University has agreed that the confidential nature of the student's work is such as to preclude the thesis being made freely available in the library of the University or sponsoring establishment for an agreed period as identified on the Registration Form. (and collaborating establishment, if any) The thesis shall, immediately on the completion of the programme of work, be held by the University Graduate School Office on access restricted to those nominated by the Head of the University Intellectual Advice Centre, in consultation with the Head of the Graduate School Office. After this period the thesis will be kept in the University library and Institutional Repository

16. Selection and Appointment of Examiners and Examiners' Duties

16.1 A student for a research degree shall be examined by the external and internal examiners appointed for that purpose by the Higher Degrees Committee on the nomination of the Supervision team. There shall be at least one external examiner and one internal examiner. An external examiner shall be external to and independent of the University and of a Collaborating Establishment. An internal examiner shall be a member of the staff of the University.

16.2 The application for approval of examination arrangements should be submitted for consideration by the Higher Degrees Committee at least three months prior to submission of the thesis. Examinations which do not take place within eighteen months of the date approved by the Higher Degrees Committee will require, either,

- a) confirmation by the First Supervisor (or nominee) that the examination team remain valid, or
- b) the submission of a revised application for the approval of examination arrangements.

16.3 A person who is appointed as a student's supervisor cannot be appointed as an examiner of that student.

16.4 Where the student is a member of permanent academic staff of the University, **at the time of examination**, a second external examiner shall be appointed.

- a) Where the student is registered for a PhD by Published Works two external examiners and at least one internal examiner shall be appointed. This regulation shall apply to all students regardless of his/her status at the time of examination.
- b) Research Students who engage in not more than 6 hours per week of teaching during their research studies do not fall within the scope of this regulation.

16.5 In appointing examiners the Higher Degrees Committee must ensure that the following criteria are met:

- a) The examining team as a whole must have:
 - i) substantial experience in examining research degree students at the level of the degree in question; and
 - ii) substantial knowledge of current research relating to the subject area of the submission.
- b) For PhD examinations, at least one examiner shall normally possess a PhD or equivalent qualification

In order to meet these criteria, additional examiners may be appointed as necessary.

- c) No person who is registered as a student for a research degree at this University or elsewhere may act as an examiner.
- d) All examiners shall be independent of the student and the student's work. No examiner shall have provided any formal guidance in respect of the context or structure of the thesis, thesis project or other submitted work, see also Regulation 16.6 above.
- e) Former members of the staff of the University are not normally eligible for appointment as external examiners until three years after the termination of his/her employment.
- f) All examiners shall be independent of the candidate and the candidate's work. No examiner shall have provided any formal guidance in respect of the context or structure of the thesis, thesis project or other submitted work.

16.6 Nomination of Internal Examiners.

- a) Proposals for Examination Arrangements will normally identify only **one** Internal Examiner, who **must** have previous examining experience of at least

two research degrees and have attended Certificate in Research Supervision.

Where a second internal examiner is required under 16.6b) below they each must also have attended the Certificate in Research Supervision.

- b) An 'experienced internal examiner' is a person whose experience is sufficient to give themselves, his/her peer group and the University confidence that they can play a full and balanced role as the sole or lead internal examiner for a research degree. Administrative aspects of this role are as laid out in the 'Guidance Notes for Examiners'. Further, the experienced internal examiner is expected to exercise judgement about the conduct of the examination process such that the outcome is commensurate with the performance. S/he is also responsible for ensuring that standards are appropriately maintained. In other words it is a responsibility of the experienced internal examiner to ensure that the expectations of fellow examiners are neither excessive nor inadequate.

A 'new internal examiner' is one who is gaining experience in the processes but has not yet reached the standing of experienced internal examiner. Normally, after participating satisfactorily in two examinations it is likely that a new internal examiner shall be eligible to become an experienced internal examiner. The transfer test shall be by self-certification against a checklist, the Chair of Higher Degrees Committee (or nominee) shall review and countersign, except in rare cases where further experience is deemed to be desirable to protect the students' interest.

- c) When **two** Internal Examiners are proposed, the experience of one must be certified (See Regulation 16.6b) above) and additionally must, for PhD examinations, have examined at least one at the level of the award. A case must be made giving the reasons for the nomination of a second Internal Examiner.

The major justifications for proposing **two** Internal Examiners are:

- i) Staff development

the nomination of a new inexperienced Examiner to work with an experienced Examiner, in order to gain relevant examining experience as part of a planned staff development exercise.

- ii) Subject expertise

the nomination of an inexperienced Examiner with specific and unique experience of the subject matter of the dissertation, and an experienced Examiner, who is able to give support to both the inexperienced Internal Examiner and the student, or

- iii) the nomination of **two** experienced examiners to cover separate, highly specialised aspects of the research project/dissertation.

16.7 The duties of examiners shall be as follows:

- a) All examiners are required to complete an independent pre-viva form and submit to the Graduate School Office at least five days prior to the date of examination.
- b) The examiners are required to hold an oral examination, (viva voce), except in the most exceptional of circumstances, see Regulation 17.1.
- c) The examiners are required to submit an Examiners Report form and recommendation on the appropriate form, unless they are in disagreement in which case separate report forms must be submitted (see Regulation 19 below). Also to assess material subsequent to the viva where appropriate.
- d) Examiners are expected to complete the examining process within ten weeks of receiving the thesis. This applies to re-submissions also. If this cannot be achieved, a report outlining reasons for delay, must be submitted to the Higher Degrees Committee.

16.8 The experienced internal examiner is deemed to play the role of independent Chair.

17 Oral Examinations (Viva Voce)

17.1 All students are examined orally in English, (except when submitting under Regulation 11.2), on the programme of work and on the field of study. However, in cases of sickness, disability or comparable valid cause, an alternative form of examination may be approved. Such cases require the approval of the Higher Degrees Committee on the recommendation of the examiners and/or supervision team.

17.2 The purposes of an oral examination are:

- a) to establish that the submitted work is that of the student;
- b) to give the student the opportunity to defend the direction, structure and conclusions of the work. This involves the examiners making constructive criticisms of both the research and the thesis and giving the student the opportunity to respond;
- c) to explore with the student any particular issues in the thesis or submitted work which require clarification or development. This is particularly important in cases where the examiners feel that their final decision could be other than an unconditional pass;
- d) to test the student's personal eligibility for the award of the degree by exploring his/her understanding of issues arising in and from the research and of the

relationship of the research to the wider field of knowledge. In the case of a PhD student, the student should be able to demonstrate his/her understanding of the nature and extent of the original contribution to knowledge entailed in the research.

- 17.3** If one or more of the examiners contact the Graduate School Office to say that, in their opinion, the standard of the thesis is such that the oral examination should be postponed, the Chair of HDC shall consider the matter and decide whether or not to allow the scheduled oral examination to proceed. If the decision is to postpone, then student, supervisors and examiners will be notified of this and of actions that need to be taken in order that the oral examination can be re-scheduled at a later date.

Postponement will normally not exceed six months and in any case will not exceed one year.

- 17.4** One of the student's supervisors who is not an examiner should attend the oral examination to answer questions, unless the student has expressed a wish to the contrary. The purpose of this is to assist the student and examiners with matters of clarification only and not to participate in the oral examination. Attendance by a supervisor is not compulsory but if the student feels that this would be helpful, the University then expects the supervisor to be at the oral examination.
- 17.5** Oral examinations must normally take place with the student and the examination team present at the same location.
- 17.6** The recording of the proceedings of the oral examination, by any method, is normally prohibited.
- 17.7** The oral examination should **normally** last between one and two hours. The pattern for each particular oral is for the examiners to determine but in most cases the examiners will wish to focus on a detailed consideration of the research, its methodology and its findings. In some cases, however, the examiners could wish to focus on a discussion of broader aspects of the research process or findings, or the implications for policy/research, or publication possibilities. For this, the student could be invited to highlight aspects or issues that appear most important or interesting.

Supervisors of students who are undertaking their research degree by Exhibition, Performance or similar work must arrange **prior** to the viva for the full examination team to have sight of the work. This may be in the form of a performance to which the examination team are invited or could be a private showing of the work set up for this purpose. This showing can take place well in advance or on the day of the viva voce.

The student must ensure the final submission is accompanied by some permanent record (for instance, computer disk, video, photographic record, musical score, choreographic notation, diagrammatic representation) of the exhibition, performance or other creative work where practicable, bound with the thesis and with the electronic copy. In addition, it is expected that normally the textual component of the submission sent to examiners

should be accompanied by documentary evidence in photographic/video form of the creative work undertaken.

17.8 The intention is that oral examinations should be constructive and stimulating for all participants. The students should expect to be challenged on their ideas, but should be assured that the experience is intended to be helpful and positive. In preparation, students are advised to re-familiarise themselves with their thesis, make their own assessment of its strengths and weaknesses, and try to anticipate issues that are likely to be raised. The student must bring a copy of his/her thesis with them to the oral examination.

17.9 No communication shall be made with a student for the award of a distinction of the University which purports to be, or might reasonably be taken to be, official notification of the results of the candidature, except by the Graduate School Office on behalf of the Academic Registrar.

18. Examination Outcomes

18.1 Unless operating under regulation 19, a copy of the final joint report shall be issued to the student. In the case of 18.2 b) and c) below the student will be given a written statement of the work to be done to get his/her degree within an agreed timescale. The criteria for assessing the degree of MPhil/MA/MSc shall be in accordance with Regulation 1.3 and those for PhD shall be in accordance with Regulation 1.4.

18.2 The final report of the examiners on the student shall recommend one of the following:

- a) the student should be awarded the degree sought;
- b) the student should be awarded the degree sought, provided that minor amendments and corrections in the submitted work are made to the satisfaction of the nominated examiner(s) within a specified period not exceeding six months from the notification of the result to the student;
- c) the student be permitted to re-submit for the degree sought and be re-examined as follows:
 - i) the thesis to be revised and if deemed satisfactory by the Examiners, the student will be exempt from further examination, oral or otherwise; or
 - ii) the thesis to be revised and the student must undergo a further oral or alternative examination; or
 - iii) the thesis is satisfactory, but the student must undergo a further oral examination or other such examination as the examiners shall specify.

In this case the examiners shall specify the maximum period open to the student to re-submit, this period is not to exceed 12 months. The maximum period shall date from the notification of the result to the student.

Examiners shall not make recommendations 18.2 c) if they are examining a student who is already re-presenting *unless* the re-presentation is the outcome of an appeal.

- d) If a student for PhD, the student should be awarded the MPhil, if appropriate, subject to corrections on the basis stated in 18.2 b) above. Examiners must only make this recommendation for positive achievement by the student in accordance with Regulation 1.3; or
- e) The student should not be awarded any degree and should be given no further opportunity of examination.
- f) the examiners may also offer a PhD student a choice between accepting an MPhil as in 18.2d) or requiring major revisions over a period of time in 18.2c) to achieve PhD. The student shall be given no more than one month to select the route that they wish to follow.

Where examiners recommend in terms set out in Regulations 18.2 b), c) or d) they shall provide the student and the Graduate School Office with a written statement, on the 'Statement of Thesis Deficiencies' form. The statement shall outline the deficiencies of the thesis.

Where the examiner recommends that a student should not be awarded the degree sought as set out in 18.2 e) above, and should have no further opportunity of examination, the examination team must complete the 'Statement of Reasons for Failure' form. If the student appeals against the outcome they will be provided with a copy of this statement, it should therefore be as practicable whilst safeguarding the confidentiality of the examining process.

Where the examination team are recommending that the student should be awarded the degree sought 'subject to minor amendments and corrections' we would ask that they consider an appropriate length of time. In some circumstances six months might be too long, and examiners are encouraged to specify a shorter time in these instances.

Before forwarding a recommendation for the award of a degree to the Graduate School Office the examiners must be satisfied that the format of thesis is in accordance with the University's regulations (see Regulation 15).

18.3 Examiners should be aware of the distinction between the decision to pass a student subject to correction of minor amendments and the decision not to award a degree to a student but to permit the student to revise and re-present the thesis. The following aim to clarify the distinctions:

- a) One factor (among many others) in assessing a thesis is to judge whether it demonstrates satisfactorily the student's ability to produce a substantial and coherently argued report on the research. Ultimately, a successful thesis is one, which is judged worthy to be lodged for public access in the Library. Nonetheless, it is not immediately clear in every case when a thesis is unsatisfactory which of the recommendations summarised in Regulation 18 above is appropriate. These guidelines are intended to aid examiners in coming to an appropriate decision in such cases.
- b) It should be borne in mind that there is a substantive difference between recommending the award subject to correction of the thesis, and not recommending the award but permitting the student to revise and re-present the thesis.
- c) A practical yardstick is whether the external examiner wishes to see the thesis again in order to check matters of substance. If he or she does so wish then the decision should be *not* to award the degree but to permit the student to revise and re-present.

If the external examiner believes the thesis can be brought to an acceptable standard and does not need his or her further inspection then it can be recommended that the student be awarded the degree subject to minor amendments. The basis for this distinction is that a student who has been permitted to revise and re-present has to have his/her thesis re-examined formally in its entirety, while a *corrected* thesis simply has the corrections checked by the examiner(s);

- d) *Minor amendments* (18.2 b) can normally be taken as *correction* of minor textual errors and faults, while a deficient technical content would lead to re-submission and re-examination. For example, rewriting a chapter to clarify issues would be *minor amendments*, as would relocation of a chapter from the substantive text to an appendix.

Generally, errors of presentation can be remedied by *minor amendments* unless they are judged as fundamentally and comprehensively impairing the argument of the thesis, which would require substantial rewriting. In such a case it would be advisable to require the student to revise and re-present, as the final form of the thesis would differ substantially from its original form and would need reassessing as a whole.

18.4 Awards of the University are formally conferred upon Research Degree students by a re-presentative of the Vice-Chancellor acting on behalf of the Academic Board and the Board of Governors. The Graduate School Office Head is responsible for reviewing, checking and completing the recommendation paperwork for signature by a re-presentative of the Vice-Chancellor.

19. Disagreement Amongst Examiners

Where examiners fail to agree on a recommendation they shall report separately on the appropriate form to the Higher Degrees Committee. The Higher Degrees Committee may:

- a) accept a majority recommendation, provided that this includes the recommendation of at least one external examiner; or
- b) accept the recommendation of the external examiner or, if more than one, the agreed recommendation of the external examiners; or
- c) appoint an additional external examiner.

Where an additional external examiner is appointed, he/she shall not be informed of the recommendations of the other examiners but shall prepare an independent preliminary report on the basis of the thesis and, if he/she considers it necessary, conduct a further oral examination. On receiving the report of this additional external examiner the Higher Degrees Committee shall have options 18.2 a), b) or c) available to it.

20. Students' Rights of Appeal

20.1 A student has the right to appeal against a decision of:

- a) the Higher Degrees Committee to terminate his/her registration;
- b) the Higher Degrees Committee Sub-Committee to decline an application for transfer of registration from MPhil to PhD
- c) the examination team to recommend the examination outcome of 18.2c), d) or e).

20.2 Grounds for appeal are limited to those set out in the 'General Regulations and procedures Affecting Students' which also sets out the appeals process.

21. Academic Offences Panel

Academic Offences often involve plagiarism. The University considers such offences to be a serious issue and it is important that students make themselves aware of what is meant by plagiarism and how to avoid it. The regulation concerning Academic Offences for research degree students is outlined in the 'General Regulations and procedures Affecting Students'.

22. Induction and Training

All research degree students are required to attend a number of subject specific and generic courses during his/her period of study. For further information students should consult the relevant Research Training Handbook. Please contact the Graduate School Office to obtain a hard copy. The handbooks are also available on the website.

Students on the International PhD Programme must undertake all mandatory elements of the Research Training Programme which are available to them as defined in their Study Protocol document.

Research Degree Procedures

De Montfort University

2010

Research Degree Procedures

1. Introduction

The Regulations for Research Degrees of De Montfort University govern the provision for, and examination of, research degrees in the University.

The Procedures describe the ways the Regulations are to be implemented in practice and provide guidelines for the conduct of all aspects of degree provision, registration, supervision and examination.

The procedures are designed to be of assistance to all who are involved with research degrees in the University.

The various stages in the procedures are outlined in flowchart 1. Ancillary flowcharts are included in the appropriate sections.

2. The Graduate School Office

The Graduate School Office of the University is responsible for research degrees across all campuses of the University, and is located on the Leicester Campus. The Office was established on 1st August 1996 to administer research degree students throughout the University, at all sites. It provides a friendly information point for both staff and students on the procedures involved from admission to graduation.

The Office is responsible to the Academic Registrar, and services the Higher Degrees Committee (HDC) which authorises the registration of research degree students and monitors their progress through the Higher Degrees Committee Sub-Committees.

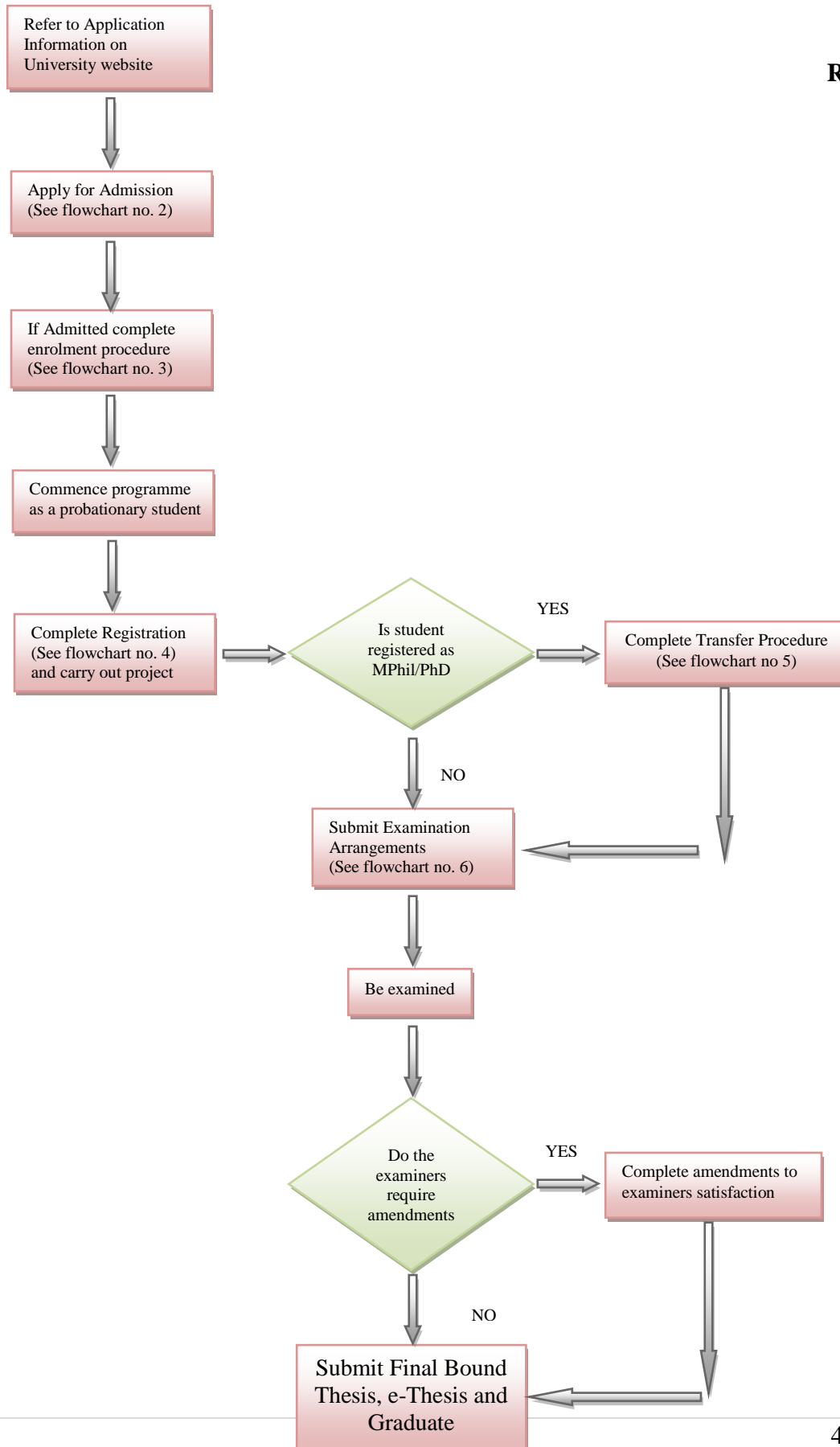
Members of staff of the Graduate School Office can be contacted on the numbers below and are happy to answer any query:

The contact address is: The Graduate School Office
De Montfort University
The Gateway
Leicester, LE1 9BH

Tel: (0116) 250 6309
Fax: (0116) 250 6431
email: researchstudents@dmu.ac.uk

Requests for forms and documents should be made to the office.

Flowchart 1 - Research Degree Procedures



3. Admission Procedures

All prospective applicants wishing to undertake a research degree at De Montfort University must complete the 'Application Form for Admission to a Research Programme (e.g. MPhil/PhD/MA by Research/MSc by Research)'. These forms are available on the University website and must be returned to the appropriate email address as stated on the web.

The Academic Registry will process this form, which includes verifying qualifications, and forward it onto the relevant Faculty, for assessment by its Admission Assessor who is the authorised Faculty person responsible for ensuring that the resources will be available when the student enrolls.

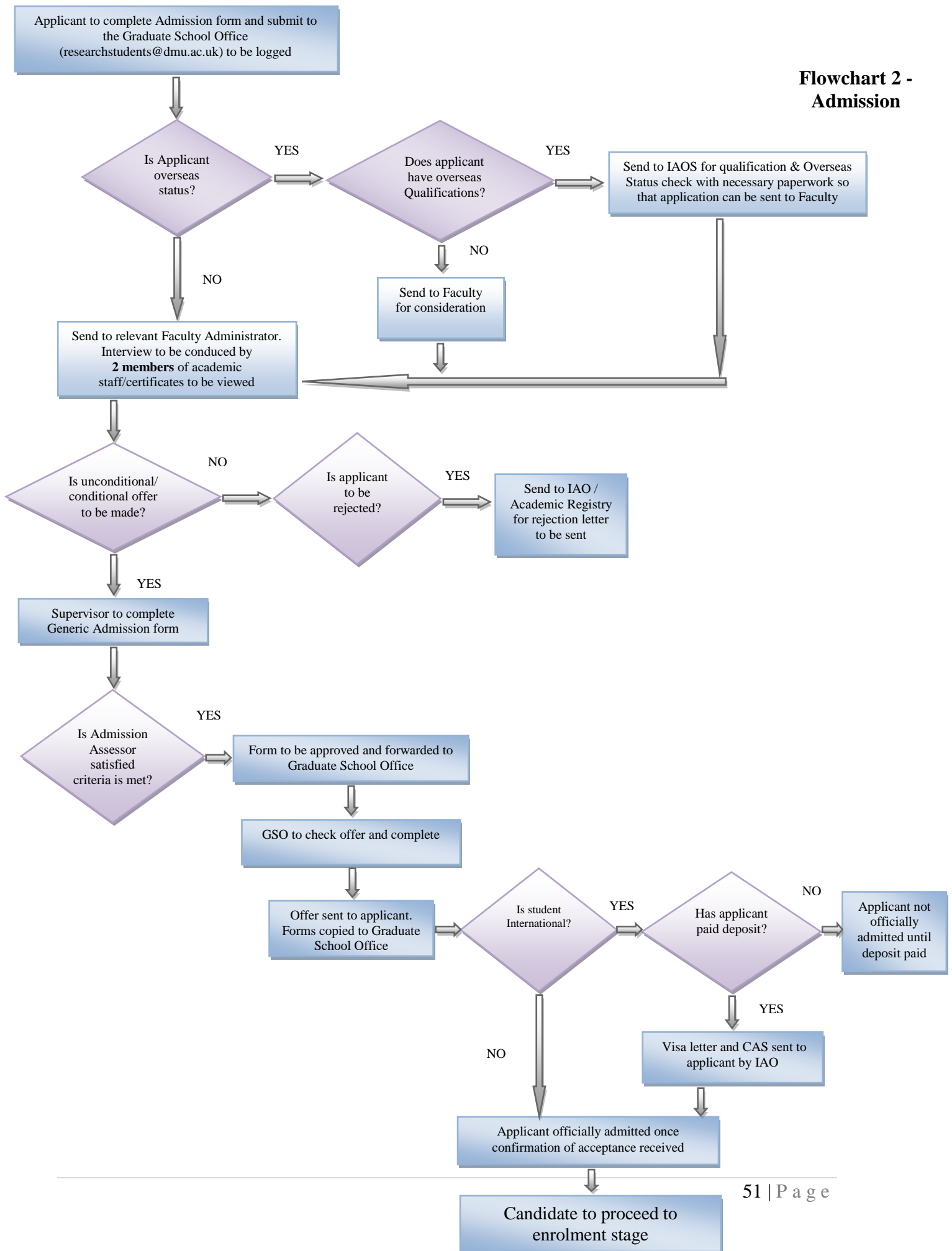
If unconditionally accepted an unconditional offer letter will be sent to you informing you of your start date, First Supervisor etc.

If conditionally accepted a conditional offer letter will be sent to you outlining the conditions you must fulfil before your offer of a place is confirmed.

If the application is not accepted a rejection letter will be sent to you.

The stages in the admission procedure are outlined in flowchart 2.

**Flowchart 2 -
Admission**



4. Research Ethics

The University has established two Committees which oversee research programmes (including undergraduate projects) with regard to research ethics.

The first is titled the “University Ethical Review Committee” and its creation was required by legislation.

The second is called the “University Human Research Ethics Committee” and deals with the protection of individuals who are the subjects of research (including undergraduate projects).

When required, ethical approval must be obtained before commencement of the work to which it pertains.

4.1 The University Ethical Review Committee

De Montfort University Research Degree Regulations stipulate that where research involves animals an application for approval must be made to the *University Ethical Review Committee*. Without the formal approval of this committee, the research must not proceed.

4.1.1 Procedures

Any member of staff intending to work, or having responsibility for a student intending to work, in these areas should contact the Office of the Pro Vice Chancellor (Research) for advice and guidance upon procedures concerning the University Ethical Review Committee.

The review process will be undertaken by a small committee meeting on an ad hoc basis but at least twice yearly, which would also oversee the general management of animal work in the University. This Committee would then set up small working parties, involving individuals with statistical, pharmacological, surgical or experimental design expertise etc, when necessary, to consider new proposals for, or amendments to, Project Licences.

It is particularly recognised that whilst ethical and managerial considerations must be both adaptable to a changing workload in the future, it is important that the work of the Committee in a central university activity that reports directly to the University Executive Group. Consequently, the convenor of this committee will be a senior member of this latter group.

4.1.2 Collaborative Work Overseas

In respect of collaborative work overseas:

- a) Researchers must apply the principles of protecting animal welfare in the course of their research, especially those of refinement, reduction and replacement;
- b) They must conform with local laws;
- c) They must not undertake procedures that could jeopardise the chances of work being published in journals or presented at international conferences.

4.2 The Human Research Ethics Committee

4.2.1 Description of Role

Where research involves the collection of data directly from people, or where it involves the collection of data about individuals whose identity can be detected from the data, an application for approval must be made to the Faculty Human Research Committee which reports to the *University Human Research Ethics Committee*. Without the formal approval of this committee, the research must not proceed. All research involving human tissues is governed by the Human Tissue Act (2004) and is regulated by the University in accordance with the Act. All such work must proceed following established guidelines.

The collection of data directly from people includes research activities such as:

- i) interviewing
- ii) surveying
- iii) questionnaires
- iv) observation of human behaviour
- v) taking human tissue/fluids
- vi) experimentation involving interference with normal physiological and/or psychological processes

The collection of data about individuals whose identity can be detected from the data includes the use of archived data in which individuals are identifiable (such as patient records).

4.2.2 Ethical issues in Human Research

4.2.2.1 Codes of research ethics relating to research on humans normally identify the following basic principles:

no harm; people participating in the research should be no worse off as a consequence of their participation. People should endure no physical or mental suffering during or after the research as a consequence of their participation.

informed consent; participants should be given information about the nature and purpose of the inquiry and about what their involvement entails. They should have the capacity to understand such information. They should provide the researcher with explicit consent to their participation. Participants can withdraw their consent at any time.

no deception; researchers should be as open and honest as possible in their dealings with participants.

avoid undue intrusion; researchers should respect the private lives of participants and cause as little disruption as possible in the process of data collection.

confidentiality; information collected by researchers should be treated in confidence and not disclosed to third parties.

anonymity; the identity of participants should not be revealed without their explicit consent.

security; data collected should be stored securely and measures should be taken to prevent loss of, or unauthorized access to, the research data.

- 4.2.2.2 Depending on the nature of the research, it might not be possible or desirable to adhere strictly to the basic principles outlined above. For example, psychological experiments might require some initial deception of participants as a necessary part of the research design. In some observational research, as another example, it might not be feasible to obtain formal written consent from participants. Where research does not adhere to the basic principles, researchers should provide an appropriate justification of their approach.

4.2.3 Procedures

Research degree students whose research requires approval from an Ethics Committee should submit the relevant application form before applying to the relevant Sub-Committee of Higher Degrees Committee for registration of their degree.

For postgraduate research degree students, the application should normally be made to the Faculty's designated Human Research Ethics Officer.

The above requirements and procedures must be upheld by DMU staff and their students for collaborative work overseas involving the activities of Section 4.1.2.

4.3 Reporting Lines

The Human Research Ethics Committee produces a report of its activities annually to the Academic Board.

5. Enrolment Procedures

All continuing students will be automatically enrolled **every** year, usually at the beginning of each academic session. During your first year it is expected that you will enroll at one of the agreed Fixed Entry Points; 1st October, 1st January, 1st April and 1st July and pay fees pro-rata.

You will be instructed to enrol as soon as you have received your offer. At this point you will complete an enrolment form (bring two colour passport sized photographs of yourself). Also bring information on how you intend to pay for your research. Full fees are due at enrolment. If unable to pay in full you must pay a minimum of 50%, there will be an option to settle in instalments, which confirm to the University's payment policies. The instalments can be made by Direct Debit or online at www.dmu.ac.uk by selecting online payments and the terms are three termly or four monthly instalments. Full time students will receive a discount of £500 if tuition fees are settled in full within one month from the date of enrolment.

Standard fee payers who are unable to pay in full must submit a direct debit mandate to pay in three or six instalments.

Once you have enrolled and the arrangements to pay your fees have been agreed you will be issued with your student ID card, which allows you access to University buildings. Your ID card is also your library card and you will need to show your card to have access to library facilities or to borrow books. You must ensure that you keep your ID card safe, as you will be asked for your Student Number (on the reverse of the card) throughout your period of enrolment. You may also be asked to show your card at any time in any of the University buildings.

Following admission, you will be assigned two supervisors, who will be responsible for arranging your induction to the University, helping you to complete the Training Needs Analysis/Statement (for those students enrolled after 1st October 2005), organising your programme of study and working with you to develop your research proposal.

5.1 Probation

Your enrolment as a research student is probationary until your 'Application to Register for a Research Degree' is approved by the Higher Degrees Committee Sub-Committee. A full-time student must apply to register within **six months** of

his/her enrolment date or within **one year** if studying part-time. Those full-time students enrolled on the MA/MSc by Research must register within three months of enrolment or part-time students within six months. If an application is not made to the Higher Degrees Committee Sub-Committee within these periods, the student's progress is deemed to be unsatisfactory and his/her enrolment is automatically terminated.

5.2 Enrolment of Members of Staff as Research Students

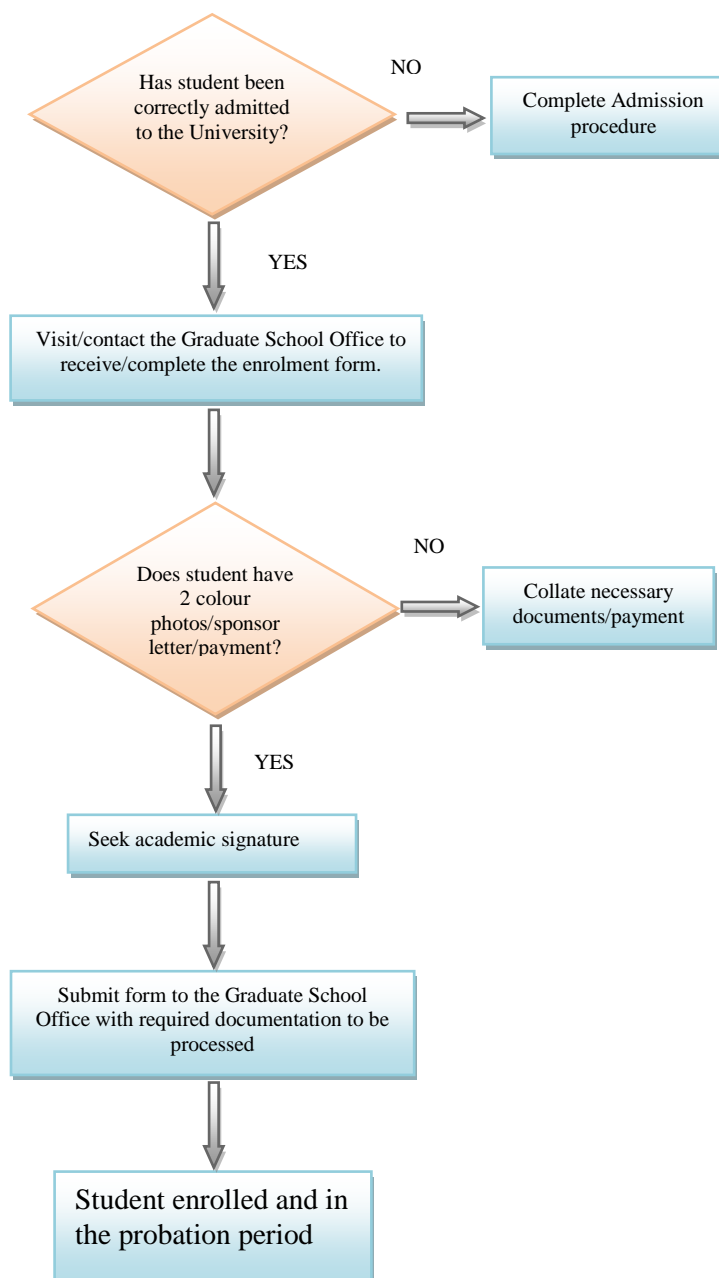
Members of University staff undertaking a research degree of this University **must** enrol as research students every year under the same conditions as above. Tuition fees are **NOT waived automatically** for DMU staff enrolled as students but are charged at the standard approved rate for students on similar programmes. Staff however, may apply for their fees to be paid in one of the following ways:

- from a Faculty or Department's staff development fund with the approval of their Head of Faculty/Department
- from central staff development funds administered by Human Resources (application forms available from Human Resources)
- from the appropriate research budget belonging to the Faculty/Department in which they are studying with the approval of their Head of Faculty/Department.

In each case a letter confirming the source of fees, stating the budget code, signed by the Head of Faculty/Department or the Head of Human Resources, as appropriate, must be provided **at enrolment**. If such a letter is not provided the appropriate tuition fee will be **charged to the student** until sponsorship details are approved.

The stages in the enrolment procedure are outlined in flowchart 3.

**Flowchart 3 -
Enrolment
procedure**



5.3 Re-enrolment

Continuing students will be enrolled automatically in October of each year.

5.4 Communication with students

From October 2007 research degree students will be required to use their university email address (e.g. P00000076@email.dmu.ac.uk). This will be the main form of communication from the Graduate School Office and Faculties. All information will be sent to this account and/or posted on Blackboard, therefore students will be required to check this account regularly.

6. Monitoring of Student Progress

All students enrolled and registered for research degrees are subject to annual monitoring to ensure that their progress is satisfactory and that the arrangements for supervision, which include the relationships between the research degree students and their supervisors, are working well.

Progress is subject to annual review, *excluding MA/MSc by Research*, as outlined in Regulation 12.8. Please refer to the 'Guidance Notes for Annual Review Panels' for further information.

Progress is regularly monitored by progress meetings as outlined in Regulation 6.4. It is expected that such formal discussions will be recorded and a full-time student will complete at least 10 records per annum and part-time students shall complete at least 5.

7. Research Degree Procedures (Forms)

The procedures for research degrees are governed by information given on a number of forms, each of which relates to a different stage in the student's progression from the registration through to the final examination, as appropriate. These forms are:

RDC : R	Application to Register for a Research Degree
RDC : PW	Application to Register for a Research Degree by Published Works
RDC : T	Application for Transfer of Registration from MPhil to PhD (Nomination of Internal Assessors)
RDC : M	Application for Change in Mode of Study
RDC : S	Application for Change in Approved Arrangements for Supervision
RDC : EXT	Application for Extension of Period of Registration
RDC : INT	Application for Interruption of Registration
RDC : INT 1	Application for Interruption of Enrolment in Probationary Period
RDC : SIX	Notification of Student entering the Writing-Up Period
RDC: Tr EXT	Application for Extension to Deadline for Transfer from MPhil to PhD
RDC : W	Notification of Withdrawal of Registration
RDC : E	Application for Approval of Examiners

All forms are submitted to the Higher Degrees Committee Sub-Committee except for the 'Application for Approval of Examiners' and 'Application for Extension of Period of Registration' which are submitted to the Higher Degrees Committee, for consideration and approval. Great care must be taken in the completion of the forms.

All forms must be typewritten in a font no smaller than 10 pt. Incomplete or hand-written forms will **not** be accepted. No additional papers or attachments other than, when appropriate, curriculum vitae of supervisors or examiners, can be submitted.

It is important to ensure that all forms are signed by the student and the supervisors as appropriate. The Higher Degrees Committee Sub-Committees will **not** consider forms which do not have the appropriate signatures.

If the enrolment procedure has not been completed upon submission of the Application to Register for a research degree, the Graduate School Office has the authority to refuse this submission.

All forms, in the first instance, must be submitted to the appropriate Faculty Assessor. (A list of Faculty Assessors is obtainable from the Graduate School Office).

All forms must be submitted in accordance with published deadlines. These dates are available from your Faculty Assessor and by email (researchstudents@dmu.ac.uk).

Procedures for the examination of students involve the completion of a number of forms, prior to and at the end of, the oral (viva voce) examination. These forms are provided by the Graduate School Office and must be returned to the Office upon completion of the examination, or, in the case of the Pre-viva forms by the examiners, 5 days prior to the viva voce. These forms are:

PRE VIVA	Examiners' pre-viva assessments and reports. (Completed by each examiner prior to the viva voce)
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Examiners' Report Form for students of Research Degrees; and

VIVA DECL	Declaration to be signed by the student.
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The Graduate School Office will dispatch copies of the thesis, together with copies of the 'Guidance Notes for Examiners', to all examiners as soon as the thesis has been formally submitted by the student and examination arrangements have been approved.

8. Application to Register for a Research Degree (Form RDC:R)

Once you have enrolled as a probationary research degree student you must apply to Register for a research degree with the relevant Faculty Research Degrees Committee. Students who are based in the IOCT will submit their application to the Faculty Research Degrees Committee to which their First Supervisor belongs. Registration is a separate procedure from enrolment and needs to be completed only once.

Application to register for a research degree is made on form RDC: R, which you will need to complete in collaboration with your assigned supervisors. As registration is a very important stage in becoming a research degree student, the need for the full and accurate completion of all parts of this form cannot be stressed too strongly. The information contained on the form is the sole basis on which the relevant Higher Degrees Committee Sub-Committee decides whether or not to approve your application to register.

The form requires certain elements of information:

- information about the **student** applying for registration for a research degree,
- information about the proposed **topic of research**, its aims, methods and intellectual content. When proposing the working or final title of a thesis, acronyms will not be used.
- information about the proposed **supervision arrangements** for the student.
- information regarding ethical and other approval. (See Procedure 4)

The information given will indicate your eligibility to pursue a research degree and the adequacy of the proposed supervision arrangements. The supervision team proposed must have the expertise to cover all aspects of the research project and must include experience of successful supervision of previous research degrees at the level for which you are applying.

Your registration is dependent essentially on the research topic you choose and the nature, level and appropriateness of the methods you intend to follow. It is vital, therefore, that your proposed Programme of Research is fully and clearly described.

The aims of your research need to be formulated precisely, stating clearly what the programme of research sets out to achieve. You must place your proposed research in the context of other work in the field and specify its relationship to previous research, in terms of theories and empirical work. It is important to cite key texts and indicate how the proposed research builds upon earlier work in the field. The methods of investigation you intend to pursue need to be described and you should give details, as appropriate, of:

- the location of the proposed research. e.g. when, where, etc.

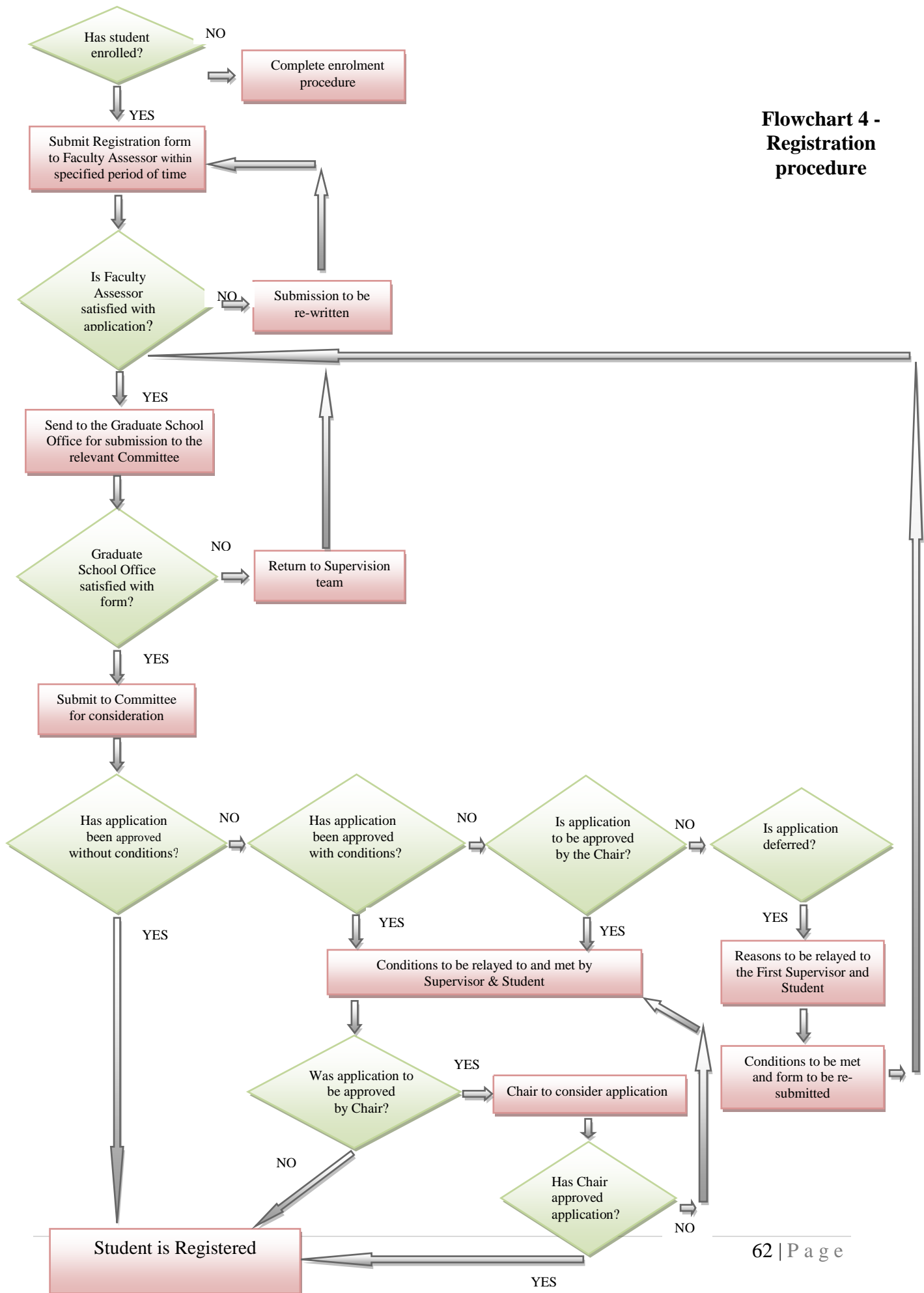
- the rationale for the selection. e.g. sampling, case studies, etc.
- the methods to be used in the investigation. e.g. descriptive, experimental, etc.
the instruments to be used or devised. e.g. computer equipment, questionnaires, etc.
- the techniques of analysis to be used.

It is also important for you to outline what you expect the outcomes of the research to be in terms of, for example, the construction of prototypes, the generation of principles or the formulation of theories and how these might contribute to the discipline. If you are proposing to extend the research from the MPhil to PhD, you need to indicate the point in the programme when you expect to apply for transfer.

If you are intending to pursue your research by other than the standard form, such as through Exhibition, Performance, Creative Writing or other similar work, you need to indicate the form in which you would propose to present the outcomes of the research and the ways in which it might be assessed.

Applications for registration for a research degree must be submitted in accordance with the format and procedures detailed in paragraph 7.2 and by the published deadlines, which are available from the Graduate School Office and Faculty Assessors.

The stages in the registration procedure are outlined in flowchart 4.



9. Application for Transfer of Registration from Master of Philosophy to Doctor of Philosophy (Form RDC: T)

If you are registered for the degree of Master of Philosophy with the possibility of Transfer to Doctor of Philosophy (MPhil/PhD) you need to apply to the relevant Faculty Research Degrees Committee for the approval of the transfer.

The deadlines to be adhered to are as follows:

Mode of Study	Minimum Submission	Maximum Submission
Full-time	12 months	15 months
Part-time	18 months	24 months

You must submit your transfer report, as appropriate, within these timescales. If you miss this deadline and as a full-time student do not submit the transfer report by month 17 (month 28 for part-time students) your registration will revert to Master of Philosophy and you will lose the opportunity to submit for the PhD.

You will be required to undergo a formal interview with the assessor and at least one member of the supervisory team in order to inform the decision of the internal assessor(s); you will be informed of the arrangements for the interview by the supervisor

The point of transfer is a critical stage in the research programme and the application you make needs to show that the level of the work you have already completed has achieved what would be normally expected at Master of Philosophy level. It also has to show that this work has the potential to be developed to a level, which will meet the intellectual rigor expected of doctoral research.

Please note these deadlines are strict and must be adhered to.

9.1 Application for Transfer

The application for transfer from MPhil to PhD is made on form RDC: T (A). To support your application for transfer, you need to provide a transfer report of between 5,000 and 10,000 words. The report should describe the work you have done and outcomes and conclusions reached. On the form, you need to provide a summary of the progress made in the research, which is an abstract of the transfer report, of no more than 500 words. In addition to the abstract, you also need to provide an outline showing how the work you have already completed will be extended to meet the requirements of the PhD.

If you are registered for a research degree by Exhibition, Performance, Creative Writing or similar work, (Regulation 11.1), you should also present examples of

the work you have completed to support your transfer report, which in this case will be within the range of 3,000 - 5,000 words. The form in which you present your work must be appropriate to the nature of the work, such as, as an exhibition or a performance. You must also be prepared to discuss the work so presented with the Internal Assessor(s) if he/she wishes.

The form RDC: T (A) requires the supervisors to report on two aspects of the research programme. First, they need to comment on the student's progress on the programme of research as approved at registration, which refers not only to the research project itself but also to the programme of related studies, including, the Research Training Programme. Secondly, they need to report on the quality and suitability of the plan for the future work with regard to its potential for achieving PhD level.

9.2 Nomination of Internal Assessors and Guidelines

In putting forward an application for transfer, the supervisor must complete form RDC: T(B) on which he/she nominates one member of university staff as potential Internal Assessor. The supervisor shall obtain the consent of the internal assessor prior to their possible appointment and in advance of submission of the transfer report and form. The Chair of the relevant Higher Degrees Committee Sub-Committee approves the nomination for appointment as the Internal Assessor. In exceptional cases, such as when the application has been approved subject to special scrutiny at the transfer stage, two internal assessors will be nominated and approved.

In order to assess the suitability of a student's application for transfer of registration from MPhil to PhD, Internal Assessors should take note that:

- a) the MPhil is awarded for a critical investigation and evaluation of an approved topic and a demonstration of an understanding of research methods appropriate to the chosen field,
- b) the PhD is awarded for a critical investigation and evaluation of an approved topic which results in an independent and original contribution to knowledge and an understanding of research methods appropriate to the chosen field,
- c) the transfer report should include a brief review and discussion of the work already undertaken and a statement of the intended further work, including details of the original contribution to knowledge which is likely to emerge.

After scrutinising the transfer report, the Internal Assessor submits his/her report and makes the preliminary recommendation to recommend or not recommend that the application to transfer registration from MPhil to PhD be approved by the Higher Degrees Committee Sub-Committee.

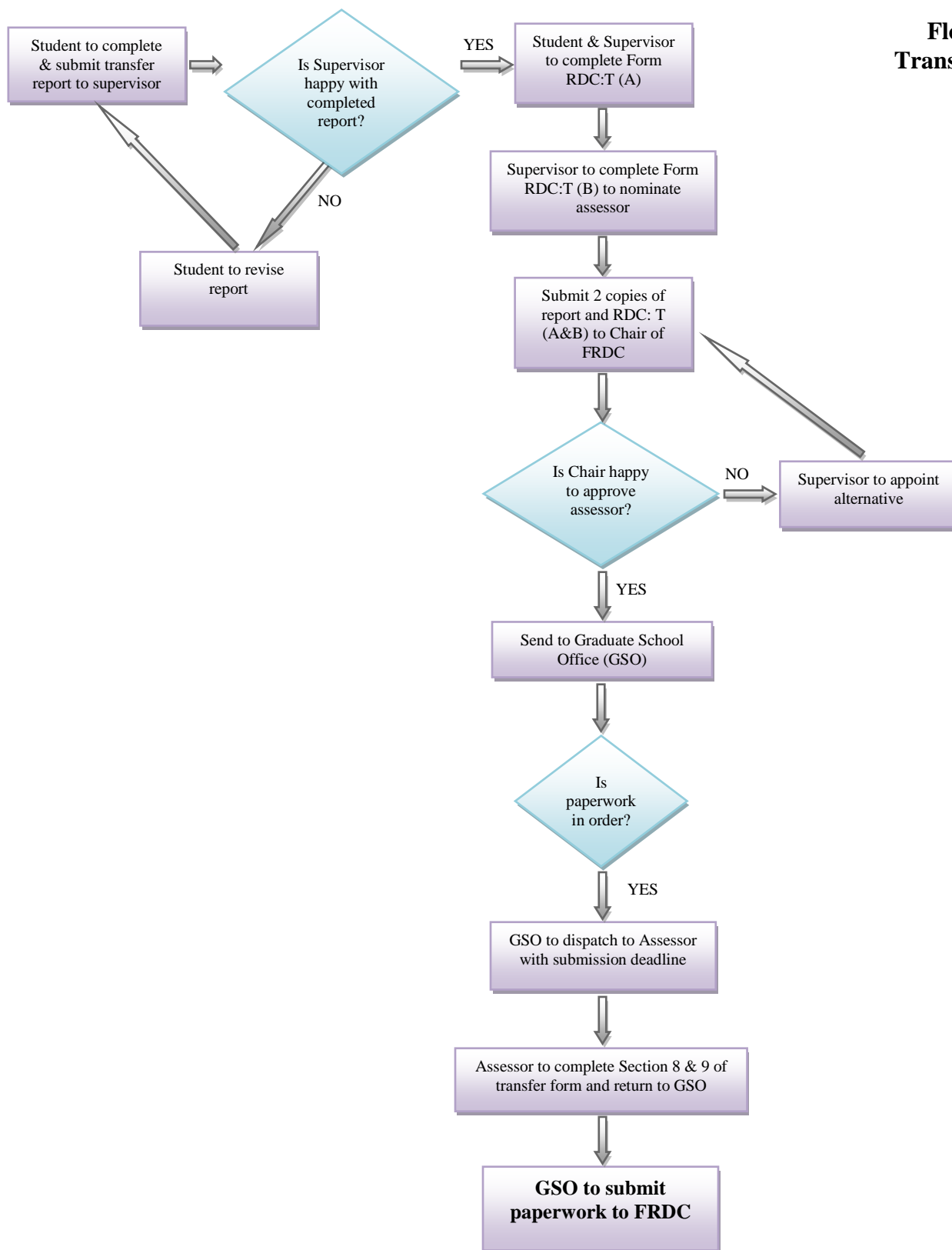
Before approving transfer, the Committee must be satisfied that the student has

made sufficient progress and that the proposed programme provides a suitable basis for work at PhD standard which the student is capable of pursuing to completion.

Applications for transfer from MPhil to PhD must be submitted in accordance with the format and procedures detailed in paragraph 7.2 and by published deadlines, which are available from the Graduate School Office and Faculty Assessors.

The stages in the transfer submission process are outlined in flowchart 5.

**Flowchart 5 -
Transfer procedure**



10. Application for Change in Mode of Study (Form RDC: M)

When you were registered for a research degree, approval was given for you to pursue your programme of research either full-time or part-time. If through a change of circumstances, such as change in your employment or in your financial position, you wish to change your mode of study from full-time to part-time, or vice versa, you must apply to the Chair of the relevant Higher Degrees Committee Sub-Committee for approval. A change in mode of study affects the date by which you will be expected to complete your programme of research. Guidance should be sought from the Graduate School Office on the revision of expected dates of completion.

No change of mode shall be considered following the commencement of the Writing-Up Period. This is to ensure that University statistics be more accurate. There is no negative implication for the student with respect to fees.

Overseas students who are studying full-time in the UK would have to prove that their visa status allows a change to part-time study.

Applications for change in mode of study are made on form RDC: M, on which you need to state the change you wish to make, indicating in consultation with the Graduate School Office, the date on which you wish the change to occur and putting forward a new date when you will expect to complete your studies. You also need to indicate the main reason for wishing to change your mode of study. Your application needs to be signed by your supervisors to indicate that they recommend the proposed change.

Applications for change in mode of study must be submitted in accordance with the format and procedures detailed in paragraph 7.2 and by published deadlines, which are available from the Graduate School Office and Faculty Assessors.

11. Application for Change in Approved Arrangements for Supervision (Form RDC: S)

The supervision team approved by the Higher Degrees Committee Sub-Committee at registration is an integral part of the research programme. If there is a change in circumstances, such as one of your supervisors leaving the employment of the University or a shift in your research direction which requires different or additional subject expertise, it may be necessary to seek approval for a change in your supervisors. It is important to note that, in order to avoid potential difficulties, approval for any change in supervisors needs to be sought as soon as possible. Any proposals for a change in the supervisory team can only be made with the agreement of the student, and is the responsibility of the First Supervisor (or nominee).

Applications for change in approved supervisory arrangements are made on form RDC: S. The reason for the change needs to be described and details of the proposed supervisory team given, under the procedure described in Procedure 6. If a new supervisor is proposed who has not been approved previously by the Higher Degrees Committee Sub-Committee as a supervisor, the supervisor's curriculum vitae must be

submitted with the application. The student must sign the form to indicate that he/she is in agreement with the proposed change.

Applications for change in approved supervisory arrangements must be submitted in accordance with the format and procedures detailed in paragraph 7.2 and by published deadlines, which are available from the Graduate School Office and Faculty Assessors.

12. Application for Extension of Period of Registration (Form RDC: EXT)

The parameters for the periods of registration during which research degree programmes are expected to be completed are precisely set out in the Regulations. The start and completion dates for each research programme are approved by the relevant Higher Degrees Committee Sub-Committee at the time of registration.

If, through a change of circumstances such as delays in acquiring essential equipment or ill health or other personal matters, you need to revise your research programme to go beyond the period of time approved at registration, you can apply for your period of registration to be extended to take account of the changed circumstances. The maximum periods of time for which extension can be considered are twelve months for full-time students and eighteen months for part-time students. You should note that you will continue to be liable for fees during an extension period.

When submitting an 'Application for Extension to Period of Registration' form the student must produce a thesis outline agreed with the supervisor and may present such evidence to help his/her case. It is permissible to request subsequent extensions and in this case there shall follow a 15 minute face-to-face or telephone interview with an experienced internal assessor appointed by the faculty assessor. It is permissible to request subsequent extensions but the University will scrutinise additional requests carefully.

The criteria for the internal assessor to support the application are as follows:

- a) Substantial progress with respect to an agreed thesis outline,
- b) Whether the work is still timely,
- c) Availability of time and resources to complete the work.

The assessor shall express a view as to whether; in their opinion the resulting period of extension is sufficient. The form shall then be submitted to the Higher Degrees Committee or Faculty Research Degrees Committee (where appropriate) for consideration.

Applications for extension of period of study are made on form RDC: EXT. The period of time for which extension is requested needs to be stated and the reason for the request indicated from a range of possibilities listed on the form. You are also required to provide a summary of not more than 500 words describing the progress of your research to date and outlining the work still to be completed.

Your application for extension must be supported by a signed recommendation by your

supervisor.

Applications for extension of period of study must be submitted in accordance with the format and procedures detailed in paragraph 7.2 and by published deadlines, which are available from the Graduate School Office and Faculty Assessors.

13. Application for Interruption of Registration (Form RDC: INT)

Where you are prevented from carrying out all aspects of the research, by a good cause, you may apply for your registration to be interrupted. Short interruptions for example short breaks due to illness, will not warrant the granting of an interruption.

The application shall be considered by the relevant Higher Degrees Committee Sub-Committee, which may grant an interruption of study normally for not less than six months or more than one year in the first instance. The Committee shall consider up to no more than six months backdating.

Fees are not payable during an interruption of registration because it is assumed that resources, such as library study and/or lending access and access to the supervision team are not being used. If supervision continues, then the student status reverts to active fee paying.

An application for interruption of registration is made on form RDC: INT, on which the student has to state the dates from which and to which interruptions are requested. The First Supervisor needs to sign the form to confirm his/her approval of the suspension of registration.

If interruption of registration is approved, the Graduate School Office will complete form P63 to ensure that your enrolment is also interrupted for the same period. On your return to the University, The Graduate School Office needs to be informed that you are resuming your studies. It is not necessary to apply for **registration** for the research degree to be restored but it is necessary for you to complete the **re-enrolment** procedure with the Graduate School Office (where relevant).

Applications for interruption of registration must be submitted in accordance with the format and procedures detailed in paragraph 7.2 and by published deadlines, which are available from the Graduate School Office and Faculty Assessors.

Students still in their probationary period who wish to interrupt their studies should complete form INT1, the minimum period to be granted during the probationary period shall be two months. See Regulation 3.6. The application should be submitted by the first supervisor to the Graduate School Office as soon as the student is aware of the necessity to interrupt his/her studies.

14. Notification of Student Entering the Writing-Up Period (Six months for MPhil or PhD and three Months for MA / MSc by Research) (Form RDC: SIX)

Once you have reached the final stage in your programme of research and you are solely concerned with writing your thesis, which normally does not need a high level of supervision, the university has resolved that because you will be working on your own, for a nominal period, you will be charged nil fees (Six months for MPhil or PhD and three Months for MA / MSc by Research). If, however, you do not complete your writing-up in this time, **you will be charged a continuation fee for the remaining period.** This amount will be reduced upon formal submission of the thesis.

Notification of a student entering the writing-up period is made on form RDC: SIX. The form should be completed by the student and signed by the First Supervisor. The start and end dates of the writing-up period must be stated.

Notification of a student entering the writing-up period must be submitted in accordance with the format and procedures detailed in paragraph 7.2 and by published deadlines, which are available from the Graduate School Office and Faculty Assessors.

15. Notification of Withdrawal of Registration (Form RDC: W)

You may find that, for a variety of reasons, such as ill-health, change of employment or financial problems, you are not able to continue with your programme and that it is necessary to seek formally to withdraw your registration. In exceptional cases, supervisors may consider it advisable to seek the termination of a student's registration.

Notifications of withdrawal of registration are made on form RDC: W. In most cases, the form is completed by the student, indicating, from the list of possibilities provided on the form, the main reason for wishing to withdraw. If the student is unavailable to complete and sign the form, the First Supervisor may do so, giving the reasons for the student's unavailability.

You will be subject to an exit interview which will normally be carried out by the First Supervisor

Notifications of withdrawal of registration must be submitted in accordance with the format and procedures detailed in paragraph 7.2 and by published deadlines, which are available from The Graduate School Office and Faculty Assessors.

Please note that failure to formally withdraw from the programme will result in you being charged fees until such time as you do formally withdraw.

16. Application for Approval of Examiners (Form RDC: E)

Students for research degrees are examined on the basis of the submitted thesis and through the defence of the thesis in an oral examination (viva voce). Applications for the

approval of examiners are prepared by the supervisors and put forward on form RDC: E. The form requires the nomination of the examination team and the date the examination is expected to take place for the approval of the Higher Degrees Committee.

16.1 Normally, the examining team for a research degree consists of:

- a) an External Examiner, who is external to and independent of the university or the collaborating establishment, and
- b) an Internal Examiner, who is a member of staff of the university.

16.2 As a whole, the examining team is expected to have:

- a) substantial experience in examining research degree students at the appropriate level of the degree,
- b) substantial knowledge of current research relating to the subject area of the submission.

In selecting individuals to be nominated as examiners and with regard to Regulation 16, the supervisors need to take a wide range of matters into account, which include:

- i) in order to be able to take a detached view of the student's work, the examiners who are nominated shall be independent of the student and his/her work in that they shall not have provided any guidance in respect of the context or structure of the thesis or other submitted work. However, in very exceptional cases, one of the student's supervisors may be nominated to be an examiner but in this case an additional internal examiner will also need to be nominated,
- ii) if the student is a permanent member of academic staff of the university, it is a requirement that two External Examiners are nominated as well as an Internal Examiner,
- iii) for PhD students at least one examiner shall normally hold a PhD,
- iv) a person who is a student for a research degree cannot be nominated to be an examiner for another student,
- v) in the case of PhD students who have transferred from MPhil, the Internal Assessor at the transfer stage cannot normally be nominated to be an examiner.
- vi) former members of university staff are not normally eligible for nomination as external examiners until three years after the termination of their employment in the university.

If an examiner is nominated who has not previously served as a research degree examiner at the University, it is necessary for a copy of his/her curriculum vitae to be submitted with the application.

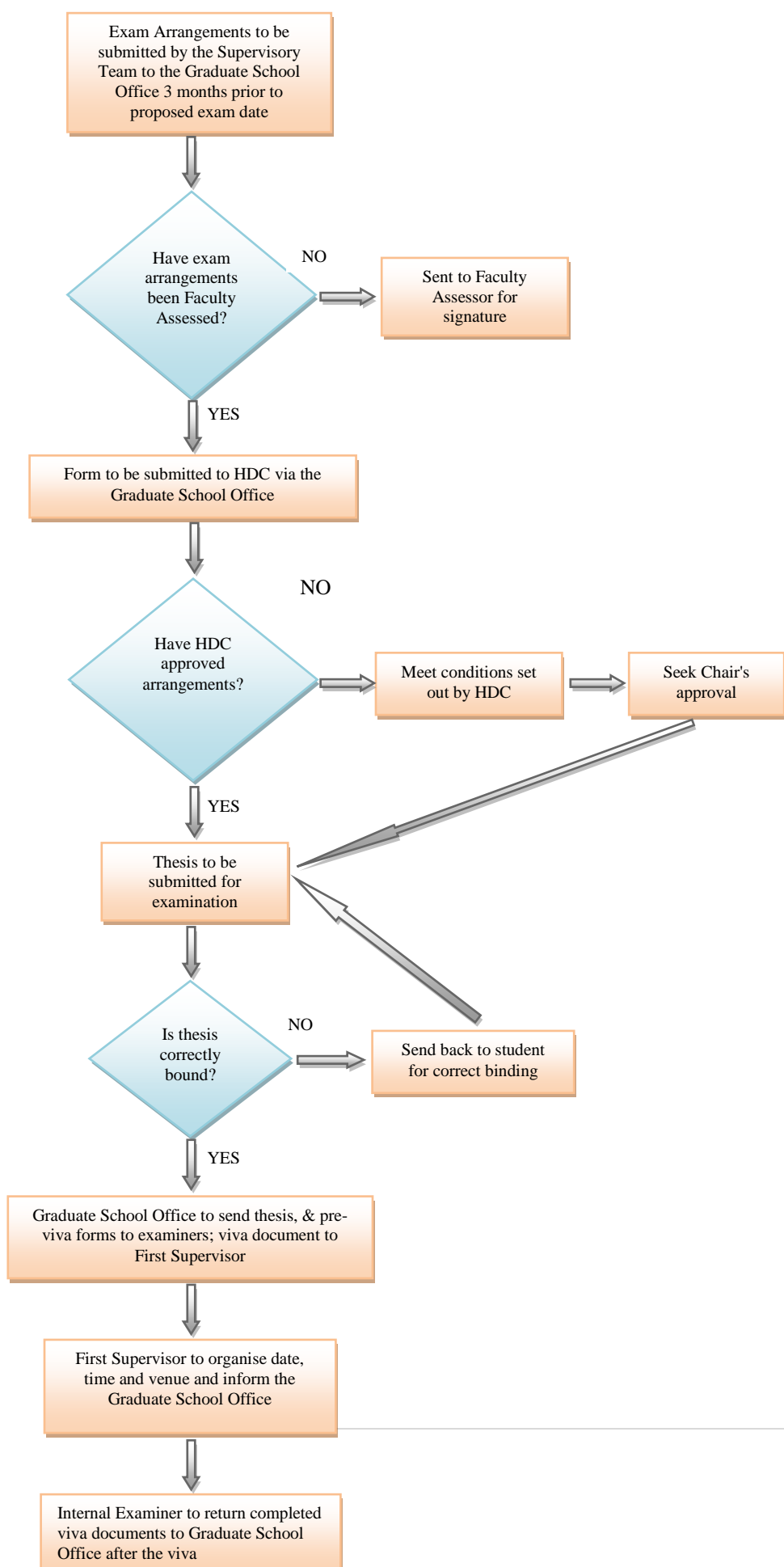
An application for approval of examination arrangements must be submitted **at least 3 months** prior to the submission of the examinable thesis. If the examination does not take place within 12 months of the proposed examination date, the First Supervisor will be asked by the Graduate School Office to confirm that the approved examining arrangements are still valid and to set a new examination date. If the examination has not taken place within 18 months of the original proposed examination date, the Higher Degrees Committee may require a resubmission of the examination arrangements,

Applications for approval of examination arrangements must be submitted in accordance with the format and procedures detailed in paragraph 7.2 and by published deadlines, which are available from the Graduate School Office and Faculty Assessors.

- 16.3** A student will complete a declaration form upon submission of the thesis for examination which confirms that:
- a) the work was solely conducted during the registration for the award with the University, under University supervision; *or*
the nature and extent of any exceptions must be specified.
 - b) no material used in the thesis was used in any other submission; *or*
indicate nature and extent of any material which forms part of the submission elsewhere.
 - c) The work re-presented in the submission was undertaken solely by the student, except as described under regulation 2.10.

The stages in the examination procedure are outlined in flowchart 6.

**Flowchart 6-
Examination
procedure**



17. Administrative Conduct of Examinations

When the Higher Degrees Committee has approved the examination arrangements, the examiners will be notified of their appointments. The student's First Supervisor will receive copies of the correspondence.

The instructions given to examiners will be explicit in that they will be made aware that if they write on the thesis the student may eventually get to see such comments.

It is the responsibility of the First Supervisor to make the specific arrangements for the examination, including the date, time, location and hospitality. **The Graduate School Office must be notified of these arrangements immediately they have been finalised.**

17.1 Submission of Theses

The student should submit as many identical copies of the glue-bound thesis as there are examiners to the Graduate School Office, at least one month prior to the date of his/her examination, and should bring to the viva voce a further identical copy for their own use.

The Graduate School Office will send the copies of the thesis and the pre-viva form to the Examiners along with other relevant documentation. The First Supervisor will be informed when this has taken place and sent the viva document, 'Examiners' Report Form for Candidates for research degrees (Doctor of Philosophy and Master of Philosophy) and VIVA DECL when it has not be completed upon submission for examination.

The student must bring an identical copy of their submitted thesis to the viva voce for their own use. If under Regulation 17.4 the student has requested that his/her supervisor be present then a further copy shall also be provided for use by the Supervisor.

17.2 The Examination

The student's First Supervisor is responsible for ensuring the smooth running of the examination, and **must be** available at all times, while the examination is in progress.

One of the student's supervisors who is not an examiner shall normally attend the oral examination, unless the student has expressed a wish to the contrary. The purpose of this is to assist the student and examiners with matters of clarification only and not to participate in the viva. Attendance by a supervisor is not compulsory but if the student feels that this would be helpful, the University then expects the supervisor to be at the viva.

At the completion of the oral examination, the student and other persons attending the examination must withdraw from the examination room before the examiners begin their deliberations to determine the result of the examination. Following their deliberations:

- a) the 'Examiners' Report form for candidates for Research Degrees' and where relevant the 'Statement of theses Deficiencies' or the 'Statement of Reasons for Failure'.
- b) Form VIVA DECL should be completed by the student.

The completed forms must be returned to the Graduate School Office within three working days.

Following the viva voce, it will be the responsibility of the internal examiner to collect all copies of the thesis.

The internal examiner will retain these copies until the award is conferred upon the student. (This is so that the University has copies of the thesis in the event of an appeal)

Once the award is conferred the internal examiner shall hand the copies back to the student or confidentially waste.

If on the examination report the examiners state that the students should carry out the corrections as stated on the thesis, this shall override the points above. This will be communicated to examiners in the initial letter of appointment.

17.3 Amendment to Theses

When amendments to the thesis, as indicated on the 'Statement of Theses Deficiencies' form have been completed, copies of the thesis should be forwarded onto the relevant examiner(s) and the Graduate School Office informed so that the relevant documentation can be distributed.

17.4 Examination of an Amended Thesis

Copies of an amended thesis are sent to the Examiners separately, who must confer in reaching a recommendation, including whether or not they wish to re-examine the student in a further oral examination when this had been previously recommended under Regulation 18.2, and submit their joint recommendation to the Graduate School Office on the appropriate form. In the case of disagreement, the Examiners must submit separate recommendation forms in accordance with Regulation 19, *Disagreement Amongst Examiners*.

The decisions of the examiner(s) regarding an amended thesis submitted under Regulation 18.2 c) are normally limited to:

- a) a recommendation for the award of a degree (Regulation 18.2e)
- b) a recommendation that no degree should be awarded (Regulation 18.2f)

17.5 Lodging of thesis

When the viva documentation clearly recommends the award of the research degree or when any required amendments have been completed and approved by the examiners, the student should make arrangements for one copy of the final thesis to be bound in hard cover and submitted also electronically. This copy of the hardbound thesis must be lodged with the Graduate School Office as soon as possible. A list of binding companies is available on request from the Graduate School Office.

17.6 Conferment of the Research Degree

Following the receipt of completed examination documents, one hardbound copy of the thesis, and the electronic thesis the form DMU REC will be completed by the Graduate School Office and the recommendation for the award of a research degree will be forwarded to the Vice-Chancellor or nominee.

If the Regulations are adhered to the Vice-Chancellor will sign a conferment list, which officially confers the degree. A degree parchment will then be produced and normally will be sent to the student and he/she will be invited to attend a Graduation Ceremony.

18. Remit of a Faculty Assessor

The Faculty Assessor is nominated by the Dean of the Faculty/Head of Independent Research Centre to serve on the Higher Degrees Committee and relevant Higher Degrees Committee Sub-Committees.

All research degree documentation is required to be submitted to the Faculty Assessor prior to being forwarded to the Graduate School Office for subsequent consideration by the Higher Degrees Committee or Higher Degrees Committee Sub-Committee.

The basic remit of a Faculty Assessor is:

To ensure that the research degree documentation prepared by staff in the Faculty in respect of individual research students is of a high standard and meets the requirements of the University's Research Degree Regulations and Procedures. (Procedure 7.2)

The critical scrutiny by the Faculty Assessor is intended to avoid the Higher Degrees Committee (HDC) or Higher Degrees Committee Sub-Committees being distracted and wasting time in dealing with omissions, inaccuracies and other minor issues in documentation presented to it for consideration.

18.1 The duties of a Faculty Assessor are as follows:

General Duties

- a) To ensure that Faculty staff are made aware of the dates of forthcoming HDC and HDC Sub-Committee meetings and the deadlines for submission of material.
- b) To ensure that research degree documentation for the relevant Committee is sent to the Faculty Assessor for approval and is not submitted directly to the Graduate School Office without such approval.
- c) To liaise with the Graduate School Office in dealing with queries arising from both staff in the Faculty and from the Graduate School Office following decisions made by the HDC and HDC Sub-Committee.
- d) To attend all HDC Sub-Committee meetings. If, exceptionally, absence is unavoidable then the Assessor must brief another Committee member in the same Faculty to speak to items involving Faculty documentation.
- e) To be suitably briefed in detail by any member of staff submitting documentation which the Assessor believes could give rise to particular scrutiny/controversy in a HDC and HDC Sub-Committee meeting.
- f) Assessors must ensure that the completion of all forms satisfies the requirements detailed in Procedure 7.2 regarding the accuracy of student details, dates, details of supervisory team, institutional and departmental titles, type size, layout, attachments and signatures. The Assessor's signature and date in the box provided will indicate that a form has passed scrutiny. Forms not satisfying the requirements should be returned to the originators for amendment.

Assessors may find it helpful to maintain a log of material submitted with dates, together with actions required and the final dates of submission to the Graduate School Office.

18.2 Duties specific to the various RDC forms

The following checklist is designed to act as an *aide-memoir* for Faculty Assessors.

18.2.1 For the document RDC: R proposing initial registration (Regulation 4.10, Procedure 8)

Is the research plan clearly described with references to, and set in, the context of previous work? In the case of MPhil/PhD, is the break point for transfer clearly specified?

Are any or all acronyms used in the proposal preceded by the titles in full the first time they are used?

Are the questions about intellectual property collaborating establishment, confidentiality and ethical approval clearly answered?

Are there any very obvious points concerning the supervisor team that the HDC or HDC Sub-Committee may question? For example:

- a) Do the proposed supervisors collectively have previous supervisory experience to completion? (Regulation 5.2)
- b) Do any of the supervisors have an apparently excessive supervisory load, which would need justification? (The Graduate School Office will provide Assessors with the data to enable them to perform this latter task). Should this be the situation, the possibility of making a special case for exceptional circumstances should be drawn to the attention of the staff concerned.

Are the key references listed in Section 12.5 of the form correctly formulated in accordance with the established bibliographical systems associated with appropriate Professional Body standards and are they cited appropriately in Section 12.2?

18.2.2 For the documents RDC: T (A), RDC:T (B) proposing transfer from MPhil to PhD. (Regulation 13, Procedure 9)

Does the Abstract set the work in context, list the tasks actually done and the outcomes and conclusions reached up to that point? (Procedure 9.1)

Following the Abstract, is there a clear statement of the work proposed for PhD and is there at least some plausible argument to demonstrate the increase in intellectual level associated with this proposed work?

Are the statements, which have been written by the Supervisor(s) clear and adequate?

Is the required nomination for Internal Assessor detailed on Form RDC:T(B)? (Procedure 9.2)

Does the relevance of the experience of the proposed Internal Assessor make it plausible that he/she is well suited to scrutinise the transfer report?

If the Faculty Assessor is not the Chair of the Faculty Research Degrees Committee they should ensure the transfer reports and form are submitted to

the Chair for approval of the nomination of the internal assessor.

18.2.3 For the document RDC:E proposing the examination arrangements (Regulation 16, Procedure 16)

Has the proposed External Examiner had actual previous examining experience at the appropriate level? An External Examiner without relevant experience can only be approved after a close scrutiny by HDC of the overall experience of the examining team at the level in question.

Have two External Examiners been nominated if the student is a permanent academic member of university staff? (Regulation 15.4)

Has the proposed Internal Examiner had actual previous examining experience at the appropriate level? An Internal Examiner without relevant experience can only be approved if paired with an experienced Internal Examiner. If more than one Internal Examiner is proposed, an appropriate case must be made. (Procedure 16.6.2)

The section on the form requesting further supporting information should explain fully the reasons for the choice of Examiners.

Check the degree to which, if any, the proposed Examiners have been involved previously with the project/student/institution. (Regulations 16.5.4, 16.5.5)

18.2.4 Other Forms

These are normally fairly straightforward for originating supervisors to deal with and seldom present any difficulties for an Assessor. However, should there be any queries or problems about the completion of these forms they should be addressed to the Graduate School Office.

Note that all forms other than those dealing with the examination and extension process are dealt with by the Faculty Research Degrees Committees rather than directly by HDC. Final submission dates for those forms are published by the Faculties. The deadlines for the submission of all Application for Approval of Examination Arrangements RDC:E and Application for Extension of Period of Registration RDC:EXT forms are given in the schedule provided by the Graduate School Office.

It should be noted that the final responsibility for the approval or not of the content of all RDC forms resides with the Higher Degrees Committee or its Sub Committees. Faculty Research Degrees Committees are delegated to approve forms with the exception of those dealing with examination arrangements.

Guidance Notes for Examiners

De Montfort University

2010

Guidance Notes for Examiners

1. Introduction

These Guidance Notes are issued by the Academic Registrar and are intended to assist examiners and supervisors in their preparation for and conduct of examinations of candidates for the degrees of Master of Philosophy and Doctor of Philosophy. They are based on the Research Degree Regulations and Procedures of De Montfort University.

2. Responsibilities in Relation to the Examination Process

The respective responsibilities of the Supervisor, the Examiners and the Graduate School Office are as follows:

2.1 The First Supervisor (or Second where necessary)

- a) To complete the 'Approval of Examiners' form three months prior to submission of thesis and submit form to the Higher Degrees Committee. To inform the examination team of their nomination and of the subsequent approval.
- b) On behalf of the Dean of Faculty concerned, to make the administrative arrangements for the oral examination, consulting the external and internal examiners as appropriate, notifying all concerned of the date, time and place of the oral examination and attending the examination to answer questions, unless the candidate has expressed a wish to the contrary.
- c) To complete Section B of the 'master copy' of the Examiners' Report Form and to pass this to the internal examiner immediately before the examination. The report must provide contextual information on the candidate's work, e.g. mentioning any technical problems experience during the research or any personal difficulties faced by the candidate.
- d) Following an examination where examiners require minor corrections or major revisions to be made to the thesis, to obtain details of these from the examiners and to pass them onto the candidate. This should be done as soon as possible and within one week of the date of the examination at the latest.

2.2 All Internal and External Examiners

- a) To read the candidate's thesis as soon as possible after they receive it and to make themselves available to conduct the oral examination as soon as practicable. The University aims to ensure that all candidates are examined as soon as possible and no later than ten weeks after submission of their thesis. This applies to re-submissions also.

- b) To prepare written notes on the thesis and to complete the pre-viva form and submit to the Graduate School Office 5 days prior to the oral examination. These notes and pre-viva forms should form the basis of discussion with other examiners immediately prior to the oral examination.
- c) Jointly with the other examiners, to complete Section C of the Examiners' Report Form and, where applicable, the 'Statement of Thesis Deficiencies' or the 'Statement of Reasons for Failure'. This should be done immediately after the examination is concluded and **before the examiners disperse**.

2.3 The Experienced Internal Examiner

- a) To ensure that the completed Examiners' Report Form, including where appropriate the 'Statement of Thesis Deficiencies' or the 'Statement of Reasons for Failure', is passed to the Graduate School Office as soon as possible and within three working days of the oral examination at the latest.
- b) If the examiners have decided that minor corrections are required, to consider these (in association with any other internal examiners) once submitted and to notify the Graduate School Office without delay whether or not they are satisfactory. The Graduate School Office will provide a form for such notification.

2.4 The Graduate School Office

- a) To give formal notification to all examiners of their appointment by the Higher Degrees Committee.
- b) To dispatch copies of the thesis to all examiners as soon as it has been formally submitted by the candidate and examination arrangements have been approved, together with these guidance notes.
- c) To dispatch a copy of the thesis to the Supervisor, along with these Guidance Notes including the 'master copy' of the Examiners' Report Form, with Section A completed and request that he or she makes the administrative arrangements for the oral examination.
- d) To notify the candidate of the result of his/her candidature upon receipt of the completed Examiners' Report Form.

3. The Oral Examination

- 3.1** All candidates are examined orally in English on the programme of work and on the field of study. However, in cases of sickness, disability or comparable valid cause, an alternative form of examination may be approved. Such cases require the approval of the Higher Degrees Committee on the recommendation of the examiners.
- 3.2** The purposes of an oral examination are:
- a) to establish that the submitted work is that of the candidate;
 - b) to give the candidate the opportunity to defend the direction, structure and conclusions of the work. This involves the examiners making constructive criticisms of both the research and the thesis and giving the candidate the opportunity to respond;
 - c) to explore with the candidate any particular issues in the thesis or submitted work which require clarification or development. This is particularly important in cases where the examiners feel that their final decision may be other than an unconditional pass;
 - d) to test the candidate's personal eligibility for the award of the degree by exploring his/her understanding of issues arising in and from the research and of the relationship of the research to the wider field of knowledge. In the case of a PhD candidate, the candidate should be able to demonstrate his/her understanding of the nature and extent of the original contribution to knowledge entailed in the research.
- 3.3** One of the candidate's supervisors who is not an examiner shall normally attend the oral examination, unless the candidate has expressed a wish to the contrary. The purpose of this is to assist the candidate and examiners with matters of clarification only and not to participate in the viva. Attendance by a supervisor is not compulsory but if the student feels that this would be helpful, the University then expects the supervisor to be at the viva.
- 3.4** Oral examinations must normally take place with the candidate and the examination team present at the same location.
- 3.5** The recording of the proceedings of the viva voce, by any method, is normally prohibited.
- 3.6** There will normally be at least two examiners present - one external examiner who is independent of De Montfort University and one internal examiner.

- 3.7** The oral examination should last between one and two hours. The pattern for each particular oral is for the examiners to determine; but in most cases the examiners will wish to focus on a detailed consideration of the research, its methodology and its findings. In some cases, however, the examiners may wish to focus on a discussion of broader aspects of the research process or findings, or the implications for policy/research, or publication possibilities. For this, the candidate may be invited to highlight aspects or issues that appear most important or interesting.
- 3.8** The intention is that oral examinations should be constructive and stimulating for all participants. The candidates should expect to be challenged on their ideas, but should be assured that the experience is intended to be helpful and positive. In preparation, candidates are advised to re-familiarise themselves with their thesis, make their own assessment of its strengths and weaknesses, and try to anticipate issues that are likely to be raised.

No communication shall be made with a candidate for the award of a distinction of the University which purports to be, or might reasonably be taken to be, official notification of the results of the candidature, except by the Graduate School Office on behalf of the Academic Registrar.

4. Academic Standards

4.1 The Degree of Master of Philosophy (MPhil) and the Degree of MA/MSc by Research

The degree of MPhil is awarded to recognise the successful completion, under such conditions as are prescribed by Regulations, of a supervised programme of individual research, development or design, the results of which have been satisfactorily embodied in a thesis (or other presentation as defined in Regulation 11), and which:

- a) demonstrate an understanding of research methods appropriate to the field of study; and
- b) demonstrate critical investigation and evaluation of the topic of research.

4.2 The Degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

The degree of PhD is awarded to recognise the successful completion, under such conditions as are prescribed by Regulations, of a supervised programme of individual research, development or design, the results of which have been satisfactorily embodied in a thesis (or other presentation as defined in Regulation 11), and which:

- a) demonstrate an understanding of research methods appropriate to the field of study; and
- b) demonstrate critical investigation and evaluation of the topic of research; and
- c) constitute an independent and original contribution to knowledge; and
- d) demonstrate the candidate's ability to undertake further research without supervision.

For Variations from the Standard Research programme see Regulation 11.

5. The Examiner's Recommendation

5.1 Regulation 18 provides for examiners to make one of the following principal recommendations:

- a) the candidate should be awarded the degree sought; or
- b) the candidate should be awarded the degree sought, provided that minor factual errors and faults in the submitted work are corrected to the satisfaction of the nominated examiner(s) within a specified period not exceeding six months from the notification of the result to the candidate.
- c) the candidate be permitted to re-submit for the degree sought and be re-examined as follows:
 - i) the thesis to be revised and if deemed satisfactory by the Examiners, the candidate will be exempt from further examination, oral or otherwise; or
 - ii) the thesis to be revised and the candidate must undergo a further oral or alternative examination; or
 - iii) the thesis is satisfactory, but the candidate must undergo a further oral examination or other such examination as the examiners shall specify.

In this case the examiners shall specify the maximum period open to the candidate to re-submit, this period is not to exceed 12 months. The maximum period shall date from the notification of the result to the candidate.

Examiners shall not make recommendations 18.2 c) if they are examining a candidate who is already re-presenting *unless* the re-presentation is the outcome of an appeal.

- d) If a candidate for PhD, the candidate should be awarded the MPhil, if appropriate, subject to corrections on the basis stated in 18.2 b) above. Examiners must only make this recommendation for positive achievement by the student in accordance with 4.1 above.
- e) The candidate should not be awarded any degree and should be given no further opportunity of examination.
- f) the examiners may also offer a PhD candidate a choice between accepting an MPhil as in 18.2d) or requiring major revisions over a period of time as in 18.2c) to achieve PhD. The candidate shall be given no more than one month to select the route that they wish to follow

Before forwarding a recommendation for the award of a degree to The Graduate School Office the examiners must be satisfied that the format of thesis is in accordance with the University's regulations (see Regulation 15).

Before reaching a recommendation, the examiners may require a further examination additional to the oral examination.

Where examiners recommend in the terms set out in Regulations 18.1 b), c) or d) they shall provide the candidate and the Graduate School Office with a written statement, on form 'Statement of Thesis Deficiencies', concerning the deficiencies of the submission or examination and a date by which these amendments are to be completed and returned to the First Supervisor.

Where the examination team are recommending that the student should be awarded the degree sought 'subject to minor amendments and corrections' we would ask that they consider an appropriate length of time. In some circumstances six months might be too long, and examiners are encouraged to specify a shorter time in these instances.

5.2 Distinction between 'minor factual errors' and 'revise and re-present'

There is a substantive difference between 5.1 b) which is a conditional pass and 5.1c) which is essentially a 'fail'.

The award of a conditional pass would normally be appropriate if all that is required is editing, or the correction of presentational shortcomings not seriously impairing the argument of the thesis. On the other hand, revise and re-present would be appropriate where technical content was deficient or where errors of presentation had fundamentally and comprehensively impaired the argument and substantial re-writing was required.

A practical test of the distinction between is whether the external examiner wishes to see the thesis again. If he or she does so wish then the recommendation should be not to award the degree but to permit the candidate to resubmit the thesis and be re-examined as outlined in 5.1c) above. If the examiners believe that the thesis can readily be brought to an acceptable standard and does not need his or her further inspection then the candidate can be passed subject to minor amendments.

5.3 Distinction between 'revise and re-present' and 'fail'

Where the thesis is the sole or major element for examination, it should normally only be 'failed' on first submission if the examiners consider that the work could not form the basis of an acceptable thesis at a second attempt. Otherwise, the decision should be 'revise and re-present'.

6. Statement of Thesis Deficiencies

Where the examiners recommend that a candidate should not be awarded the degree sought, but should be afforded the opportunity to revise and re-present the thesis within a specified period, they should provide specific written advice as to the deficiencies or inadequacies of the thesis. Accordingly they are asked to complete the 'Statement of Thesis Deficiencies' and return this to the Graduate School Office, together with the Examiners' Report Form.

7. Statement of Reasons of Failure

7.1 Where the examiners recommend that a candidate should not be awarded the degree sought and should have no further opportunity of examination, the candidate has the right to appeal. If the candidate appeals, he/she must be provided with a statement giving reasons for failure. The statement should be as full as practicable whilst safeguarding the confidentiality of the examining process.

7.2 In order to save time during the appeal process and to avoid troubling examiners further, it is most helpful if the examiners complete the 'Statement of Reasons for Failure' at the same time as they complete the Examiners' Report Form, and return both to the Graduate School Office immediately after the oral examination.

8. Lack of Agreement among examiners

Should the examiners, despite their best efforts, fail to agree on a joint recommendation, the provisions of Regulation 19 will apply and separate reports are required. If two or more examiners are of the same view they should submit a joint report and any other examiners should submit individual reports; otherwise all examiners should report individually. The standard Examiners' Report Form should be used in all cases, but clearly marked '**NOT AN AGREED RECOMMENDATION - SEE REPORTS OF OTHER EXAMINERS**'.

Annual Review Panel
Guidance Notes

De Montfort University

2010

Annual Review Panel Guidance Notes

1. Introduction

These Guidance Notes are issued by the Academic Registrar and are intended to assist research degree students, supervisors and independent assessors in the conduct of Annual Review Panels. They are based on the Research Degree Regulations and Procedures of De Montfort University.

2. Regulation surrounding the Annual Review Panel

Regulation 12.8 - Progress is subject to annual review by a panel of at least three research active and relevant academics, including re-presentation of the supervisory team and at least one member who is independent of the supervisory team. Feedback shall be part of this process. If a candidate is transferring or requires an extension at the time that annual review is due then this shall form part of the discussion.

The annual review shall also include consideration of:

- a) the candidate's progress with the Research Training Programme, as informed by the initial Training Needs Analysis. (See regulation 4.1)
- b) any necessary change in the Training Needs Analysis consequent on the progress of the project.
- c) where applicable, a review of the candidate's Personal Development Plan.

All enrolled and/or registered students, excluding MA/MSc by Research, shall undertake the Annual Review Process. This excludes students whose enrolment/registration is interrupted.

3. Purpose and Timing of the Panel

3.1 The purposes of an annual review panel:

- a) to explore the progress of the student since initial enrolment or last panel meeting.
- b) to ensure that the student is on track to complete the award for which he/she is registered within the agreed time-scale (which should be within the remaining period of registration)

- c) to monitor Research Training Components and schedule set out in the Training Needs Analysis. (For students enrolling from October 2005) Where applicable, to review the candidate's Personal Development Plan.
- d) Where relevant, to consider the 'Application for Extension of Period of Registration' for consideration by the relevant Higher Degrees Committee.

3.2 The Annual Review Panel should ideally be held at 12 monthly intervals following initial enrolment. This should exclude any period of Interruption of Registration. However it is acceptable to hold it between 10 and 14 months after initial enrolment and subsequently within two months of the anniversary of the original enrolment date.

Full-time students who are registered on the MPhil with possibility of transfer to PhD route will not be required to have an annual review in year one and part-time students on this route will not be required to have an annual review panel meeting in year two. It is expected students will concentrate on transfer submission during this time.

Once the student has submitted the examinable thesis further Annual Review Panels shall not be required. The only exception to this is where the examiners have invoked Regulation 17.3 whereby the viva voce shall be postponed whilst the candidate makes further revisions, in which case an Annual Review Panel shall be held as normal.

3.3 The Annual Review Panel may take place face-to-face, via video conferencing or telephone conference (as long as all parties can speak and hear at all times).

3.4 The Annual Review Panel is expected to last approximately one hour.

3.5 There is an expectation that students will meet Regulation 6.1f) (The whole supervision team should meet with the student at least once a year). The Annual Review is perhaps the best time for this to occur.

4. Appointment of Independent Assessor(s)

4.1 The independent Assessor(s) should:

- a) Be qualified to supervise, having attended the Certificate in Research Supervision (CRS) and having been a member or currently still being a member of a supervisory team for a research degree student.
- b) Normally have some relevant subject specific expertise.

4.2 It may be that the supervision team feel it would be helpful for the assessor to be used for more than one of the annual reviews to give continuity, this is acceptable.

- 4.3** The Independent Assessor can act as Internal examiner **unless** they were involved in assessment of the transfer report.

5. Responsibilities in Relation to the Annual Review Process

The respective responsibilities of the Supervisor, the Research Degree Student and the Independent Assessor are as follows:

5.1 The First Supervisor (or Second where necessary)

- a) To complete the relevant sections of the 'Research Student Annual Review' form once submitted by the student.
- b) To ensure that the administrative arrangements for the Annual Review Panel are made, consulting the student and independent assessor(s) as appropriate, notifying all concerned of the date, time and place of the panel meeting.
- c) Following the panel meeting the application shall be sent to the Graduate School Office for consideration at a Higher Degrees Committee Sub-Committee in the usual way.
- d) To consider whether an 'Application for Extension to Period of Registration' should be considered by the Annual Review Panel and if so to discuss completion of the RDC: EXT with the student.

Following the panel meeting the application shall be sent to the Graduate School Office for consideration at a Higher Degrees Committee in the usual way.

- e) To include, as part of the review, monitoring of the progress of the student on their research and also to monitor Research Training Components and schedule set out in the Training Needs Analysis. (For students enrolling from October 2005)
- f) Where applicable, to review the candidate's Personal Development Plan.
- g) To ensure that the completed paperwork is copied to the research degree student and to the Faculty Office responsible for research degree administration so that they can copy to the University Graduate School Office.

5.2 Research Degree Student

- a) To download and complete relevant sections of the 'Research Student Annual Review' form and submit to First Supervisor.

- b) Following the panel meeting the application shall be sent to the Graduate School Office for consideration at a Higher Degrees Committee Sub-Committee in the usual way.
- c) Where the student wishes the assessor to consider an 'Application of Extension of Registration', (this is relevant when the student expects his/her registration shall expire within the next 12 months and before they have submitted an examinable thesis to the Graduate School Office), he/she should complete the RDC: EXT and submit to his/her supervisor in advance of the panel meeting.

Following the panel meeting the application shall be sent to the Graduate School Office for consideration at a Higher Degrees Committee in the usual way.

5.3 Independent Assessor(s)

- a) To read relevant material submitted by the student in advance of the meeting.
- b) To attend the Annual Review Panel and carry out the panel meeting along with at least one member of the Supervisory team. The Independent Assessor shall provide impartiality in the proceedings.
- c) To complete relevant sections of the 'Research Student Annual Review' form.