



The University of Northampton

Academic Regulations for research students

2023/24

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1. Introduction and scope of the Regulations

These Regulations are the most important part of the University of Northampton's information for postgraduate research students, and set out the requirements for the University's research degrees. They apply to all students following a programme leading to the award of PhD, MPhil or a professional doctorate, and to awards delivered solely by the University or in partnership with another organisation.

In addition to these Regulations, research students should ensure they are familiar with the following documents, which provide further relevant information.

- [Postgraduate Research Code of Practice](#)
- [Postgraduate Research Satisfactory Progress Policy](#)
- [Framework for Postgraduate Researcher Development](#)
- [Student Engagement Policy](#)
- [Research Integrity Policy](#)
- [Research Misconduct Policy](#)
- [Research Ethics Code and Procedures](#)
- [Postgraduate Research Supervision Policy](#)
- [Postgraduate Research Thesis and Examination Policy](#)

Research degrees are overseen by the Research Degrees Committee, supported by discipline-focussed Research Degree Boards. The Research Degrees Committee may delegate authority to a panel of its members, or to its Chair.

2. Admission and enrolment

- 2.1 The University's entry requirements are set out on the University website and in the Postgraduate Research Admissions Process. Those responsible for the admission of students will consider an applicant's educational, professional and research background, their ability to propose an appropriate research programme and motivation to undertake a research degree, as well as the University's ability to supervise the proposed research.
- 2.2 Approval for a student to study off-site, whether elsewhere in the UK or overseas, will be considered as a special dispensation that may be granted by the Research Degrees Committee at application.
- 2.3 A student may be permitted to transfer registration from a research degree programme at another recognised higher education institution. Such requests will be referred by Admissions to the Research Degrees Committee, and where granted will allow entry with advanced standing to a specified stage of a programme, with the maximum period of study adjusted accordingly. The minimum period of study at University of Northampton following transfer from another institution will be decided by the RDC on a case-by-case basis.

- 2.4 The discovery of a relevant fraudulent, untrue or misleading statement or one which omits pertinent facts at any stage in the application process (including on an application, during the selection process – e.g. at interview or audition – or at enrolment) will normally lead to an immediate withdrawal of any offer of a place. Such a discovery after a student has been enrolled may lead to the Academic Registrar (or nominee) declaring the enrolment void, in which case the student will be required to withdraw from the University.
- 2.5 Students who are admitted to the University should complete enrolment before the start date specified in their offer letter. Students are not entitled to supervision or access to facilities until enrolment has been fully completed. In all cases, students must have completed enrolment no later than two weeks after the specified start date.
- 2.6 Students must enrol at the start of each subsequent year of their programme, unless a study break has been approved in advance.
- 2.7 A student who fails to enrol, or to pay the appropriate fees, by the published deadline in any year of study will be assumed to have withdrawn from their studies, and their record will be closed.
- 2.8 The University reserves the right to decline or withdraw the enrolment of students who do not hold the appropriate immigration status, or who fail to comply with the conditions of their visa.
- 2.9 Senate, delegated to the Research Degrees Committee, may terminate a student's registration:
- If the student's period of registration has expired and no application for extension of registration has been submitted;
 - If the student fails to make satisfactory progress, or fails to maintain regular contact with their supervisory team, and reaches stage 3 of the Satisfactory Progress Policy;
 - If the student fails to submit amendments, or to resubmit a referred thesis, by the date specified by the Examiners.

3. Research awards and duration of study

- 3.1 The research awards of the University of Northampton are:

Level 8:

- Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)
- Doctor of Business Administration (DBA)
- Doctor of Professional Practice (DProfPrac)
- Postgraduate Research Diploma
- Postgraduate Research Certificate

Level 7:

- Master of Philosophy (MPhil)

3.2 Requirements for awards are as follows:

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD): A student must present and defend a thesis, by viva voce examination, to the satisfaction of the examiners. The thesis must reflect research which could reasonably have been carried out within three years of full-time registration or the equivalent part-time period. The thesis should demonstrate a significant and original contribution to a specialised field of enquiry demonstrating a command of methodological issues and engaging in critical dialogue with peers. It will contain work that is deemed worthy of publication although not necessarily in the form presented.

In the context of practice-based PhDs in the Arts, ‘thesis’ is understood to denote the totality of the submission which may comprise a practical component (for example; fine art exhibition, design, creative writing, musical composition, film, dance and performance) accompanied by an analytical commentary that sets the work in its relevant theoretical, historical, critical and design context.

For PhD by means of published work the ‘thesis’ will be deemed to be the published works and the critical appraisal.

Professional Doctorates: (Doctor of Professional Practice in Health and Social Care [DProfPrac] and Doctor of Business Administration [DBA]): 540 credits of which a minimum of 360 credits must be at level 8, and the rest must be at a minimum of level 7. Of the Level 8 credits, 240 must be within a thesis module that demonstrates the student’s ability to undertake an independent individual research project at doctoral level and 120 must be through completion of Level 8 taught module..

Postgraduate Research Diploma (PGR Diploma): 300 credits of which at least 120 must be at Level 8. A requirement of Level 8 is for reflective practice to be a feature of each programme.

Postgraduate Research Certificate (PGR Certificate): 240 credits of which at least 60 must be at Level 8. A requirement of Level 8 is for reflective practice to be a feature of each programme.

Master of Philosophy (MPhil): A student must present and defend a thesis, by viva voce examination, to the satisfaction of the examiners. The thesis must reflect research which could reasonably have been carried out within two years of full-time registration or the equivalent part-time period. The thesis should demonstrate mastery of a complex and specialised area of knowledge and skills, employing advanced skills to conduct research, or advanced technical or professional activity.

3.3 The University stipulates a period of time in which a student must complete the award for which they are registered. The maximum and minimum registration periods for Research Degree awards are detailed in the table below. These maximum and minimum periods measure the academic years from initial registration to submission of the thesis for

examination for doctorates and MPhil, and to completion of the award for PG Research Diploma and Certificate.

Award	Total credit	Min period	Min with APL	Max period
PhD	n/a	2 years(FT) 3 years (PT)		4 years(FT) 6 years(PT)
PhD by Published Works	n/a	1 year (PT)		2 years (FT)
Professional Doctorate	540	2 years (FT) 3 years (PT)	2 years	10 years (PT) [6 years if a student enters with APL for 180 credits at L7]
MPhil	n/a	1 year (FT) 2.5 years (PT)		3 years (FT) 5 years (PT)
PG Research Diploma	300	1 year (FT) 2 years (PT)	1 year	3 years (FT) 4 years (PT)
PG Research Certificate	240	6 months	6 months	2 years (FT) 3 years (PT)

- 3.4 A student who is registered for the degree of PhD and who is unable to complete the approved programme of work may apply to the Research Degrees Committee for the registration to transfer to that for MPhil, provided they will be in a position to submit a thesis for examination within the period of study for MPhil set out above.
- 3.5 Where the student is prevented, by ill-health or other cause, from making progress with the research the Research Degree Committee may, subject to the support of the supervisory team, take a study break. The RDC will not normally grant a study break of more than 6 months in a single request. The maximum study break allowance is normally 12 months over the degree registration period. Study breaks are not included in the registration period as specified.
- 3.6 Parental leave may be granted by the Research Degrees Committee upon application by the student with the support of their supervisory team. Six months 'ordinary parental leave' can be granted in the first instance and a further 6 months 'additional parental leave' thereafter. The entitlement is 'per child' rather than a maximum allowance over the registration period of registration.
- 3.7 Students who hold a Student Route visa will not normally be able to remain in the UK during suspension or parental leave, and so should seek advice from the International Student Support Team before making an application.
- 3.8 Extension to the maximum period of registration will be considered only in exceptional circumstances, and will be subject to the approval of the Research Degrees Committee. Only in the most severe circumstances will the Committee permit extension of greater than six months. Requests for extension to the maximum period of registration must be made before the end of the original registration period.

- 3.9 No student registered on a postgraduate research degree at the University may be registered concurrently on any other course at the University or another institution, unless as part of their Continuing Professional or Researcher Development.
- 3.10 The Postgraduate Research Diploma and Postgraduate Research Certificate are intermediate awards offered to students who have studied the required volume of Level 8 credit but have not completed the thesis module.
- 3.11 The Research Degrees Committee may, on the recommendation of the Faculty and assuming admission and enrolment requirements are still met, reinstate a student who has formally withdrawn if, due to a change in circumstances, the student is in a position to be able to resume the research programme. The period during which the student was withdrawn will not be included in the registration period as specified in Regulation 3.3. If the research programme has substantially changed from that originally approved by the Research Degrees Committee, a new application for Initial Project Approval should be submitted.

4. Supervision and engagement

- 4.1 The Research Degrees Committee sets and maintains requirements and procedures for the appointment of supervisory teams, and for approving changes to supervisory teams, to ensure the quality and appropriateness of research degree student supervision. These are set out in the Postgraduate Research Supervision Policy.
- 4.2 A student will be allocated to a supervisory team. Supervisory teams should comprise:
- A minimum of two and a maximum of three internal supervisors, with a combined contract of 1.4FTE for two member teams and 2.0FTE for three member teams.
 - At least one internal supervisor on a substantive contract and normally no more than one external supervisor
- 4.3 Within each supervisory team there will be a designated Director of Studies, who manages and oversees the supervision process and who normally acts as the main point of contact for the student, and a designated First Supervisor who will bring subject expertise to the team. The Director of Studies may also act as First Supervisor.
- 4.4 A person who is registered for a research degree is ineligible to act as a supervisor of a research degrees student intending to study for the same award.
- 4.5 Full-time students are required to meet with their supervisors at least once every four weeks, and part-time students at least once every six weeks. Meetings must be recorded on Gateway, the University's postgraduate research management system. Where a student fails to meet regularly with supervisors they may be referred to the PGR Satisfactory Progress Policy.

- 4.6 Students should ensure they are familiar with, and comply with, the Research Misconduct Policy, the Academic Misconduct and Integrity Policy, and associated guidance on Academic Misconduct and Integrity.

5. Professional Doctorates: modular provision

- 5.1 Professional Doctorate students must complete 300 taught credits before they can progress to the thesis module. Up to 180 of these credits may be Accredited Prior Learning in recognition of a relevant Master's degree. Level 8 taught modules can range from 10 to 40 credits representing between 100 and 400 hours of student effort.
- 5.2 Assessments for Level 8 modules will be graded pass or fail, and students will be required to pass all items of assessment within a module. There will be no condonement of failed modules or compensation within modules.
- 5.3 A student who fails or does not submit/attend any assessment item has the right to resubmit/resit that item on one further occasion. If a student does not resubmit/resit an item of assessment following failure the original (fail) grade stands.
- 5.4 All coursework is required to be submitted by the due deadline. Deadlines will be given in assignment briefs and recorded in module documentation. Where a student cannot meet the deadline due to illness or other circumstances beyond their control, they may seek an extension to the deadline, in accordance with the University's mitigating circumstances procedure. Such extensions should normally be sought no later than two days before the deadline and the student should normally provide documentary evidence to support the request for an extension. Extensions are not available at the second assessment opportunity.
- 5.5 Where an item of assessment is referred due to failure or non-submission, or deferred through approved Mitigating Circumstances, the deadline for the further submission will be specified in the individual module guide.
- 5.6 Grades obtained following a referral/deferral are final. There is no further (third) opportunity to submit/resit any item of assessment.
- 5.7 In order to continue studying in the next academic year, a student must be in a position to complete the qualification for which they are registered within the maximum registration period, taking account of any pre-requisites and other registration requirements.
- 5.8 A student has is permitted to repeat a maximum of 20 credits in total during the taught component of the Professional Doctorate. Where a module is repeated, students will have access to both assessment opportunities and the module must be passed. a student's registration will be terminated if they fail more than 20 credits in total, or if they fail a

module that they have repeated.

- 5.9 A student must have passed 120 credits of taught modules at Level 8 to be eligible to commence the thesis module.
- 5.10 A student who completes a minimum of 120 credits at Level 8, and who decides not to progress to the thesis module, will be eligible for the award of Postgraduate Research Diploma
- 5.11 A student who attends an examination or submits an assessment declares themselves 'fit to sit' and cannot afterwards submit a claim for Mitigating Circumstances.
- 5.12 The Research Degrees Committee shall establish and maintain clearly defined procedures for the thesis module to enable students to complete their research degree programme successfully within the specified registration periods.
- 5.13 Proposals for new programmes of study using this will be subject to the University's planning and validation procedures. As each programme will have its own named award, Faculties must seek approval through a Development Authorisation Form to move to validation.

6. Transfer of registration

- 6.1 The status of a PhD/MPhil student in the first instance is as an advanced postgraduate student. The status of a professional doctorate student who has completed their taught modules is as an advanced postgraduate student. This is designated a probationary period during which the student and the supervisory team work to put together an application for transfer of registration.
- 6.2 Within the first two months of the probationary period, the Director of Studies will submit a request for 'Initial Project Approval' containing details of the proposed supervisory team, funding arrangements, working thesis title, and the initial resource requirements for the research degree for approval by the Research Degrees Committee by application to the relevant Research Degrees Board.
- 6.3 During the probationary period a student is required to:
 - (a) Complete the appropriate induction programme;
 - (b) Complete specified parts of the generic training programme;
 - (c) Complete a checklist of compulsory activities, developed and managed by the supervisory team, supported by the online PGR management system, to include:
 - Completion of mandatory online courses,
 - Writing an improved research proposal,
 - Producing a plan of work,
 - Engaging in development needs analysis,

Considering of resource requirements,
Gaining ethical approval,
Engaging in discipline-based development.

- 6.4 Unsatisfactory performance during this phase must be signalled to the student by the supervisory team. The PGR Satisfactory Progress Policy will be initiated where progress or performance do not improve as a consequence of action planning and supervisory support during the probationary period.
- 6.5 Transfer is the most important quality assurance gateway within the PhD/MPhil and Thesis Module. For PhD/MPhil students it determines the specific degree for which the student should be registered. For Professional Doctorate students it determines a student's formal progression within the Thesis Module. An application for transfer of registration is made to the appropriate Research Degrees Board which then recommends outcomes to the Research Degrees Committee (RDC).
- 6.6 A student's application to transfer should be completed and submitted to a Research Degree Board by the Director of Studies: normally within 12 months of enrolment, and no sooner than 9 months and no later than 15 months after enrolment for full-time PhD and MPhil student; normally within 18 months and no sooner than 15 months and no later than 21 months after enrolment for part-time students; and normally within 15 months of enrolment and no sooner than 12 months and no later than 18 months after completion of the modules for a professional doctorate student. An RDB will refer a student directly to Stage 3 of the PGR Satisfactory Progress Policy where these timescales are not met.
- 6.7 The role of the Research Degrees Committee is to assure the University that a satisfactory case has been made for transfer of registration for a specified award on the grounds of the suitability of both the student and of the research undertaken. The evidence that the Committee will use to evaluate the case will include information on:
- Candidate, project title, mode of study, etc
 - Completion of mandatory induction and development
 - Ethical approval
 - Resourcing
 - Training plan of work
 - Commentary on submitted written work and a seminar presentation
 - A report on a transfer viva-voce examination
 - A case for transfer
- Guidance will be provided on the format and detail of the application.
- 6.8 In addition, for students undertaking a Practice-based PhD in The Arts, a statement should be provided establishing the balance between the practical and written components of the thesis and when the practical component of the thesis is to be formally examined. If it is to be examined before the viva voce examination, the times and places of access of examiners

must be identified. This statement will determine the timescale for the nomination of examiners.

- 6.9 All students will be required to confirm that the written work and case for transfer submitted for transfer is their own work unless otherwise acknowledged in the text or by references.
- 6.10 The application for transfer may be declined by the RDB and returned to the student for further work on one occasion only, where it does not meet the criteria for progression. All documentation must be completed to the satisfaction of the RDB within four months of initial consideration by the Board. An RDB will refer a student directly to Stage 3 of the PGR Satisfactory Progress Policy where these timescales are not met.
- 6.11 The RDB may make the following recommendations to the RDC:
- Registration for the degree of PhD; or
 - Registration for the degree of MPhil; or
 - Registration for the degree of DBA; or
 - Registration for the degree of DProfPrac; or
 - Termination of registration.
- 6.12 Where the recommended outcome is transfer to a lower award than intended or termination of registration, the Research Degrees Committee will consider the full transfer application before approving the recommendation. A student has the right of appeal against the outcome of Transfer of Registration, under the Postgraduate Research Academic Appeals Policy.

PhD by Published Works

- 6.13 Following enrolment, the relevant Research Degree Board will consider the case for transfer to PhD. Transfer should take place no more than three months following enrolment. The RDB must be satisfied that:
- there is a prima facie case that the published work / research outputs proposed for submission represent a coherent body of work, are set in the appropriate context and makes an original and sufficient contribution to the present state of knowledge;
 - the research environment and proposed supervisory arrangements are appropriate.
- 6.14 The information required to support the application for transfer to PhD by Published Works, will be submitted to the relevant Research Degrees Board and will include information on the:
- Candidate, project title, mode of study, etc
 - Supervisory team
 - Resourcing
 - Training plan of work
 - Quality and suitability of the project

Guidance will be provided on the format and detail of the application.

- 6.15 Students will be required to confirm that the proposal submitted for transfer is their own work unless otherwise acknowledged in the text or by references.
- 6.16 A student's application to transfer should be completed and submitted to a Research Degrees Board by the Director of Studies normally within 3 months of enrolment for PhD by Published Works students. An RDB will refer a student to Stage 3 of the PGR Satisfactory Progress Policy where these timescales are not met.
- 6.17 Where there is evidence that the compilation of the published work and the critical appraisal had progressed exceptionally well, the Research Degrees Committee may approve the work being submitted in less than the minimum period of registration as specified in regulation 3.3. Such requests should be made in writing to the Graduate School and should have the support of the supervisory team.

7. Annual review

- 7.1 An annual meeting, normally held between June and August, will take place between the student and their supervisors, with all members of the supervisory team present. The annual review meeting is an opportunity to formally review progress and to reflect on the student's training and development needs, encouraging students to reflect upon their own development.
- 7.2 Following the review supervisors will state whether:
 - (a) progress is satisfactory;
 - (b) there are areas for improvement; or
 - (c) progress is unsatisfactory.

Where the outcome is 'progress is unsatisfactory', a member of the Research Degrees Board will contact the Director of Studies to initiate the PGR Satisfactory Progress Policy.

8. Writing up and submission for examination

- 8.1 Students who are entering the final year of the maximum registration period and for whom the main activity is writing-up (rather than collecting or analysing new information) may, with the support of their supervisor, apply, initially to the relevant Research Degrees Board, for writing-up status. UON students who have transferred to writing-up status are entitled to a reduction in fees. Partner institutions may put in place arrangements for fee reductions for Writing-Up students and communicate them to their students.

- 8.2 Writing-up students will have access to appropriate computing and Library facilities, and will continue to have appropriate support from their supervisors.
- 8.3 The maximum period of writing-up is one year and this period is counted as part of the maximum registration periods given in Regulation 3.3. Writing-up students must submit their thesis within the writing-up year.
- 8.4 Where there are serious extenuating circumstances affecting a student's ability to submit the thesis within the writing-up period, an extension of registration can be requested as outlined in Regulation 3.8.
- 8.5 University- and other-funded students who have not applied for writing-up status at the end of their funded period will be required to pay full fees. Students who are self-funded or who have external funding must apply for writing-up status to take effect at the time of re-enrolment in order to be eligible.
- 8.6 Students registered for PhD by means of published work are not entitled to writing-up status.
- 8.7 Candidates must give to the Graduate School no less than three months' notice of the date on which they intend to submit their thesis. The date must fall within the maximum period of registration for the degree. When giving notice to submit, the student will state the title of their thesis.
- 8.8 When a student has given notice to submit, the supervisory team will be asked to nominate examiners if they have not already done so. As a minimum, two appropriately qualified examiners will be appointed, at least one of whom is external to the institution. At least one of the examiners will have previous experience of examining in the UK at the level of the degree being examined. None of the student's supervisors will be appointed as an examiner. Normally researchers who have had a substantial direct involvement in the student's work or whose own work is the focus of the research project will not be appointed as internal or external examiners. Further details on the criteria for the appointment of examiners are available in the PGR Thesis and Examination Policy.
- 8.9 The format and length of the thesis must follow University guidelines as set out in the PGR Thesis and Examinations Policy. The body of work must be submitted as an electronic version of the final thesis in accordance with University requirements before the degree is awarded.
- 8.10 For PhD by Published Works, the submitted work should reflect the same academic standards as those for a traditional PhD, based upon a submitted body of work and a supporting critical appraisal of 7,500–15,000 words demonstrating:
- a coherent programme of published research or equivalent;
 - the use of appropriate research methodology;

- an original and sufficient contribution to the present state of knowledge in a particular field to the satisfaction of the examiners;
- where the body of work stands in relation to other relevant works in the field.

The candidate must include in each copy of their thesis a signed declaration that the submitted body of work and the critical appraisal are their own work.

- 8.11 The final decision to submit a thesis in any particular form rests with the candidate alone. While it would be unwise to submit for examination against the judgement of the supervisory team, it is the candidate's right to do so. Equally it should not be assumed that the supervisory team's agreement to the submission of the work in any way guarantees the award.
- 8.12 The greater proportion of the work submitted in a thesis must have been done after the initial registration for a research degree. A candidate may not submit material for assessment which has already been submitted for another degree or comparable award of this or any other University or institution, unless the material previously submitted for another degree:
- forms a minor part of the submission; and
 - has been supplemented by new material; and
 - has been appropriately integrated into the work for the subsequent degree; and
 - has been adequately identified.
- 8.13 A student may submit material for assessment which has already been published provided that the material published:
- has been appropriately integrated, either in the body of the work or as an appendix to which reference is made; and
 - has been adequately identified and referenced.
- 8.14 If material submitted is the result of collaborative research or work, the submission must clearly identify the candidate's contribution.
- 8.15 The presentation of any formally examinable practical component of the thesis can take place at any time after transfer. Where formal examination of the practical component of the thesis takes place prior to the final viva voce, prior to the examination examiners will be provided with an interim abstract of the practical component. Examiners will not normally offer formal feedback.
- 8.16 The copies of the submission required for examination will remain the property of the University.
- 8.17 Information on the Intellectual Property rights associated with research degrees is set out in the Intellectual Property Policy.

9. Examination of the thesis

- 9.1 An Independent Chair will be appointed by the University to each viva voce examination for MPhil, PhD, PhD by Means of Published Works and Thesis Module theses. Independent Chairs are experienced examiners with a sound working knowledge of the University's regulations and procedures for research degrees.
- 9.2 Where formal examination of practical components of the thesis takes place prior to the final viva voce examiners will be expected to produce an interim report which may contribute to the final full report.
- 9.3 At least 10 days prior to the scheduled *viva voce* examination, each Examiner will submit a brief independent written report, summarising the argument of the thesis and commenting on its strengths and weaknesses. If, following discussion of their independent pre-viva reports, an examining team believes that a thesis should not proceed to *viva voce* examination, the reason for this must be communicated to the Chair of the Research Degrees Committee, who will recommend a course of action.

The reason for a decision not to proceed to viva-voce examination is likely to fall in to one of two categories:

- (a) Technical reasons such as excessive length or suspected academic or research misconduct.

In cases of suspected misconduct, the appropriate policy and procedure will be followed to investigate the case. The examination process will be paused until the misconduct panel makes a recommendation to inform the examination process.

Where a thesis exceeds the word count such that it cannot be examined, it may be decided to refer the thesis for resubmission without a *viva voce* examination in order to meet the required word length. In such a case, the examiners will agree a timescale for resubmission.

- (b) Where examiners express serious concerns about the eligibility of a thesis for an award, the Chair of the Research Degrees Committee will offer the student the following alternatives:
- (i) to proceed to viva to defend the thesis, noting that the examiners may recommend an outright fail.
 - (ii) a referral for resubmission without a *viva voce* examination of the first submission.

If the candidate opts for option (ii), the examiners will submit a joint report on the thesis and agree a timescale for resubmission.

In all cases where a thesis is referred under this regulation, the resubmitted thesis will be examined by *viva voce* examination. Following examination of the referred thesis, examiners may make any of recommendations listed in regulations 9.4 or 9.5, except that the thesis cannot be referred for a second time, thus outcomes 9.4 iv) and v) and 9.5 iv) are not possible.

9.4 Normally, a *viva voce* examination will be conducted in person at the University of Northampton, or at a partner institution where appropriate, and consist of the student, the internal examiner, the external examiner and the independent chair. Alternative arrangements that may be agreed in certain circumstances are set out in the PGR Thesis and Examinations Policy.

9.5 PhD / MPhil examiners may make the following recommendations:

- i) award of the degree of PhD;
- ii) award of the degree of PhD, subject to corrections and minor amendments being made within one month;
- iii) award of the degree of PhD subject to amendments being made within 5 months;
- iv) referral for resubmission of the degree of PhD within a specified period, not exceeding 24 months;
- v) referral for resubmission of the degree of MPhil within a specified period, not exceeding 24 months;
- vi) award of the degree of MPhil;
- vii) award of the degree of MPhil, subject to minor amendments being made within one month;
- viii) award of the degree of MPhil, subject to amendments being made within 5 months;
- ix) fail.

Candidates for the degree of PhD by Published Works may be referred only in relation to the critical appraisal.

9.6 Thesis module examiners may make the following recommendations:

- i) has achieved the learning outcomes for the module and should be awarded the associated credit;
- ii) has achieved the learning outcomes for the module subject to corrections and minor amendments being made within one month;
- iii) has achieved the learning outcomes for the module subject to amendments being made within 5 months;
- iv) has been referred for resubmission of thesis within a specified period, not exceeding 24 months;
- v) has failed to achieve the learning outcomes for the module.

9.7 Where the examiners are in the position of choosing between a recommendation for resubmission or the award of a lower degree, they may take into account the candidate's

wishes.

- 9.8 A research degree may be awarded posthumously on the basis of a thesis completed by a candidate that is ready for submission for examination. In such cases the Research Degrees Committee will seek evidence that the candidate would have been likely to have been successful had the oral examination taken place.
- 9.9 Following re-examination of a referred thesis, examiners may make any of recommendations listed in 9.4 or 9.5. above, except that the thesis cannot be referred for a second time. Outcomes 9.4 iv) and v) and 9.5 iv) are not therefore possible following re-examination of a referred thesis. The viva voce examination on a resubmitted thesis or on other re-submitted materials may be omitted at the examiners' discretion.
- 9.10 The Research Degrees Committee may refer a recommendation back to the examiners to be reconsidered, or for the rationale for the recommendation to be explained more fully.
- 9.11 In any instance where the Research Degrees Committee is made aware of any procedural irregularity or error which has materially affected the result of the examination it may declare the examination null and void and recommend to Senate the appointment of new examiners.
- 9.12 If a student fails to submit the required amendments, or fails to resubmit the thesis for examination, by the due date, they will be referred to Stage 3 of the PGR Satisfactory Progress Policy. If termination is recommended, no award will be made, unless the examiners have previously indicated that the student is eligible for a lower award.
- 9.13 Where the examiners recommend a fail, students may not re-apply to undertake a research degree within a period of three years from the date of the original examination.
- 9.14 A student has the right of appeal against the outcome of a research degree examination, under the Academic Appeals Policy.
- 9.15 The procedure for thesis submission includes a process for requesting temporary and complete embargoes on publication of a final thesis in PURE. A request for an embargo must be received and approved by the RDC prior to submission of a thesis.
- 9.16 For PhDs with a practical element the final submission will be accompanied by some permanent record of the practical component of the thesis (for instance, video, photographic record, diagrammatic representation of the creative work), where practicable, bound with the analytical commentary.

10. Conferment of research degrees

- 10.1 The power to confer the degree rests with Senate. The Research Degrees Committee will make a decision on the reports and recommendations of the examiners in respect of the candidate and make a recommendation to Senate.
- 10.2 An award of the University of Northampton may be conferred provided that the following conditions have been met:
- That the candidate has been an enrolled student of the University for the prescribed minimum period of registration for the degree concerned;
 - The candidate has followed a programme that has been approved according to the requirements of Senate;
 - The candidate has fulfilled the requisite assessment requirements for a research degree required by Senate;
 - The recommendation for the conferment of the award has been made by examiners who have been selected and have acted according to the requirements of Senate;
 - The recommendation for the award has the written agreement of all members of the examining team.

The Academic Registrar or their nominee will ensure all these conditions have been fulfilled.

- 10.3 Upon advice from the Director of Finance, Senate will reserve the right to withhold the certification of the award of any student having an academic financial debt to the University.
- 10.4 The certificate of an award conferred by the University will record:
- The name of the University;
 - The full name of the student as registered;
 - The award;
 - The title of the thesis (where applicable);
 - The date of conferment.