Research Degrees on the Basis of Published Works

Regulations and Notes for Guidance

October 2012
PLYMOUTH UNIVERSITY

REGULATIONS

FOR THE DEGREES OF

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

AND

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

ON THE BASIS OF

PUBLISHED WORKS

1. With the approval of the Graduate Committee a member of staff of Plymouth University, an industrial or public partner, one of its approved Partner Institutions or a member of its alumni may submit for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy or Master of Philosophy on the basis of published works.

Eligibility

2. Candidates are expected to have been employed by the University or its Partner Institutions or the industrial/public employer for a minimum of five years preceding the application and the published works and related research to have been carried out during the appointment period as evidenced, for example, by the acknowledgement of the University or Partner Institution or the industrial/public employer in the publications being submitted, or the University or Partner Institution or the industrial/public employer being the mailing address for the candidate in the publications. Part-time staff are eligible to apply for consideration but a period of time in excess of 5 years may be required by Graduate Committee. The minimum qualifying part-time employment is defined as having a staff contract in excess of 0.2 FTE for the duration of the period. All staff will be expected to continue in the employment of the University or its Partner Institution or the industrial/public employer during the period up to the point of submission. Alumni candidates are normally expected to have graduated from Plymouth University at least 5 years previously.

3. Eligible industrial/public partners are defined as those that can demonstrate an ongoing relationship with the University which may include research funding, joint publications, honorary academic fellowship or similar.
4. Intention to submit will be made to the relevant Head of School as appropriate and a suitably qualified Mentor will be assigned to assist the candidate in the preparation of their application. Where the candidate is from a Partner Institution then the Mentor will normally be a member of University academic staff from an appropriate discipline, but a second Mentor may be appointed from the Partner Institution.

Evidence to determine whether a prima facie case exists

5. The candidate will submit to the Head of School or Faculty nominee as appropriate a list of works, as defined in the attached notes, on which the final submission is to be based together with a statement as to where and when the study and research on which the works were based was undertaken. The candidate will indicate the proportion of the work which was carried out personally by the candidate for all works produced in cooperation or co-authored with others.

6. The candidate shall also submit a summary of not more than 6,000 words setting out his/her view of the nature and significance of the work submitted. The Head of School/Faculty nominee will submit this evidence to a suitably qualified internal (or external) commentator who will produce a report on the initial submission. If this report is positive then the Head of School/Faculty nominee will put the submission to Graduate Committee for approval that a prima facie case exists.

7. Graduate Committee will scrutinise the submission and come to a decision on whether a prima facie case for submission exists or whether the submission requires further assessment, or further work or whether the submission is rejected.

8. If the Graduate Committee is satisfied that a prima facie case has been made for candidature, it will refer the submission back to the School/Faculty for preparation of the submission for examination.

Post prima facie determination

9. The candidate will have a maximum of 12 months from the time of approval of the prima facie case to submission of the final documentation for examination.

10. The mentor will nominate the examining team using an RDC.3SC form approximately 6 months prior to final submission. Two external examiners and one internal examiner will be required as with the examination of staff for research degrees. No examiner should have been a co-author of any of the works on which the candidate’s application is to be based.

11. Any works or publications submitted for another degree or emanating from research conducted for another degree (taught or research, e.g. MSc, MA, MBA, MRes, ResM, MPhil, etc.) cannot form a part of the candidate’s submission for the award.

12. The candidate shall be examined on both the submitted written evidence together with a viva voce examination by all the examiners. The language of the examination shall be English unless otherwise approved by the Graduate Committee.
13. The examiners shall determine whether the works submitted demonstrate that the candidate has undertaken study and research at least comparable with that required to prepare an MPhil/PhD thesis in the field. The works must show that the candidate had personally made a systematic study, that he/she has shown independent, critical and original powers and that he/she has made a distinct contribution to knowledge. Together, the works must display coherence and progression.

14. After the examination, the examiners shall report on the works submitted and on the viva voce examination and complete an RDC.SC4 form and shall jointly recommend either:
   a) that the degree be awarded, or
   b) that the degree be awarded, subject to minor/major modifications detailed in a written summary provided to the candidate, or
   c) that the degree be not awarded, or
   d) in the case of consideration for PhD, the examiners may decide not to offer the award of PhD but to offer an MPhil with or without corrections.

15. In the case of disagreement amongst the examiners, the decision shall be deferred and the Graduate Committee shall appoint an additional external examiner who will consider both the submission and the reports of all the original examiners and come to a recommendation. After this evidence is compiled an ad-hoc sub-committee of the Graduate Committee will arbitrate and come to a decision on the outcome of the examination.

16. A candidate to whom the degree is not awarded may submit a fresh application at any time, provided that such an application includes additional works based upon further study and research.

17. The appeals procedure embodied in the Regulations and Code of Practice for research degrees shall apply.

NOTE: THE INTERPRETATION ACT 1889
Unless a contrary intention appears, words importing the masculine gender shall include females, and words in the singular shall include the plural and words in the plural shall include the singular.

APPROVED BY THE VICE-CHANCELLOR
Minor amendments approved subsequent to the meeting of the Academic Board on 23 June 1993.

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Vice-Chancellor
1. Introduction

Plymouth University has the power to award the degrees of MPhil and PhD on the basis of published work. The intention is to enable eligible candidates who have not previously been able to register for a higher degree but have been research active and publishing in the public domain, to submit a collection of works for consideration for the award of a research degree.

The submission must show that the candidate has personally made a systematic study, that he/she has shown independent, critical and original powers and that he/she has made a distinct contribution to knowledge (in accordance with the QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications Descriptors). This opportunity normally applies to full time members of staff of the University, one of its Partner Institutions, an industrial or public partner or member of its alumni not earlier than five years after appointment or graduating from the University (for alumni), provided that study and research has been carried out during the period of appointment. Part time staff are eligible to apply (see below).

A work will be regarded as published only if it is traceable through ordinary catalogues, abstracts or citation indices and copies are available in the public domain. Manuscripts of proofs of works about to be published are not submissible unless they carry a DOI reference number. Reports to Government Departments, local or industrial organisations and the like, are not normally submissible unless they have been published in the public domain and can be evidenced e.g. with an ISBN number.
2. Meeting the Criteria

For a candidate to be eligible to be considered for a degree of Doctor of Philosophy or Master of Philosophy on the basis of published works, they must meet the following criteria:

- they must have been a full-time member of the staff of the Plymouth University or its predecessors or a Partner Institution or an industrial/public institution for at least five years, or in the case of alumni, have graduated from the Plymouth University at least five years previously,

- part time staff may be eligible to apply if they have worked for the University or one of its Partner Institutions for a minimum of 7 years on at least a 0.2 FTE continuous contract. Graduate Committee may require a longer service period than 7 years if the part-time contract is close to the minimum FTE.

- candidates must have the approval of their Head of School or appropriate individual within a Partner Institution prior to submission to Graduate Committee.

In preparing the preliminary documentation and the final submission, the candidate will be advised and assisted by an experienced Mentor in the subject area who has successfully supervised a number of Research Degree candidates appointed by the Head of School. Where the candidate comes from a Partner Institution or industrial/public institution the Mentor will normally be a member of University staff. A second Mentor from the Partner Institution may also be appointed.

The Head of School will appoint an internal (or external) expert commentator to assess the candidate’s prima facie application and if there is a positive report will allow the application to go forward to Graduate Committee.

Graduate Committee will determine if a prima facie case exists.

The work submitted for the degree should consist of a collection of published works, papers, chapters, books, and/or other creative works in any media (including suitable documentation of performance, installation, and other temporary works) which together form a coherent programme of research and have been accepted for dissemination by reputable journals, publishing houses, galleries or similar publishing media in the field. It is the responsibility of the candidate to identify the research content of the submission. The works should normally have been published within the preceding five years. Works previously or simultaneously submitted for another degree or emanating from research conducted for another degree must not form a part of the candidate’s submission for the award and a declaration to this effect must be submitted by the candidate along with their application.
3. Submission to Graduate Committee
In order to establish a prima facie case, the candidate must submit to the Graduate Committee via the Graduate School:

- a completed RDC.1SC,
- a brief curriculum vitae,
- a list of the published works on which the final submission is to be based,
- a declaration of approximately 500 words identifying where and when the research contributing to the published works was undertaken,
- the external commentators report on the application made to the School/Faculty
- a letter of support for the submission from the School/Faculty, and Partner Institution where appropriate.

The Graduate Committee, if necessary, may seek further expert comment on the submission and if it is satisfied that a prima facie case has been made for candidature, it will approve the request for submission. Graduate Committee may decline the submission or refer it back for further work or further research or further clarification.

4. Examination arrangements
The Mentor will nominate the examination team 6 months prior to final submission. Normal examination arrangements applying to Staff will apply (2 externals and 1 chairperson). Form RDC.3SC must be completed and forwarded to the Graduate Committee for approval.

5. Submission of the Full Documentation
The candidate must submit to the Graduate School a set of documents (in a temporary binding/folder) for each of the examiners i.e. 3 copies. The Graduate School will send out the submission to the examiners. The Mentor will make the arrangements for the viva voce examination.

The appropriate fee must be paid prior to the viva voce examination.
Each set of documentation, excluding books, must be presented in A4 format. The contents must be written in English unless the Graduate Committee has approved otherwise. Details of the presentation and contents of the documentation are included in the appendix.

The Graduate Committee may give permission for an alternative format to be used for the documentation where it is satisfied that this would be more appropriate.

Normally a submission will consist of the following (see appendix):

- an introduction and current review of literature leading to a setting of the context of the published body of work presented,
- the published works,
a general discussion of the published works that shows the cohesive nature of the works and summarises the main conclusions and suggestions for further work,

- a reference list of all references that are not cited in the published works.

6. Examination and Outcome

The examination consists of 2 parts, the written submission and the viva voce examination (oral defence of the submission).

In the viva voce examination, the examiners will be concerned with the content of the works submitted, the individual’s knowledge of the subject area and any other matters they deem to be relevant to the works. The examiners need to establish that the works submitted demonstrate that the candidate has undertaken study and research at least comparable with that required to prepare an MPhil or PhD thesis in the field concerned. The works must show that the candidate has personally made a systematic study, that he/she has shown independent, critical and original powers and that he/she has made a distinct contribution to knowledge. Together, the works must display coherence and progression.

The viva voce examination is a “closed” examination and normally no person other than the candidate and the appointed examiners may be present at, or take part in the examination. The Mentor(s) may be present as observers at the discretion of the candidate.

After the examination, the examiners will report on the works submitted and on the viva voce examination and complete form RDC.4SC. Where they are in agreement, the examiners will jointly recommend to the University one of the following:

- that the degree be awarded, or
- that the degree be awarded, subject to minor/major modifications to the written summary provided by the candidate, or
- that the degree be not awarded, or
- in the case of consideration for PhD, the examiners may decide to not offer the award of PhD but offer an MPhil with or without corrections.

Following a successful examination, the candidate must submit an electronic version of the thesis in the University repository.

Where the examiners decide that the degree be awarded subject to minor/major modifications to the written summary provided by the candidate, the extent, nature and time scale for such changes shall be indicated to the candidate in an written document appended to the RDC.4SC. If the changes are minor, their verification may be left to the internal examiner only but in the case of major changes, all examiners must confirm acceptance of the modifications.
Where the examiners decide that the degree be not awarded, they will prepare an agreed statement of the deficiencies of the candidate's submission and their reasons for their recommendation appended to the RDC.4SC which will be forwarded to the candidate.

A candidate to whom the degree is not awarded may submit a fresh application at a future date for *prima facie* consideration, provided that such an application includes additional works based upon further study and research.

In the case of disagreement amongst the examiners, the Graduate Committee will appoint an additional external examiner who shall consider the reports of all the examiners and make a recommendation. The final decision to award or not to award the degree will then rest with the Graduate Committee.

7. **Fees**

For staff members the University, the Faculty or Directorate who employs the candidate, normally covers the fees for examination for the degree of MPhil/PhD on the Basis of Published Works but this should follow the general rules for staff enrolling for research degrees at the Plymouth University. The fee for candidates from Partner Institutions, industrial/public partners or alumni is the same as that for University staff and agreement as to who covers the fee needs to be determined prior to submission. If no sponsor is found, the candidate is responsible for the appropriate fees. The fee is published annually in the University's schedule of tuition fees. No degree will be awarded until all the appropriate fees or other debt have been paid.

8. **Appeals Against the Outcome of an Examination**

The appeals procedure as detailed in the Plymouth University Regulations for research degrees will apply.

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APPENDIX

PRESENTATION OF THE DOCUMENTATION

SUBMISSION FOR EXAMINATION

The thesis should be presented in A4 format and in a temporary binding in such a way that it can be opened fully, for ease of reading.

Recommended Sequence

- **Title Page:** should include the following information: an appropriate title relating to the candidate’s area of research, the full name of the candidate, the award for which the degree is being submitted in partial fulfilment of its requirements, that the degree is awarded by the Plymouth University and the month and year of submission.

- **List of Contents:** should give in sequence, with page numbers, a list of the published works on which the application is based.

- **Declaration:** approximately 500 words identifying where and when the study and research on which the works were based was undertaken and declaring that no part of the submission has been considered for any other degree or award.

- **Abstract:** normally not more than 500 words. Abstract to include full name of candidate (no abbreviations) and full title of the thesis.

- **Critical appraisal:** normally not more than 6000 words which states the nature and significance of the work submitted and including a seminal literature review where appropriate.

- **Published Works:** an offprint or high quality photocopy of all the published works cited in the contents. Where a work has been written in co-operation with others the candidate must state what proportion of the work was carried out personally by the candidate. The works must be numbered and correspond exactly with the list cited in the contents. No additional works should be included. Books or monographs or other electronic formats may be submitted separately from the other published works. Copyright permissions from publishers must be obtained prior to submission and evidence of such presented in the submission.

- **General Discussion** a short general discussion summarising the main conclusions of the body of work and suggesting further works.

- **References** a list of references used but not cited in the published works.
The Graduate School will provide guidance on the submission of other forms of creative works and artefacts. In the case of tapes, CDs, artwork or other items of research output, the Graduate School may have to discuss the mode of presentation with the candidate and other staff in the area involved with the submission.

**SUBMISSION OF FINAL ELECTRONIC LIBRARY COPY (AFTER SUCCESSFUL EXAMINATION)**

From 1st October 2010 candidates will be required to upload an electronic version of the thesis in the University repository as the final Plymouth University Library copy.

On successful receipt of the upload of the electronic thesis the University will award the degree and the candidate will be entitled to attend the next appropriate Graduation Ceremony, subject to general financial regulations.