

## **REGULATION 19: RESEARCH DEGREES IN THE BRIGHTON AND SUSSEX MEDICAL SCHOOL AWARDED JOINTLY BY THE UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX AND THE UNIVERSITY OF BRIGHTON**

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### **1. Introduction**

Degrees conferred under this Regulation shall be joint awards of the University of Brighton and the University of Sussex. Every student must comply at all times with the Charter and Statutes Regulations of the University of Sussex, the Articles of Government of the University of Brighton and all relevant Regulations of both universities.

- 1.1 In accordance with Article 10 of the Charter and in accordance with the Statutes, the University shall:
  - (a) grant and confer Degrees, Diplomas, Certificates and other academic distinctions to and on persons who shall have pursued a course of study approved by the University and shall have passed the examinations or other tests prescribed by the University; provided that all Degrees, Diplomas, Certificates and other academic distinctions so granted and conferred shall be held subject to this Regulation.
  - (b) on what the University shall deem to be good cause, to deprive persons of any Degrees or other distinctions conferred on them and to revoke any Diplomas or Certificates granted to them by the University.
- 1.2. The Universities shall grant and confer Degrees, Diplomas, Certificates and other academic distinctions to and on persons who shall have pursued a course of study approved by the Universities and shall have passed the examinations or other tests prescribed by the Universities; provided that all Degrees, Diplomas, Certificates and other academic distinctions so granted and conferred shall be held subject to this Regulation.
- 1.3. The degrees, foundation degrees, diplomas, certificates, and other distinctions of the Universities shall be awarded by the authority of Senate of the University of Sussex and the Academic Board of the University of Brighton on the recommendation of an authorised sub-committee.
- 1.4. The Universities reserve the right to apply a range of sanctions against students for academic debt, academic-related debt and non-academic related debt as set out in the University of Sussex Student Debt Policy.
- 1.5. The conferment of any degree, or the award of any foundation degree, diploma or certificate, may be revoked by Senate of the University of Sussex and the Academic Board of the University of Brighton, provided that the individual circumstances of each such case shall be considered by Senate.

### **2. Scope**

Courses of research offered by the Brighton and Sussex Medical School may be undertaken provided that the proposed course:

- (i) can be appropriately supported by supervisory experience within the Brighton and Sussex Medical School, or in partnership with either University.
- (ii) is capable of leading to scholarly research and to its presentation for assessment by appropriate examiners in the form of
  - (a) a written thesis; or
  - (b) a written thesis which may be supplemented by material in other than written form, if appropriate.

All proposed research degree courses shall be considered on their academic merits and without reference to the concerns or interests of any associated funding body.

### **3. Standard of research degrees**

The standards of the research degrees of MPhil, PhD and MD are:

- 3.1 The MPhil will be awarded to a candidate who satisfies the examiners that their thesis makes an adequate original contribution to knowledge or understanding, or is a valuable presentation or interpretation of material put together in an original manner, and who demonstrates that they have:
- (i) critically investigated and evaluated an approved topic;
  - (ii) an understanding of research methods appropriate to the field;
  - (iii) an ability to relate the findings of the study to the broader context.

The thesis must be defended by oral examination to the satisfaction of the examiners.

- 3.2 The PhD will be awarded to a candidate who satisfies the examiners that their thesis makes a substantial original contribution to knowledge or understanding and who demonstrates that they have:
- (i) critically investigated and evaluated an approved topic resulting in an independent and substantial original contribution to knowledge;
  - (ii) an understanding of research methods appropriate to the field;
  - (iii) an ability to relate the findings of the study to the broader context.

The thesis must be defended by oral examination to the satisfaction of the examiners.

- 3.3 The MD will be awarded to a candidate who satisfies the examiners that the thesis makes a substantial original contribution to knowledge or understanding and who demonstrates that they have:
- (i) critically investigated and evaluated an approved topic resulting in an independent and substantial original contribution to knowledge;
  - (ii) an understanding of research methods appropriate to the field;
  - (iii) an ability to relate the findings of the study to the broader context.

The thesis must be defended by oral examination to the satisfaction of the examiners.

#### 4. Registration Periods

- 4.1 The normal minimum and maximum periods from initial registration for the respective categories (see paragraph 4.2) for research degrees are:

Category	Minimum	Maximum
<b>MPhil</b>		
Full-time	18 months	36 months
Part-time	30 months	48 months
<b>PhD</b>		
Full-time	24 months	48 months
Part-time	36 months	72 months
<b>MD</b>		
Full-time	12 months	24 months
Part-time	24 months	36 months

- 4.2 Research projects develop at different rates therefore these guidelines may not always be appropriate. Applications for examination without these guidelines may be considered on an exceptional basis by the Joint Research Degrees Approval Board.
- 4.3 If a candidate has previously undertaken research as a registered candidate for a research degree at either University, it may be appropriate to approve a shorter than usual registration period which takes account of all or part of the time already spent by the candidate on such research. This will be subject to approval by the Joint Research Degrees Approval Board.
- 4.4 Where a candidate is prevented because of ill-health or other circumstances from making progress with the course of research, they may intermit. Intermissions are normally granted for a period not exceeding a year at any one time and normally a student cannot intermit on more than two occasions. Retrospective intermission will normally be permitted for a maximum three-month period. The intermission should be agreed by the candidate's Thesis Panel.
- 4.5 Full-time candidates are advised that they should devote on average at least 40 hours per week to their research and part-time candidates on average a minimum of 20 hours per week.
- 4.6 Any change to the duration of a research degree project incurred by extension or intermission will require the formal approval of the Joint Research Degrees Approval Board.
- 4.7 The Universities shall have the right to withhold or withdraw registration from a student who:
- (i) is in arrears with the payment of the University tuition fees;
  - (ii) has failed to meet the academic requirements to continue on the course of studies concerned;
  - (iii) has been found guilty of research misconduct;

- (iv) has provided materially inaccurate information in support of his/her application.
- (v) has a visa status which is in conflict with the terms of the University's licence as a visa-sponsoring organisation.

## **5. Requirements for registration of candidates**

- 5.1 The admission and registration of each candidate will require appropriate academic judgement being brought to bear on the viability of each research proposal in accordance with the procedures established by the University of Sussex Senate and the University of Brighton Academic Board. The purpose of the admission and registration procedure is to ensure, in so far as it is possible, that the candidate is capable of achieving the standard of the award sought; that the subject of the research and the research methods proposed will allow this to be achieved; that both Universities are able to ensure that suitably qualified and experienced staff act as supervisors; and that all other resources required will be available.
- 5.2 Each registered research student will be a member of the academic community at both the University of Brighton and the University of Sussex.
- 5.3 The Joint Research Degrees Approval Board, in conjunction with the Registrar and Secretary from the University of Brighton (or nominee), shall have the authority to admit applicants on the recommendation of the Brighton and Sussex Medical School. In all cases, the Registrar and Secretary's decision shall be final.
- 5.4 The University of Brighton shall be responsible for the administration of the admissions and registration process, the collection of fees, monitoring of students in debt, the conduct of examinations and assessments, the maintenance of student records and archives, the provision of formal references, the conduct of student complaints and appeals, and the administration of the appointment and remuneration of external examiners.
- 5.5 A person may apply for admission and registration as a research degree candidate for one of the following categories of registration:
- (a) the Degree of Master of Philosophy (MPhil);
  - (b) the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD);
  - (c) the Degree of Doctor of Medicine (MD).

The initial registration of research degree candidates will normally be for an MPhil with the possibility of transfer to PhD or MD.

- 5.6 The normal entry requirements for registration for the Degree of MPhil are:
- (i) a first or second class honours degree, or other qualification which is regarded by the Joint Research Degrees Approval Board as being equivalent, and which is normally relevant to the course of study proposed; or
  - (ii) appropriate research or professional experience at postgraduate level. An application made by someone with this experience will be considered on its merits and will normally require independent academic references.

- 5.7 The normal entry requirements for registration for the Degree of PhD are:
- (i) a recognised Master's Degree or other qualification which is regarded by the Joint Research Degrees Approval Board as being equivalent, and which is normally relevant to the course of study proposed; or
  - (ii) substantial appropriate research or professional experience at postgraduate level which resulted in published work, written reports or other appropriate evidence of accomplishment. An application made by someone with this experience will be considered on its merits and will normally require independent academic references.
- 5.8 The normal entry requirements for registration for the Degree of MD are:
- (i) the BM BS degree of the Brighton and Sussex Medical School or a registrable professional or other medical qualification;
  - (ii) eligibility for full registration or limited registration with the General Medical Council.
- 5.9 The provisional research topic must be stated in order for a candidate to be considered for admission and registration.
- 5.10 It is the responsibility of the candidate to enrol as a research student each year during her/his period of registration for a research degree. This re-enrolment is subject to satisfactory progress as approved by the Thesis Panel. The Thesis Panel comprises the BSMS Director of Research, the Head of Division to which the student is assigned and the student's supervisors (who may be one and the same).
- 5.11 If the proposed course of work is to be part of a group project, then the course of research to be undertaken by the applicant and presented as her/his own work for the purposes of assessment shall be clearly distinguishable and be appropriate for the category of registration and level of award being sought.
- 5.12 A candidate for the Degree of PhD, MPhil or MD will undertake an integrated course of related-research training and transferable skills as determined by the Thesis Panel and the performance of which may be formally assessed. Such a course of study shall not occupy more than one-third of the total period of registration and shall complement the research element of the course.
- 5.13 With the exception of specific research training courses, a candidate shall only be permitted to register for another course of study concurrently with research degree registration if either the research degree registration is itself part-time or the other course of study is part-time, and then only if supervisory team considers that the dual registration will not detract from the research course.
- 5.14 The candidate shall abide by the obligations set down in any confidentiality agreement.
- 5.15 All patentable intellectual property resulting from research undertaken during the period of registration will be considered in accordance with the arrangements agreed between the University of Brighton and the University of Sussex, unless agreed otherwise in writing at registration. In all cases, the copyright of the thesis is vested in the candidate, unless agreed otherwise at registration.

## **6. Induction, course of work and related studies and collaboration**

- 6.1 A candidate for a research degree shall be required to follow a programme of induction as appropriate to the area of study as determined by the supervisory team.
- 6.2 The course of related research and transferable skills training should fulfil the following objectives:
- (a) to assist the candidate with the timely and successful completion of the research project;
  - (b) to provide the candidate with the skills and knowledge necessary for the pursuit of the proposed research and the use of the intended research methods;
  - (c) to ensure that the candidate leaves with a rounded and useful range of skills for further academic work or employment outside academia;
  - (d) to provide a body of knowledge normally associated with a degree in the field of study;
  - (e) to provide breadth of knowledge in related subjects.

The Skills Evaluation proforma contained in the BSMS Research Skills Training Programme should be used for this purpose.

- 6.3 All research students should be familiar with, and be expected to comply with, the *Code of Practice for Research Degrees in BSMS*.

## **7. Research Plan Approval**

- 7.1 The full-time candidate is required to submit a research plan for approval by the Thesis Panel within four months of initial registration; this period will be extended to six months for part-time candidates. Failure to submit a research plan without prior approval will result in a Progression Review Panel which, after following the process set out in paragraphs 9.1-9.3 below may result in a recommendation for withdrawal of registration.
- 7.2 Should the research plan not be approved, the candidate will have one further opportunity to submit. The date of submission will be no less than one month and no more than three months from the date of the initial Research Plan Approval meeting. The second meeting will have the status of a second Progression Review Panel (paragraphs 9.2 and 9.3 refer).

## **8. Supervision**

- 8.1 In approving supervision teams the Universities seek to ensure that there is an appropriate level of academic support available for the student and experience of supporting research students to a successful conclusion within the supervisory team.
- 8.2 Each research degree candidate shall have at least two supervisors and not usually more than three.
- 8.3 Each supervisory team must have a lead supervisor who has primary responsibility for liaison with staff responsible for research student administration within the

University of Brighton. The lead supervisor must be an individual holding a formal staff contract with one of the two Universities. The supervisory team is confirmed at the point at which the thesis outline is formally approved by the Thesis Panel. The Joint Research Degrees Approval Board will maintain a register of staff acting as supervisors to BSMS research students.

- 8.4 At least one supervisor shall have experience of supervising candidates to the successful completion of a research degree. In the case of a candidate registered for a PhD, one of the supervisors should have successfully supervised to PhD level.
- 8.5 Normally, the supervision team shall have a combined experience of research degree supervision of not fewer than two candidates to successful completion.
- 8.6 In addition to the supervisors, it may be appropriate to identify an adviser or advisers to contribute specialised knowledge or to provide a link with an external organisation.
- 8.7 A person who is registered for a research degree other than for PhD by publication shall not be eligible to act as a supervisor for a research degree candidate. Where a student's supervisor becomes registered for a research degree other than for PhD by Publication, after the student's registration, that supervisor shall withdraw and alternative arrangements for supervision be made.
- 8.8 In deciding whether the proposed supervisory arrangements are satisfactory, the existing supervision commitments of proposed members of the team, and the record of supervision of the proposed supervisors, will be considered. A supervisor shall not normally act as lead supervisor for more than six candidates (FTE).
- 8.9 The *Code of Practice for Research Degrees in BSMS* sets out the arrangements by which the Medical School will maintain appropriate standards and enhance the quality of postgraduate research courses.

## **9. Progression Review**

- 9.1 Continuation of registration of the student shall be dependent on the approval of both Universities at a formal Progression Review Panel. The procedure for operation of the Progression Review Panel is set out in the *Code of Practice for Research Degrees in BSMS*. A meeting of the Panel will be held, at a minimum, on an annual basis. However the University reserves the right to hold a Progression Review Panel at any point provided that at least one month's notice is given to the student and supervisors.
- 9.2 Should the progression of a student not be approved by the Progression Review Panel, the student must produce specified evidence and/or additional work for consideration at a second meeting of the Progression Review Panel to be held no less than one month and no more than three months after the initial progression review. Supervisors may be required to produce further evidence at this stage. The supervision team will attend this meeting which must also include either the Chair of the Deputy Chair of the Joint Research Degrees Approval Board. The student is also permitted to bring a person of their choosing.
- 9.3 The Progression Review Panel will consider the evidence submitted to it and if it is not satisfied that the student has met the requirements outlined in the first meeting of the Progression Review Panel, they may recommend to the Vice-Chancellors that the student be excluded. Should this occur, the student will have the right to submit

an appeal against the exclusion. The procedure is set out in Appendix 1 to the *Code of Practice for Research Degrees in BSMS*.

- 9.4 Outcomes of the Progression Review Panels will be reported to the Joint Research Degrees Approval Board.
- 10. Transfer of registration from Master of Philosophy or Doctor of Medicine to Doctor of Philosophy or from Master of Philosophy to Doctor of Medicine**
- 10.1 A candidate who was registered initially for MPhil or MD shall have the opportunity to submit a formal application for the transfer of their registration to PhD and a candidate registered initially for MPhil shall have the opportunity to submit a formal application for the transfer of their registration to MD. With effect for entrants in 2009/10, this should normally be done within 18 months of initial registration for a full-time student and within three years for a part-time student.
- 10.2 In order to apply for transfer from MPhil or MD to PhD, or from MPhil to MD, a candidate must prepare a transfer report. This should normally contain the following:
- (a) a summary of progress to date;
  - (b) three draft chapters including the methodology chapter, or the appropriate equivalent, depending on the subject discipline;
  - (c) a statement articulating the anticipated original contribution to knowledge which is likely to be made;
  - (d) a detailed work plan for the completion of the thesis.
- 10.3 Students will be required to present a summary of their work to date to the transfer panel.
- 10.4 Candidates wishing to transfer to a doctoral course must demonstrate the following:
- (i) critical investigation and evaluation of an approved topic which has the potential to result in an independent and original contribution to knowledge;
  - (ii) an understanding of research methods appropriate to the field;
  - (iii) an ability to relate the findings of the study to the broader context.
- 10.5 Rejection of the transfer may be due only to failure to achieve the above. Candidates will have a total of only two opportunities to apply for transfer to a doctoral course. The second application should normally be made within six months of notification of the first unsuccessful attempt.
- 10.6 Transfer requests will be considered for approval by the Joint Research Degrees Approval Board acting on the recommendation of the transfer panel. The transfer is retrospective to the date of initial registration.
- 10.7 A candidate who is registered for the Degree of PhD or the Degree of MD and who is unable to complete the approved course of work may, at any time prior to the submission of the thesis for examination, apply for the registration to be changed to that of the Degree of MPhil providing that the work has attained the required standard.
- 10.8 A student who has been refused permission to transfer from MPhil to PhD or MPhil to MD or vice versa and considers that the decision was taken on the basis of

inadequate evidence or taken in an improper manner, shall have the right to appeal against that decision in writing to the Registrar and Secretary of the University of Brighton within 21 working days of the notification of the decision.

The procedure is set out in Appendix 2 to the *Code of Practice for Research Degrees in BSMS*. It shall be the responsibility of the student to ensure that all relevant evidence is available to the Thesis Panel before the decision on changing registration is made. Approval shall be the responsibility of the Joint Research Degrees Approval Board acting on the recommendation of the Thesis Panel. Evidence produced later will be taken into account only when there are good reasons for it not having been presented in good time.

- 10.9 It is an offence for any student to be guilty of, or party to, plagiarism, collusion or any other research misconduct in an examination or work which is submitted for assessment. An examiner who has reason to believe that there may have been collusion, plagiarism or any other misconduct shall report the circumstances to the Chair of the Joint Research Degrees Approval Board who shall, as soon as possible, investigate the matter in accordance with procedures approved by the Joint Research Degrees Approval Board.
- 10.10 Registration may be withheld or withdrawn from a student under procedures determined by the Joint Research Degrees Approval Board.

## **11. Thesis Completion Plan**

With effect for 2009/10 entrants, each candidate shall be required to submit a Thesis Completion Plan for approval by the Thesis Panel. This should normally be submitted 30 months after registration for a full-time candidate and 48 months for a part-time candidate. Failure to submit a Thesis Completion Plan will normally result in a Progression Review Panel.

## **12. Examinations**

- 12.1 The examination for the Degree of MPhil, PhD and MD shall have two stages: first, the submission and preliminary assessment of the thesis and accompanying material; second, the defence of the thesis by oral examination.
- 12.2 The Joint Research Degrees Approval Board is responsible for the approval of the examining team. This must take place before the thesis can be submitted for examination.
- 12.3 It is the responsibility of each candidate to ensure that the thesis is submitted for examination before the expiry of the period of registration (taking account of any extension(s) which may have been approved). The submission of the thesis for examination shall be at the sole discretion of the candidate.
- 12.4 The candidate shall be required to submit one perfect or spiral bound copy of the thesis for each examiner to the Registry at the University of Brighton normally a minimum of six weeks before the oral examination. Once the thesis copies have been submitted and lodged in the Registry, a date shall be set for the oral examination. The thesis will be sent to the examiners only when the date of examination has been set and confirmed with the candidate and all examiners involved.

- 12.5 Each candidate shall normally be examined orally on the course of work and on the field of study in which the course lies. Where for reasons of sickness, disability or comparable valid cause, a candidate would be under serious disadvantage if required to undergo an oral examination, an alternative form of examination can be considered by the Joint Research degree Approval Board. The grounds on which an alternative form of examination may be proposed shall not include a candidate's inadequate knowledge of the language in which the thesis is to be presented.
- 12.6 Any failure to comply with the procedures established for the examination may lead to the examination being declared null and void and to the appointment of new examiners.
- 12.7 A candidate shall take no part in the arrangement of the examination and have no formal contact with the external examiner(s) between the appointment of the examiners and the oral examination.
- 12.8 A candidate shall be required to confirm that the thesis has not been submitted for a comparable academic award. However, a candidate should not be precluded from incorporating in the thesis, covering a wider field, work which has already been submitted for a degree or comparable award, provided that it is made clear in a formal declaration and in the thesis, which work has been so incorporated. Notwithstanding the declaration, the Joint Research Degree Approval Board may investigate to verify the statement should it deem this to be necessary. Should the Joint Research Degree Approval Board be dissatisfied with the outcome of any such investigation, it may decide to terminate the examination. The Universities reserve the right to rescind the award of a degree.
- 12.9 The thesis and the oral examination shall be in English. The candidate should, therefore, have sufficient command of the English language to complete satisfactorily the course of work and to prepare and defend a thesis in English.
- 12.10 A recording shall be made of the oral examination in order to provide an objective record of the examination and the examiners' discussion in the event either of an appeal or where the examiners fail to reach agreement on whether the candidate has met the requirements for the award and the Joint Research Degrees Approval Board must determine the appropriate course of action (paragraph 14.7 refers).

### **13. Examiners**

- 13.1 A research degree shall be examined by at least two examiners, of whom at least one must be an external examiner.
- 13.2 Each oral examination will be chaired by a member of staff from either the University of Brighton or the University of Sussex. In the following exceptional circumstances:
- (a) where either the external examiner or an internal examiner, or exceptionally the student, reasonably requests that an independent chair be appointed;
  - (b) where the oral examination is the second examination of the thesis following either a referral or an appeal;

a chair shall be appointed who shall have had neither prior involvement with the project, nor any association with the candidate. This independent chair shall advise the examiners on the regulations but will take no part in the final academic judgement of the examiners.

- 13.3 The supervisors of the candidate may not serve as examiners.
- 13.4 A representative of the supervisory team, subject to the consent of the candidate, may attend the oral examination. He/she may participate in the discussion only if addressed directly by the examiners, and shall be required to withdraw prior to the deliberation of the examiners on the outcome of the examination.
- 13.5 Where the candidate is on either University's permanent staff, a second external examiner must be appointed.
- 13.6 Examiners shall be experienced in research in the general area of a candidate's thesis and have experience as a specialist in the topic(s) to be examined.
- 13.7 The examining team as a whole shall have substantial experience (i.e. normally three or more previous examinations) of examining research degree candidates. Provided this is the case, an inexperienced examiner who has the appropriate expertise as a researcher in the topic(s) to be examined, may be appointed. Normally at least one examiner shall have experience of examining at the particular level to be examined.
- 13.8 Any external examiner(s) should be independent of both Universities and the candidate and of any collaborating establishment(s).
- 13.9 An external examiner shall not have acted previously as the candidate's supervisor or adviser, and shall not normally be a supervisor of another candidate registered at either the University of Brighton or the University of Sussex or the BSMS.
- 13.10 An external examiner shall not normally in the last five years have acted as an external examiner on the BSMS BM BS, nor have been previously employed by either University, or be from the same institution as an external member of the supervisory team.
- 13.11 An external examiner should not be appointed so frequently that familiarity with the Brighton and Sussex Medical School or either University might prejudice objective judgement.

#### **14. Responsibilities of the examiners**

- 14.1 Each examiner is required to read and examine the thesis and to present an independent preliminary report to the Registry at the University of Brighton, normally five working days before any oral or alternative form of examination is to be held. In making the preliminary report, each examiner shall consider whether the thesis provisionally satisfies the requirements of the degree and where possible make an appropriate provisional decision subject to the outcome of the oral examination.
- 14.2 These reports will be issued to the other examiners prior to any oral or alternative form of examination. The examiners are able at all times throughout the examination to raise matters of interest to themselves regardless of whether any reference was made to such matters in their preliminary report.
- 14.3 The Chair is responsible for: chairing the examination; ensuring, with the examination team, prior to the viva, agreement on the issues to be discussed; ensuring that the questioning by examiners during the examination is appropriate and fair and that the student is given every opportunity to respond to the questioning; ensuring that the viva proceeds in an orderly manner and is completed in good time; advising the examiners on the interpretation of the regulations for research degrees in Brighton

and Sussex Medical School; informing the candidate of the recommendations of the examining team and ensuring that the candidate is informed of actions required of them; ensuring that actions resulting from the examination are understood by all; forwarding notification of the outcome to the Registry at the University of Brighton for transmission to the student, the Joint Research Degrees Approval Board and relevant committees at both Universities.

- 14.4 Following the oral examination the examiners shall, where they are in agreement, present a joint report and decision relating to the award of the degree to the Registry at University of Brighton, and, where appropriate, details of any additional work required and the timescale for its completion. It is considered that the period of time allocated for amendments is a question of academic judgement. However, exceptionally, and only for good cause, an extension to this period may be granted by the Joint Research Degrees Approval Board.
- 14.5 The preliminary reports and joint decision of the examiners shall together provide enough detailed comments on the scope and quality of the work to enable both Universities to satisfy themselves that the criteria for the award of the degree have been met. Where the examiners are not in agreement, they shall submit separate reports and recommendations. The external examiner is required to comment on the conduct of the oral examination.
- 14.6 Following the completion of the examination and assessment process of an MPhil, PhD or MD, the examiners shall be able to recommend one of the following:
- (a) that the candidate be awarded the degree for which he/she is registered;
  - (b) that the candidate be awarded the degree for which he/she is registered subject to minor amendments being made to the thesis. Minor amendments can either take the form of:
    - (i) minor editorial corrections, for which the maximum time permitted is normally six weeks; or
    - (ii) minor deficiencies, for which the maximum time permitted is normally twelve weeks;
  - (c) that the candidate be permitted to re-submit for the degree and be re-examined, with or without an oral examination. The maximum time permitted for re-submission for re-examination is normally 12 months;
  - (d) that the candidate be not awarded the degree and be not permitted to be re-examined;
  - (e) in the case of a PhD examination, that the candidate be awarded the Degree of MPhil subject to presentation of the thesis amended to the satisfaction of the examiners. The maximum time permitted for re-submission as MPhil is normally 12 months.
- 14.7 Where the examiners' decisions and recommendations are not unanimous, the Joint Research Degrees Approval Board, on behalf of the Academic Board at the University of Brighton and Senate of the University of Sussex may:
- (a) accept a majority recommendation (provided that the majority recommendation includes at least one external examiner);

- (b) accept the recommendation of the external examiner;
  - (c) require the appointment of an additional external examiner in accordance with the procedures approved for the appointment of examiners.
- 14.8 Where it is decided, on the recommendation of the examiners, that the degree be not awarded and that no re-examination be permitted, the examiners shall be required to prepare an agreed statement of the deficiencies of the thesis and the reason for their decision to be forwarded to the candidate by the Registry at the University of Brighton on behalf of both Universities.
- 14.9 The degrees of MPhil, PhD and MD may be awarded posthumously, on the basis of a thesis completed by the candidate which is ready for submission for examination. In any such case, the evidence submitted shall be such as to make it clear that the candidate would have been likely to have been successful had the oral examination taken place.
- 14.10 Where the examiners' decision is re-examination, a PhD candidate is permitted to re-submit the thesis for the award of MPhil if he/she so chooses.

## **15. Re-examination**

- 15.1 Re-examination may be permitted; normally only once.
- 15.2 The forms of re-examination may include:
- (a) the thesis only to be re-examined after revision, without holding a second oral examination;
  - (b) a re-examination of the thesis after revision and the holding of a second oral examination;
  - (c) a second oral examination after due time, without the need to revise or re-submit the thesis;
  - (d) the holding of a different form of examination to test the candidate's abilities.
- 15.3 Following the completion of the re-examination and assessment process of an MPhil, PhD or MD, the examiners shall be able to recommend one of the following:
- (a) that the candidate be awarded the degree for which he/she is registered;
  - (b) that the candidate be awarded the degree for which he/she is registered subject to minor amendments being made to the thesis. Minor amendments can either take the form of:
    - (i) minor editorial corrections, for which the maximum time permitted is normally six weeks; or
    - (ii) minor deficiencies, for which the maximum time permitted is normally twelve weeks;
  - (c) that the candidate be not awarded the degree.

- (d) in the case of a PhD examination, that the candidate be awarded the Degree of MPhil subject to presentation of the thesis amended to the satisfaction of the examiners.

## **16. Conferment of award**

- 16.1 The Joint Research Degrees Approval Board shall receive the recommendation of the examining team, via the Registry of the University of Brighton, and is responsible for recommending the conferment of the award to the Academic Board of the University of Brighton and to the Chair of the Doctoral School Committee on behalf of Senate of the University of Sussex.

## **17. Grounds for appeals against examination decisions**

- 17.1 Requests for a review of an examination decision concerning a research degree examination are permitted on the following grounds only:

- (a) that there were circumstances affecting the candidate's performance of which the examiners were not aware during the examination process;
- (b) that there was evidence of procedural irregularity in the examination process (including administrative error) of such a nature as to cause doubt as to whether the result might have been different had there not been such an irregularity;
- (c) that there was evidence of improper conduct, prejudice or bias on the part of one or more of the examiners. Candidates may not otherwise challenge the academic judgement of the examiners.

- 17.2 Procedures for requesting a review of an examination decision by a research degree candidate can be found in Appendix 4 to the *Code of Practice for Research Degrees in BSMS*.

- 17.3 Any review panel to deal with appeals shall not be constituted as an examinations board and shall not have any authority to set aside the decision of the examiners and thereby to recommend the award of the Degree.

## **18. The thesis**

- 18.1 The final title of the thesis is approved when the Joint Research Degrees Approval Board approves the examination arrangements for the candidate, and may not be altered thereafter without the approval of the Board, unless the examining team makes an explicit recommendation for a revision following the viva.

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

- 18.3 Where a candidate's research course was part of a collaborative project the thesis must contain a clear statement of the candidate's individual contribution and of the extent of the collaboration.

- 18.4 There must be an abstract of around 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.

- 18.5 The candidate is free to publish material in advance of the thesis but reference should be made to any such work in the thesis. Students wishing to include a copy of this published material in both the print and electronic versions of the thesis should first ensure that their agreement with the publisher permits the inclusion of this material. Material should then either be bound in with the thesis or be placed in an adequately secured pocket at the end of the thesis, with adequate acknowledgement of the original source of publication.

Permission from the rights holders to include third party copyright material is not required for the examined thesis but is essential for publication online. So before the thesis is made available electronically, the candidate should sign a 'deposit agreement' confirming that all clearances have been obtained. If clearances cannot be obtained for all third party material, the candidate should be asked to provide a second, edited electronic version which can be added to the University of Brighton Repository, the University of Sussex Library and the British Library's electronic thesis service (EThOS).

- 18.6 A thesis should normally be in A4 format, but approval may be given for a thesis to be submitted in another format when it is apparent that the contents would be better expressed in that other format.
- 18.7 The text will normally comprise a maximum of :
- (a) 80,000 words for the Degree of PhD/MD;
  - (b) 40,000 words for the Degree of MPhil;
- 18.8 A candidate's thesis shall normally be made available to the public. In the case of theses which contain confidential material, it will be necessary to restrict access until the obligation of the confidentiality has expired. Confidential information shall remain confidential for a period of 2 years unless otherwise agreed.

## **19. Presentation of the final thesis**

- 19.1 The following requirements must be adhered to in the format of the final thesis. They are not intended as an exhaustive specification.
- 19.2 One perfect-bound, two permanent-bound copies and one electronic copy of the thesis, shall be lodged with the Department of Information Services of the University of Brighton (the perfect bound copy to be made available to the British Library on request). One electronic copy shall also be lodged with the University of Sussex library. Perfect binding shall be of card front and back with a strip of book cloth covering the spine. (see *Guidelines for the Presentation of Theses* set out in Appendix 3 to the *Code of Practice for Research Degrees in BSMS* for more details). A perfect-bound copy is not required for MPhil theses.
- 19.3 The permanent binding shall be of a fixed type so that leaves cannot be removed or replaced. The front and rear boards shall have sufficient rigidity to support the weight of the work when standing upright (see *Guidelines for the Presentation of Theses* set out in the *Code of Practice for Research Degrees in BSMS* for more details).
- 19.4 The outside front board shall bear the title of the work in at least 24pt type. The name and initials of the candidate, 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. (This requirement applies only to the spine of final permanently bound theses, not to temporary binding).

- 19.5 Copies of the thesis shall be presented in a permanent and legible form either in typescript or print. Where copies are produced by any photocopying processes, these must be of a permanent nature. Where word processor and printing devices are used, the printer must be capable of producing text of a satisfactory quality.
- 19.6 The thesis should be printed on one side of the paper, right hand pages (rectos) only.
- 19.7 Double or one-and-a-half spacing must be used in typescript except for indented quotations or footnotes where single spacing may be used.
- 19.8 Pages shall be numbered consecutively through the main text including photographs and/or diagrams which are included as whole pages.
- 19.9 The title page shall give the following information:
- the full title of the thesis;
  - the full name of the candidate;
  - the award for which the degree is submitted in partial fulfilment of its requirements;
  - that the degree is awarded by the University of Brighton and the University of Sussex for a course of study undertaken at the Brighton and Sussex Medical School;
  - the collaborating establishment, if any;
  - the year of submission and the month in which the final version of the thesis was approved by the examiners.

### **Fitness to Study**

20. Fitness to study is defined as fit to: benefit from the programme of study or research; participate and function largely independently in the university environment including in academic, residential, social, community activities. A student may be considered not fit to study if they cannot make academic progress without frequently disrupting the academic, social or normal business of the University, its staff and other students. This regulation also applies where continued attendance is likely to be detrimental to the health of the student. Under procedures approved by Senate, where a Fitness to Study Panel believes that a student is not fit to study, the Director or Deputy Director for the Student Experience (or nominee) may recommend to the Pro Vice Chancellor for Education and Students that the student be required to temporarily or permanently withdraw or that an applicant may be required to withdraw or defer admission.
21. Fitness to Study procedures also apply to students wishing to study abroad and to those going on placements.

### *Right of Appeal*

22. A student who is required to withdraw/temporarily withdraw (or an applicant whose place is withdrawn/deferred) on fitness to study grounds shall have the right to appeal to the Deputy Vice Chancellor in writing within 7 working days of the decision being communicated to the student's address, including their email address, as

recorded on their student record. The grounds for appeal must be that there has been procedural irregularity or other inadequacy in the process by which the withdrawal/temporary withdrawal has been required.

23. Where a student or applicant lodges an appeal, they must not attend between the date of the notice in writing that they must withdraw, or temporarily withdraw, and the outcome of the appeal.

**Return from temporary withdrawal or deferral of admission on health grounds:**

24. A student preparing to return from temporary withdrawal (on health grounds) must satisfy the Fitness to Study Panel that their health has improved sufficiently to [re]commence studies or research

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