

## ***Academic Regulations***

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These regulations apply to research students registered for the award of Master of Philosophy and Doctor of Philosophy, including the Doctor of Philosophy awarded on the basis of a portfolio of published works from October 2019 onwards. Students registered before October 2019 will be eligible for transitional arrangements outlined in the Research Degrees Handbook and in communications from the Graduate School.

### **RESEARCH DEGREE REGULATIONS**

These regulations apply to programmes of study leading to the award of Master of Philosophy and Doctor of Philosophy, including the Doctor of Philosophy awarded on the basis of a portfolio of published works, and to the final examination for the award of Doctor of Education. There are otherwise separate regulations for Professional Doctorate programmes.

#### **1. Research Degrees Committee**

(a) The Research Degrees Committee acts with the delegated authority of the University Senate on all matters relating to the award of Research Degrees and Professional Doctorates.

(b) The terms of reference of the Research Degrees Committee with regard to Research Degrees and the research component of Professional Doctorates are, acting in accordance with the regulations and policies of the University:

(i) to determine and review the overall arrangements and criteria for the admission, supervision, training, monitoring and assessment of research students;

(ii) to monitor the overall academic progress of research students;

(iii) to work with academic and support Departments to enhance the experience of research students working at the University;

(iv) to review and make recommendations to Senate on the academic regulations;

(v) to appoint and consider the recommendations of internal and external examiners for the final examination and to grant awards to eligible research students;

(vi) to consider the implications of external frameworks as they relate to research students

(vi) to consider any relevant matters referred to it by the University, a Research Student Review Board, Department Committee or Research Student Representative

(vii) to review and make recommendations to the Graduate School on the training of research supervisors

(viii) to report annually to Senate on research degree policies, regulations and standards, including feedback from external examiners.

(c) The Research Degrees Committee meets as required to conduct business, normally four times across the calendar year.

(d) The membership of the Research Degrees Committee comprises a Chair, appointed by the Vice-Chancellor, and the Research Degrees Convenor from each academic department, Academic staff with responsibility for Research Student training, relevant staff from the Research Office and Graduate School, and Research Student Representatives.

(e) The Vice-Chancellor and the Academic Registrar each has the right to attend, or to send a representative to attend meetings of the Research Degrees Committee in a non-voting capacity. The Chair may permit other individuals to attend meetings in a non-voting capacity as required.

(f) Decisions of the Research Degrees Committee are normally reached by consensus and are binding on all members. Resolutions may be reached by a majority vote of those members who are present, with the Chair holding a casting vote.

(g) The Chair, or their delegate, has authority to take decisions on behalf of the Research Degrees Committee between meetings either independently, or in correspondence with other members. Any action taken in this way will be reported at the next meeting.

## **2. Research Student Review Boards**

(a) The Research Degrees Committee will convene Research Student Review Boards as required to oversee the arrangements for individual students on Research Degree programmes and the research component of Professional Doctorate programmes. A Research Student Review Board will be established for each academic department, or for a group of academic departments working jointly.

(b) The terms of reference of the Research Student Review Boards are, acting in accordance with the regulations and policies of the University:

(i) to establish and review local arrangements for the admission, induction, supervision and monitoring of individual students;

(ii) to consider periodically the academic progress of individual students and to make recommendations as required to the Research Degrees Committee;

(iii) to consider applications relating to individual students on behalf of the Research Degrees Committee as set out in the academic regulations;

(iv) to nominate internal and external examiners for the final examination;

(v) to consider any relevant matters referred to it by the University or by a Department Committee;

(vi) to report termly to the Research Degrees Committee.

(c) The Research Student Review Boards meet as required to conduct business, normally at least four times across the calendar year with meetings scheduled in advance of Research Degrees Committee.

- (d) The membership of each Research Student Review Board comprises a Chair, who is normally a Research Degrees Convenor appointed by the Head(s) of Department in consultation with the Provost, staff who are eligible to work as a co-supervisor under the provisions of 11(b) and who together represent the range of research being undertaken by students under the Board's purview, and the conveners of any Professional Doctorate programmes in the department(s). At least three of the members, including the Chair, must be eligible to work as a Director of Studies under the provisions of 11(a).
- (e) The Vice-Chancellor, the Chair of the Research Degrees Committee and the Academic Registrar each has the right to attend, or to send a representative to attend meetings of the Research Student Review Boards in a non-voting capacity. The Chair may permit other individuals to attend meetings in a non-voting capacity as required.
- (f) Decisions of the Research Student Review Boards are normally reached by consensus and are binding on all members. Resolutions may be reached by a majority vote of those members who are present, with the Chair holding a casting vote. Current and past members of an individual student's supervisory team must not be involved in making decisions which are specific to that student.
- (g) The Chair has authority to take decisions on behalf of the Research Student Review Board between meetings either independently, or in correspondence with other members. The Chair will involve at least one other member of the Board in any decisions about an individual student. Any action taken in this way will be reported at the next meeting.

### **3. Programmes of study**

- (a) The University offers programmes of study on a full- and part-time basis leading to the award of:

- (i) Master of Philosophy (MPhil)
- (ii) Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

and the following professional doctorate programmes:

- (iii) Doctor of Education (EdD)
- (iv) Doctor of Psychology (PsychD)
- (v) Doctor of Theology (DTh)

- (b) Programmes of study are determined for each student individually and will consist primarily of supervised research, assessed through a submission of work and an oral examination, together with a complementary programme of research skills development.
- (c) The degree of Doctor of Philosophy may also be awarded on the basis of a portfolio of published works, in which case the programme of study will consist of supervised preparation of the portfolio and a supporting statement.

### **4. Admission to a programme of study**

- (a) The minimum requirements for admission to a Research Degree programme are:

- (i) a Master's Degree from a UK university in a relevant subject area, or an equivalent academic qualification, or evidence of equivalent experience and learning acquired in a professional context;
  - (ii) evidence of proficiency in spoken and written English at a suitable level;
  - (iii) an outline research proposal with the potential to satisfy the criteria for the intended award.
- (b) For the degree of Doctor of Philosophy on the basis of published works, applicants are required in addition to have an extensive record of published works in the proposed area of work which are admissible for consideration as academic work, and must demonstrate that they can produce scholarly writing at an appropriate level.
- (c) An applicant will only be admitted to a Research Degree programme in a given area of work where:
- (i) the University is able to provide appropriate supervision and training;
  - (ii) the applicant would have access to the necessary resources;
  - (iii) any issues relating to commercial funding, intellectual property and research ethics have been considered and are being addressed appropriately.
- (d) The University may, in the context of (c) above, appoint specialist supervisors from outside the University, or approve arrangements for the applicant to spend a significant part of the period of study away from the University in order to have access to specialist resources.

## **5. Visiting Research Students**

- (a) An individual who is registered as a postgraduate research student at another university, or a similar institution may be admitted concurrently to undertake part of their studies at the University as a Visiting Research Student.
- (b) The period of study, entitlements and obligations of each Visiting Research Student will be set out in the formal institutional offer of admission. However, the period of study should not be less than one month or more than one year. Visiting Research Students may not follow a programme of study leading to an award of the University.

## **6. Exemption from part of the programme of study**

- (a) An applicant who has undertaken, but not completed a programme of postgraduate research at another university, or a similar institution, or at the University of Roehampton but has subsequently withdrawn from studies, may be considered for exemption from part of a programme of study at the University.
- (b) In order to qualify for consideration, the applicant's previous research must:

- (i) correspond, in terms of the level and area of work, to the proposed project of research at the University;
  - (ii) have been undertaken at a university, or a similar institution of appropriate standing and be certified by a competent officer at that institution;
  - (iii) have been undertaken over a period of at least 12 months of full-time study, or 24 months of part-time study no more than seven years before the proposed date of initial registration at the University;
  - (iv) not have been counted already towards the award of a Research Degree at any institution.
- (c) Applications for exemption are considered by the Research Degrees Committee before the applicant first registers on the programme of study. If the application is approved, the Research Degrees Committee will clarify whether the applicant is required to complete the project confirmation or upgrade process and any deadlines or other conditions which apply.
- (d) In all cases a student must complete at least 12 months of full-time study, or 18 months of part-time study at the University before submitting work for the final examination, subject also to the requirements of 18(f).

## **7. Registration on a programme of study**

- (a) An applicant who has been offered admission by the University and has accepted and met all the conditions of the offer may register as a student on a programme of study by completing the enrolment process described in Section 7.
- (b) Programmes of study commence on 1 October, or 1 January or 1 April in a given academic year.
- (d) Registered students retain their registration status until they achieve the award, withdraw, or have their registration terminated by the University.
- (e) Except for the provisions of Section 4, no student may register concurrently for more than one programme of study at the University, or as a student at another university or similar institution without the permission of the Research Degrees Committee.

## **8. Enrolment**

- (a) Each student must complete the enrolment process:
  - (i) at the point of initial registration with the University;
  - (ii) at the beginning of each academic year during the period of study, unless the student is taking an approved interruption of study at that time;
  - (iii) on returning from an approved interruption of study.

- (b) If a student does not enrol or re-enrol within relevant deadlines his/her registration on the programme will be cancelled or terminated as appropriate.
- (c) In order to complete the enrolment process, a student must:
  - (i) complete the administrative procedures for enrolment;
  - (ii) make acceptable arrangements to pay fees and any outstanding debts to the University (see the Student Fee Regulations);
  - (iii) agree to comply with the terms of the Student Contract.

## **9. Period of study**

- (a) The period of study for the degree of Master of Philosophy will be between 21 months and 36 months of full-time study, or between 33 months and 48 months of part-time study.
- (b) Except for the provisions of (c) below, the period of study for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy will be between 33 months and 48 months of full-time study, or between 45 months and 84 months of part-time study.
- (c) The period of study for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy on the basis of published works will be up to 12 months of part-time study.
- (d) If a student transfers between full- and part-time study, the period of study is determined on the basis of the number of months that the student was registered under each mode.
- (e) Any part of the programme of study from which a student has been granted exemption under the provisions of Section 5 will be counted towards the period of study.
- (f) Any interruption(s) of study approved under the provisions of Section will not be counted towards the period of study.
- (g) A student may apply to the Research Degrees Committee for an extension of the period of study. The Research Degrees Committee will not extend the period of study by more than 12 months at any one time. If a student exceeds the agreed period of study, his/her registration on the programme will be terminated.
- (h) The extensions and/or interruptions granted to a research student by Research Degrees Committee will not normally exceed 12 months total, consecutively, or cumulatively.

## **10. Interruption of study and withdrawal**

- (a) The period of study shall normally be continuous.
- (b) A student may apply to the Research Degrees Committee for permission to interrupt his/her studies on personal grounds for a period of up to 12 months in total, at the end of which s/he must either re-enrol, or withdraw from their programme of study. Students who have interrupted their studies

continue to be registered on their programmes of study, but are not entitled to receive supervision or to use University facilities.

- (c) A student may withdraw from his/her programme of study and the University at any time by submitting the appropriate form. There is no guarantee that a student who has formally withdrawn may be re-admitted to a programme of study at the University at a later date.

## **11. The supervisory team**

- (a) Each student will be assigned a Director of Studies, appointed by the Head of Department, who will be responsible for the overall direction and development of the student's programme of study. The Director of Studies must:
  - (i) normally hold the non-probationary appointment of Professor, Reader, Principal Lecturer, Senior Lecturer, Lecturer, or Senior Research Fellow at the University and have an expectation of holding such an appointment for the remainder of the student's period of study. Exceptions to this must be approved by the Chair of Research Degrees Committee;
  - (ii) have subject expertise at a level appropriate for research supervision and be research active as designated by the University in an area relevant to the student's area of work;
  - (iii) be familiar with current standards and procedures of research degrees in the UK, have received appropriate training in research supervision, and must normally have experience of supervising at least one doctoral student from registration to successful completion.
- (b) Each student will also be assigned one or more Co-Supervisors, appointed by the Head of Department, so that there is sufficient expertise within the supervisory team to evaluate and advise on all aspects of the project. The Co-Supervisor(s):
  - (i) must have subject expertise at a level appropriate for research supervision and be research active, as designated by the University, in an area relevant to the student's field of research. Exceptions to the research activity requirement must be approved by the Chair of the Research Degrees Committee;
  - (ii) should normally hold the appointment of Professor, Reader, Principal Lecturer, Senior Lecturer, Lecturer, or Senior Research Fellow at the University and have an expectation of holding such an appointment for the remainder of the student's period of study, or else should be a suitably qualified and experienced individual from outside the University;
  - (iii) should have received appropriate training in research supervision.
- (c) Supervision of the DTh thesis (Part 2, 60,000 word thesis.) On the recommendation of the Head of Department, the Research Degrees Committee shall appoint at least two supervisors for each candidate, a Director of Studies and one or more Co-supervisors. To qualify as a Director of Studies, a supervisor must have experience of supervising at least one PhD or one professional doctorate candidate from registration to successful completion. Both the Director of Studies and Co-supervisor(s) must normally have subject expertise appropriate for supervision at doctoral level and have received relevant supervisor training. Appropriate expertise might include relevant professional practice, as well as academic research activity, with the supervisory team as a whole

usually including both professional and research expertise. Exceptions to these criteria, including recommendations for the appointment of external supervisors, must be approved by the Chair of Research Degrees Committee. The Research Degrees Committee may appoint a replacement or additional supervisor at any time if it deems this to be necessary, and shall do so if no supervisor continues to be a member of the staff of the University.

## **12. Milestones**

Over the course of the period of study, research students, unless transferring from another university or registered for the PhD by Published Works, are expected to meet the following milestones:

1. Project Confirmation, 6 months after initial registration for full time study or 9 months for part time study
2. Supervisor-led annual progress review
3. Progression Review, 18 months after initial registration for full time study or 30 months for part time study
4. Completion Review, if a student has not submitted their thesis within 3 years of full time study or 5 years of part time study.

## **13. Project confirmation**

- (a) The purpose of the project confirmation process is to ensure that each student identifies in detail at an early stage in the programme of study an adequate project of research with the potential to satisfy the requirements for the intended award within the normal period of study and an appropriate plan to carry it out. Students who are admitted directly to the degree of Doctor of Philosophy under the provisions of Section 6(c) are not required to complete the project confirmation process.
- (b) The project confirmation process is also used:
  - (i) to review the supervision arrangements and resources for the research and to address issues relating to commercial funding, intellectual property and research ethics in the light of developments or changes to the project since the student's admission to the programme of study;
  - (ii) in the case of projects involving performance- or practice-based research, to clarify the intended relationship between the student's creative and scholarly work, and to identify from this the form that the final submission will take and the format in which the creative work will be recorded;
  - (iii) to identify for consideration by the Research Degrees Committee under the provisions of Section 19 cases where it would be appropriate for the written component of the student's final submission to be in a language other than English.
- (c) Each student must apply for project confirmation 6 months after initial registration, or 9 months if studying part time and must achieve project confirmation before undertaking any significant research.
- (d) The application must be presented in a form and language that allow it to be judged by researchers who are not specialists in the student's area of research.

- (e) The application will be considered by the Research Student Review Board in the student's department against the following criteria:
  - (i) the intended contribution of the research and the extent of the student's knowledge of the area and of the context for the proposed research;
  - (ii) the suitability of the proposed techniques of academic enquiry and the feasibility and adequacy of the plans to carry them out;
  - (iii) the evidence that the student is engaging in scholarship at the required level and is able to present his/her work in an appropriate form;
  - (iv) the realistic expectation that the project can be supported appropriately and completed within the normal period of study.
- (f) Having considered the application, the Research Student Review Board will:
  - (i) confirm the project; or
  - (ii) confirm the project subject to a requirement to obtain formal approval for the project under the University's Ethics Guidelines; or
  - (iii) turn down the application.
- (g) If a student does not achieve project confirmation on the first attempt, s/he will be given one further opportunity to submit a revised application within three months. The Research Student Review Board will provide feedback on the student's first application.
- (h) If a student does not achieve project confirmation after two attempts, or does not submit an application within the deadline his/her registration on the programme will be terminated.

#### **14. Annual progress review**

- (a) The purpose of the annual progress review is to monitor the progress of each student on a regular basis and to ensure that the supervisory process is working well.
- (b) Each student must submit an Annual Progress Report. This will usually be between May and July each year. A student who is taking an approved interruption of studies at that time must submit instead not more than two months after re-enrolling. The Annual Progress Report comprises:
  - (i) a record of the supervisions which have taken place over the previous year;
  - (ii) a written account of work which has been undertaken and a plan of work which remains to be done, including where appropriate a plan for the format of the final submission;
  - (iii) an account of research training undertaken by the student during the year, including sessions attended in person or accessed online on the Roehampton Research Student Development Programme.

- (c) The Director of Studies will arrange a meeting between the student and all the members of the supervisory team to discuss the Annual Progress Report and the student's progress generally. Each member of the supervisory team will add written comments to the Annual Progress Report, recording the outcomes of the meeting and giving views on the student's progress over the previous year and the plan of work which remains to be done.
- (d) The Annual Progress Report, including the supervisors' written comments, will be considered by the Research Student Review Board in the student's department against the following criteria:
  - (i) evidence of satisfactory progress over the previous year;
  - (ii) evidence that the student is working at an appropriate level;
  - (iii) evidence that any developments or changes to the project are appropriate and can be supported;
  - (iv) evidence that the plan of work which remains to be done can realistically be achieved within the normal period of study.
- (e) The completed Annual Progress Report will be sent to the Graduate School by the Director of Studies to be added to the student's record.
  - (i) use of the Cause for Concern procedure described in Section 17;
  - (ii) an application to the Research Degrees Committee to extend the period of study under the provisions of Section 8;
  - (iii) changes to the supervisory arrangements.
- (f) Where a student's progress is deemed unsatisfactory, the supervisors should recommend appropriate actions to the Research Student Review Board. These may include, without limitation:
  - (i) use of the Cause for Concern procedure described in Section 17;
  - (ii) an application to the Research Degrees Committee to extend the period of study under the provisions of Section 9;
  - (iii) changes to the supervisory arrangements

## **15. Progression review**

- (a) The purpose of the progression review is to determine, on the basis of the work which has been undertaken following project confirmation and the plan of work which remains to be done, whether a student has the potential to meet the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. Students admitted under the provisions of Section 5 may also be exempted from completing progression review.
- (b) The progression review application must be submitted 18 months after initial registration if full-time, or 30 months if part-time. Exceptions to these deadlines, for example where a candidate is unable to participate in the progression review due to overseas fieldwork, must be approved by the Chair of Research Degrees Committee.

- (c) The application must include supporting evidence, as follows:
- (i) a significant piece of scholarly work produced by the student, such as a draft chapter for the final submission of approximately 8,000 words in length, or in the case of a student who is undertaking performance- or practice-based research a combined submission of scholarly writing and creative work in the ratio which has been agreed at the point of project confirmation; the content of the piece of scholarly work should be such as to provide evidence demonstrating the student's ability to sustain work and scholarly writing at doctoral level, though academic departments will have discretion as regards to the format of the written submission;
  - (ii) a written account of work which has been undertaken and a plan of work which remains to be done, including a plan for the format of the final submission.
- (d) The Research Student Review Board in the student's department will convene a progression review panel, comprising two experienced supervisors who are not members of the student's supervisory team. One of these experienced supervisors should be a member of the departmental RSRB and will convene the panel. The panel will interview the student as part of the decision-making process. Supervisors may attend the interview but will not be on the panel and will not normally ask questions during the interview. The interview panel will have complete discretion in determining what questions to ask the candidate though they may consult with the supervisors before the interview if they wish. If necessary, the interview may be conducted remotely rather than in person.
- (e) The progression review panel will assess the application against the following criteria and make recommendations on the outcome to the Research Student Review Board:
- (i) evidence from the work which has been undertaken and the plan of work which remains to be done that the project has the potential to meet the requirements for the final submission for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, including the intended contribution of the research and its scope for originality;
  - (ii) evidence demonstrating the student's ability to sustain work and scholarly writing at doctoral level;
  - (iii) the adequacy of progress to date with the programme of work and the suitability of any adjustments made to the project, including steps taken to address any problems which have been encountered;
  - (iv) evidence that the plan of work which remains to be done can realistically be achieved within the normal period of study;
  - (v) the suitability of the plan for the format of the final submission.
- (f) Having considered the panel's recommendations, the Research Student Review Board will:
- (i) approve the progression review; or
  - (ii) not approve the application.

- (g) If a student does not complete progression review on the first attempt, s/he will be given one further opportunity to submit a revised application within three months. The Research Student Review Board will provide feedback on the student's first application.
- (h) If a student does not achieve progression review after two attempts, or does not submit an application within the deadline s/he will either be registered for the degree of Master of Philosophy, or the Research Student Review Board may recommend that their registration is terminated.
- (i) A student may ask the members of the panel and the Research Student Review Board to consider any circumstances which may have affected his/her performance since initial registration, or at the oral presentation described in (c)(ii) above under the provisions of the Mitigating Circumstances Policy. If the student has a disability or impairment, s/he may ask the Research Student Review Board to review any reasonable adjustments which have been made and to take further action if appropriate.
- (j) A student who has successfully completed progression review may transfer to the degree of Master of Philosophy at any time up to the date of entry for the final examination, in which case the Research Degrees Committee will clarify the period of study and any deadlines or other conditions which apply.

## **16. Completion review**

- (a) Research students who submit their doctoral thesis within three years of full-time study, or five years of part-time study, will be moved to 'completion status' at the end of their third year (or fifth if part-time). Research students under completion status will continue to receive supervision and have access to university resources but will not pay fees for a period of 12 months.
- (b) Research students who have not submitted their doctoral thesis within three years of initial registration, or within five years in the case of part-time students must undergo completion review. Students submitting a completion review do not need to complete an annual progress review.
- (c) The student's departmental Research Student Review Board will assess the student's readiness to complete their studies within their normal period of registration on the basis of:
  - i) A 'completion plan' consisting of a written account of no more than 2000 words of the work that has been undertaken and plan for successful completion within their period of registration
  - ii) A report from the supervisory team evaluating the feasibility of the student's completion plan
- (d) The Research Student Review Board will decide either:
  - i) To approve the completion plan, in which case the student will be moved to 'completion status'
  - ii) Not to approve the plan, in which case the student's fee status will remain unchanged
- (e) If the Research Student Review Board decides to approve the plan, the student will be moved to completion status.
- (f) Any research student who exceeds their normal period of registration or does not complete within the period of 'completion status' will need to apply for an extension to their registration as detailed in Section 9.

## **17. Cause for Concern**

- (a) The Research Degrees Committee may terminate the registration of a student at any point in their programme where, in the absence of a satisfactory and adequately documented reason, his/her record of attendance, academic progress at the required level is unsatisfactory.
- (b) The decision to terminate a student's registration under these provisions will be made on the recommendation of the Research Student Review Board in the student's department only after the Chair of the Board, or a nominee has completed the following process. If the Chair of the Board is a current or past member of the student's supervisory team, s/he will delegate the responsibility for this process to a nominee.
  - (i) Where a student's record of attendance, academic progress or productivity is unsatisfactory to the extent that it would be appropriate to terminate his/her registration, s/he will be given two formal warnings by letter issued through the Graduate School.
  - (ii) Each letter will set out the reasons for the warning and what the student must do, within a specified period of time, in order to demonstrate a satisfactory level of improvement and to avoid his/her registration being terminated. The second letter will state that it is the final warning.
  - (iii) The student will be given sufficient time and not less than one month between the first and second warning in order to demonstrate a satisfactory level of improvement.
  - (iv) At each warning the student will be offered the opportunity to respond in writing and at a meeting with the Chair of the Research Student Review Board, or his/her nominee. The student may arrange to be accompanied at the meeting by another student or member of staff of the University. The Chair of the Board may set the warning aside and confirm this decision to the student by letter on provision of a satisfactory and adequately documented reason for his/her record of attendance, academic progress or productivity. Formal warnings which have not been set aside will remain active for the duration of the student's period of study.
  - (v) If the student does not demonstrate a satisfactory level of improvement after the second warning, the Chair of the Research Student Review Board, or his/her nominee will refer the matter to the Chair of the Research Degrees Committee, setting out the grounds for the recommendation to terminate the student's registration. The Chair of the Research Degrees Committee will then make the final decision, based on the particular circumstances.
  - (vi) The Academic Registrar, or a nominee will write to any student whose registration has been terminated under these provisions, informing him/her of the reasons for the decision, the right to appeal and the date within which any appeal must be submitted.

## **18. Entry and re-entry for the final examination**

- (a) A student must submit an examination entry form in time for it to be considered by the Research Degrees Committee when submitting their written thesis. This may be before the last date on which the student intends to submit work where the overall submission includes an element of live

performance or display. No changes may be made to the title of the final submission which is recorded on the examination entry form without the agreement of the Research Degrees Committee.

- (b) Students with disabilities or other impairments may ask for reasonable adjustments to be made to the conduct of the final examination. Such requests should be made at the same time as the student's formal entry or re-entry to the examination and not later than the date of the final submission.
- (c) Students will be examined in accordance with the regulations which are in force at the time that they submit their examination entry form.

## **19. Appointment of examiners**

- (a) The examiners for the final examination will be nominated in the first instance by the student's Director of Studies following a discussion with the other members of the supervisory team. In order to ensure that examiners are sufficiently independent, Directors of Studies should avoid repeatedly nominating the same individual and should not enter into reciprocal examining arrangements. The student will not be involved in the decision on the nominations.
- (b) Director of Studies' nominations will be considered by the Research Student Review Board in the student's department. If the nominations are deemed to be acceptable, they will be submitted to the Research Degrees Committee for final consideration and approval. Nominations must be submitted to the Research Degrees Committee at least three months and not more than six months before the date on which the student intends to submit work for the final examination. This may be before the final submission in cases where the work to be examined includes an element of live performance or display.
- (c) Two examiners, or exceptionally three if the scope of the student's submission is such that it cannot be examined adequately by two individuals, will be appointed to act jointly for each student as follows:
  - (i) at least one of the examiners (at least two if three examiners are appointed) shall be external to the University when the nomination is made, meaning that s/he shall not have been affiliated to the University during the preceding three years.
  - (ii) one examiner will normally be a member of staff, or a visiting professor at the University when the nomination is made; if no suitable individual is available from within the University, or if the student is a member of staff of the University, a second examiner who is external to the University will be appointed.
- (d) The aim of the appointment process is to appoint examiners who will be able, and be seen to be able, to make a fair and independent assessment of the candidate and his/her work and to ensure the good standing of Roehampton University research degrees through the consistent application of appropriate academic standards. To this end:
  - (i) the examiners will be of sufficient authority in the area to be examined to command the respect of the wider academic community;

- (ii) the examiners will be familiar with current standards and procedures of research degrees in the UK and at least one of the examiners will have previous experience of examining a doctoral award in the UK;
  - (iii) the examiners individually will be experts in current research in the area to be examined; whilst it is accepted that each examiner individually may not have expertise in all parts of the precise topic, the examiners together should be able to cover sufficiently all aspects of the work to be presented by the student;
  - (iv) the examiners will be able to make an independent assessment of the student's work and will not previously have played an active role in supporting his/her academic progress on the programme of study, nor have had any other involvement with the student or with members of the supervisory team which might reasonably lead to an allegation of bias, or an allegation they could have a personal interest in the outcome of the examination.
- (e) Following his/her formal appointment by the Research Degrees Committee, each examiner will be sent a letter of appointment and details of the University's rules, regulations and guidelines for the assessment of Research Degrees.

**20. Requirements of the final submission for the degree of MPhil or PhD**

- (a) Except for the provisions of (c) below, the final submission for the degree of Master of Philosophy or Doctor of Philosophy will comprise a piece of scholarly writing, with a full bibliography and references and with a satisfactory standard of literary presentation. For students who achieved project confirmation after 1 October 2011, the submission shall not exceed 60,000 words for the degree of Master of Philosophy, and 100,000 words for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The same word counts are also recommended for students who achieved project confirmation before this date. The word counts include references in the text, footnotes and endnotes, but exclude the bibliography and any appendices, which should only include material which the examiners are not required to read in order adequately to examine the submission, but to which they may refer if they wish.
- (b) A student who has undertaken performance- or practice-based research may include in the final submission creative work which has been generated as an integral part of the research process and that together with the piece of scholarly writing substantiates the argument(s) of the research project. The form that the final submission takes will be determined at the point of project confirmation, so that the piece of scholarly writing is at least 20,000 words in length and the scope of the submission as a whole meets the requirements for the award of Master of Philosophy or Doctor of Philosophy as appropriate.
- (c) The final submission for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy on the basis of published works will comprise a portfolio of the student's published works and a supporting statement. The contents of the portfolio will be determined by the student and will include at least some works which have been published within seven years of the date of the student's initial registration on the programme. The supporting statement will be a piece of scholarly writing, comprising an account of the genesis of the works contained in the portfolio and the research and research methodology informing them, a discussion of the contribution which the works have made to the field of study, a review of the relevant literature (unless this is already contained in the published works), and the case for the portfolio to be considered as a coherent body of scholarly work which addresses all of the criteria for the award of Doctor of Philosophy set out in Section 25(a). The supporting statement shall not

exceed 10,000 words, except where the portfolio contains creative works, in which case the supporting statement shall be between 20,000 and 30,000 words and shall include a commentary on the theories and ideas which are substantiated in the creative works. The above word counts include references in the text, footnotes and endnotes, but exclude the bibliography and any appendices, which should only include material which the examiners are not required to read in order adequately to examine the submission, but to which they may refer if they wish.

- (d) The submission will consist of the student's own work which s/he has undertaken while registered for the research degree, subject to the provisions of (c) above and Section 6. Any work included in the submission which has been done jointly by the student with other researchers, or which has been assessed previously for a research degree or comparable award and that cannot therefore be considered again, shall be clearly indicated by the student and certified by the Director of Studies. All allegations of academic misconduct with regard to the final examination, including allegations of plagiarism, duplication, falsification, collusion and cheating, shall be investigated under the provisions of the Student Disciplinary Regulations.
- (e) Three hard copies of the submission must be presented in formats set out in University guidelines along with an electronic copy of the thesis. All work which is to be considered by the examiners must be included in the submission in a retainable form. Where work cannot be presented adequately in written form, it will be presented in an alternative, retainable format which has been determined at the point of project confirmation.
- (f) The final submission must be presented after the minimum period of study for the relevant award and before the individual student's period of study has expired.

## **21. Requirements of the final submission for the degree of EdD**

- (a) The final submission for the degree of Doctor of Education will comprise a piece, or a portfolio of related pieces, of scholarly writing of not more than 50,000 words altogether in length, with a full bibliography and references and with a satisfactory standard of literary presentation. The word counts include references in the text, footnotes and endnotes, but exclude the bibliography and any appendices, which should only include material which the examiners are not required to read in order adequately to examine the submission, but to which they may refer if they wish. If the final submission comprises a portfolio of work, it will include within the word count the case for the portfolio to be considered as a coherent body of scholarly work which meets the requirements for the award of Doctor of Education
- (b) A student may include in the final submission creative work which has been generated as an integral part of the research process and that together with the piece of scholarly writing substantiates the argument(s) of the research project. The form that the final submission takes will be determined at the point of project confirmation, so that the piece of scholarly writing is at least 20,000 words in length and the scope of the submission as a whole meets the requirements for the award of Doctor of Education.
- (c) The submission will consist of the student's own work which s/he has undertaken while registered for the degree of Doctor of Education, subject to the provisions of Section 6. Any work included in the submission which has been done jointly by the student with other researchers, or which has been assessed previously for a professional doctorate, research degree or comparable award and that cannot therefore be considered again, shall be clearly indicated by the student and certified by the

Director of Studies. All allegations of academic misconduct with regard to the final examination, including allegations of plagiarism, duplication, falsification, collusion and cheating, shall be investigated under the provisions of the Student Disciplinary Regulations.

- (d) Three copies of the submission must be presented in formats set out in University guidelines. All work which is to be considered by the examiners must be included in the submission in a retainable form. Where work cannot be presented adequately in written form, it will be presented in an alternative, retainable format which has been determined at the point of project confirmation.
- (e) The final submission must be presented after the minimum period of study for the degree of Doctor of Education and before the individual student's period of study has expired.

## **22. Language of the final submission**

- (a) The final submission shall be in English, except when the Research Degrees Committee has given permission for another language to be used owing to the nature of the subject (usually modern foreign languages and literatures). Successful applications must meet substantially all of the following criteria:
  - (i) the language of the submission must be the same as the main language of the object of study;
  - (ii) the submission must involve a high degree of reference to samples from, or texts written or spoken in, the language of study;
  - (iii) the critical or other professional discourse in the subject must be substantially grounded in the language of study;
  - (iv) publication in the language of study must be perceived as being beneficial to the subject and in the best interests of the student.
- (b) Applications for permission to submit in a language other than English should be submitted by the student prior to initial registration or by project confirmation stage at the latest. If the application is approved, the final submission must include an additional piece of scholarly writing of between 10,000 and 20,000 words, or of no more than 5,000 words in the case of the degree of Doctor of Education and the degree of Doctor of Philosophy on the basis of published works, which will be written in English summarising the main arguments of the submission. The summary shall not be included in the word counts in Sections 20 and 21.

## **23. Conduct of the final examination**

- (a) The final examination will be based on the student's final submission, including any element of live performance or display that the examiners are expected to assess, and an oral examination, and will be conducted by all the examiners appointed under the provisions of Section 19. If a student is required to make corrections to the final submission under the provisions of 24(b)(ii) (iii), 25(b)(ii) (iii), or 25(b)(iv), however, the examiners will nominate one or more from their number to confirm that the corrections have been carried out satisfactorily.

- (b) The Director of Studies will nominate a Viva Chair at the point of the exam entry form being completed to facilitate the running of the oral examination and to advise the examiners, as needed, on University regulations, policies and procedures. The Chair of Research Degrees Committee will formally approve the Chair when the exam entry form is submitted. The Chair will be a senior member of academic staff, with experience of acting as a Director of Studies who is not a member of the supervisory team. S/he will not previously have played an active role in supporting his/her academic progress on the programme of study, nor have had any other involvement with the student or with members of the supervisory team which might reasonably lead to an allegation of bias, or an allegation they could have a personal interest in the outcome of the examination. S/he will be present for the viva and in private meetings of the examiners prior to the oral examination in order to ensure that the examination is conducted fairly and in accordance with University guidelines. However, s/he will not be involved in assessing the student nor take part in the oral examination. The Chair will also advise the examiners on any reasonable adjustments to be made to the conduct of the final examination in the light of information about a disability or other impairment disclosed by the student under the provisions of Section 18.
- (c) The student may invite one or more members of the supervisory team to observe the oral examination. Members of the supervisory team will not be involved in assessing the student, or take part in the oral examination, or observe private meetings of the examiners.
- (d) Each examiner must submit a confidential, independent report on the student's final submission to the Chair of the Research Degrees Committee at least one week before the date of the oral examination, or before preparing the joint report in the case of a resubmission without oral examination, and in any case before conferring with the other examiner(s).
- (e) The oral examination will be conducted on the University campus in English.
- (f) The student may ask the Chair of the Research Degrees Committee to postpone the oral examination under the provisions of the Mitigating Circumstances Policy. Such requests must be made as soon as possible and before the start of the oral examination.
- (g) All matters concerning the final examination, including the contents of the student's final submission, are confidential to those taking part in and observing the examination, and appropriate officers of the University, subject to the provisions of Sections 24 and 25.
- (h) In instances of suspected academic misconduct, whether identified pre- or post-viva, the examiners will inform the Graduate School of their concerns. The relevant Research Degrees Convenor (or Head of Department's nominee if the RDC is one of the student's supervisors) will then conduct an investigation under the terms of the Student Disciplinary Code.

#### **24. Outcome of the final examination for the degree of MPhil**

- (a) In order for a student to qualify for the award of Master of Philosophy, the examiners must be satisfied that the student's final submission and performance in the oral examination, when considered together:
  - (i) comprise an integrated and coherent piece of scholarly work;
  - (ii) present a systematic and critical assessment of relevant work, much of which is at the forefront of the field of study;
  - (iii) show originality in the application of knowledge;

- (iv) demonstrate a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and academic enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the field of study;
- (v) represent in terms of its scope what might reasonably be achieved after two calendar years of full-time study.
- (b) The examiners shall submit to the Research Degrees Committee a joint report on the outcome of the final examination containing one of the following recommendations.
  - (i) The degree of Master of Philosophy should be awarded.
  - (ii) The degree of Master of Philosophy should be awarded subject to corrections being made to the submission within three months. The corrections shall be of a level which does not require re-assessment, but one or more of the examiners shall be asked to verify that the corrections have been made before the degree is awarded.
  - iii) The degree of Master of Philosophy should be awarded, subject to corrections of substance being made to the submission within six months. The corrections shall be of a level which does not require re-assessment, but one or more of the examiners shall be asked to verify that the corrections have been made before the degree is awarded.
  - iv) The degree of Master of Philosophy should not be awarded, but the Student may resubmit work for assessment within 18 months, with or without a further viva voce examination. The student will be required to re-enrol with the University during that time and will be entitled to supervision in accordance with University guidelines. The resubmission will be examined where possible by the same examiners who assessed the first submission. A student shall be given only one opportunity to resubmit.
  - (v) The student should fail the examination without an opportunity to resubmit and the student's registration should be terminated.
- c) If the examiners are unable to reach agreement on the outcome, they shall each submit separate reports to the Research Degrees Committee.

**25. Outcome of the final examination for the degree of PhD**

- (a) In order for a student to qualify for the award of Doctor of Philosophy, the examiners must be satisfied that the student's final submission and performance in the oral examination, when considered together:
  - (i) comprise an integrated and coherent body of scholarly work of a quality to satisfy peer review and merit publication, performance, screening or display in complete or abridged form;
  - (ii) present a systematic and critical assessment of relevant work which is at the forefront of the field of study;
  - (iii) make a distinct contribution to the field of study through the creation and interpretation of new knowledge as a result of original research;
  - (iv) demonstrate a detailed understanding of relevant techniques for research and advanced academic enquiry;
  - (v) represent in terms of its scope what might reasonably be achieved after three calendar years of full-time study.
- (b) Except for the provisions of (c) below, the examiners shall submit to the Research Degrees Committee a joint report on the outcome of the final examination containing one of the following recommendations.
  - (i) The degree of Doctor of Philosophy should be awarded.
  - (ii) The degree of Doctor of Philosophy should be awarded subject to corrections being made to the submission within three months. The corrections shall be of a level which does not require re-

assessment, but one or more of the examiners shall be asked to verify that the corrections have been made before the degree is awarded.

- iii) The degree of Doctor of Philosophy should be awarded, subject to corrections of substance being made to the submission within six months. The corrections shall be of a level which does not require re-assessment, but one or more of the examiners shall be asked to verify that the corrections have been made before the degree is awarded.
- (iv) The degree of Doctor of Philosophy should not be awarded, but the student may resubmit work for assessment within 18 months, with or without a further oral examination. The student will be required to re-enrol with the University during that time and will be entitled to supervision in accordance with University guidelines. The resubmission will be examined where possible by the same examiners who assessed the first submission. A student shall be given only one opportunity to resubmit.
- (v) The degree of Doctor of Philosophy should not be awarded, but the degree of Master of Philosophy should be awarded under the provisions of Section 24 subject to corrections being made to the submission within three months. The corrections shall be of a level which does not require re-assessment, but one or more of the examiners shall be asked to verify that the corrections have been made before the degree is awarded.
- (vi) The degree of Doctor of Philosophy should not be awarded, but the student may resubmit work for assessment for the degree of Master of Philosophy within 18 months, with or without a further oral examination. The student will be required to re-enrol with the University during that time and will be entitled to supervision in accordance with University guidelines. The resubmission will be examined where possible by the same examiners who assessed the first submission. A student shall be given only one opportunity to resubmit.
- (vii) The student should fail the examination without an opportunity to resubmit and the student's registration should be terminated.
- c) If the examiners are unable to reach agreement on the outcome, they shall each submit separate reports to the Research Degrees Committee.

## **26. Options at resubmission for the degree of MPhil/PhD**

- (a) At resubmission, examiners for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy shall submit to the Research Degrees Committee a joint report on the outcome of the final examination containing one of the following recommendations:
  - (i) The degree of Doctor of Philosophy should be awarded.
  - (ii) The degree of Doctor of Philosophy should be awarded subject to corrections being made to the submission within three months. The corrections shall be of a level which does not require re-assessment, but one or more of the examiners shall be asked to verify that the corrections have been made before the degree is awarded.
  - iii) The degree of Doctor of Philosophy should be awarded, subject to corrections of substance being made to the submission within six months. The corrections shall be of a level which does not require re-assessment, but one or more of the examiners shall be asked to verify that the corrections have been made before the degree is awarded.
  - iv) The degree of Doctor of Philosophy should not be awarded, but the degree of Master of Philosophy should be awarded under the provisions of Section 24 subject to corrections being made to the submission within three months. The corrections shall be of a level which does not require re-assessment, but one or more of the examiners shall be asked to verify that the corrections have been made before the degree is awarded.
  - v) The student should fail the examination without an opportunity to resubmit and the student's registration should be terminated.

- (b) At resubmission, examiners for the degree of Master of Philosophy shall submit to the Research Degrees Committee a joint report on the outcome of the final examination containing one of the following recommendations:
  - (i) The degree of Master of Philosophy should be awarded.
  - (ii) The degree of Master of Philosophy should be awarded subject to corrections being made to the submission within three months. The corrections shall be of a level which does not require re-assessment, but one or more of the examiners shall be asked to verify that the corrections have been made before the degree is awarded.
  - iii) The degree of Master of Philosophy should be awarded, subject to corrections of substance being made to the submission within six months. The corrections shall be of a level which does not require re-assessment, but one or more of the examiners shall be asked to verify that the corrections have been made before the degree is awarded.
  - iv) The student should fail the examination without an opportunity to resubmit and the student's registration should be terminated.

**27. Outcome of the final examination for the degree of EdD**

- (a) In order for a student to qualify for the award of Doctor of Education, the examiners must be satisfied that the student's final submission and performance in the oral examination, when considered together:
  - (i) comprise an integrated and coherent body of scholarly work of a quality to satisfy peer review and merit publication, performance, screening or display in complete or abridged form;
  - (ii) present a systematic and critical assessment of relevant work which is at the forefront of the field of study;
  - (iii) make a distinct contribution to the field of study through the creation and interpretation of new knowledge as a result of original research;
  - (iv) demonstrate a detailed understanding of relevant techniques for research and advanced academic enquiry;
  - (v) represent in terms of its scope what might reasonably be achieved after three calendar years of part-time study.
- (b) Except for the provisions of (c) below, the examiners shall submit to the Research Degrees Committee a joint report on the outcome of the final examination containing one of the following recommendations.
  - (i) The degree of Doctor of Education should be awarded.
  - (ii) The degree of Doctor of Education should be awarded subject to corrections being made to the submission within three months. The corrections shall be of a level which does not require re-assessment, but one or more of the examiners shall be asked to verify that the corrections have been made before the degree is awarded.

- (iii) The degree of Doctor of Education should not be awarded, but the student may resubmit work for assessment within 18 months, with or without a further oral examination. The student will be required to re-enrol with the University during that time and will be entitled to supervision in accordance with University guidelines. The resubmission will be examined where possible by the same examiners who assessed the first submission. A student shall be given only one opportunity to resubmit.
  - (iv) The degree of Doctor of Education should not be awarded, but the degree of Master of Education should be awarded subject to corrections being made to the submission within three months. The corrections shall be of a level which does not require re-assessment, but one or more of the examiners shall be asked to verify that the corrections have been made before the degree is awarded.
  - (v) The degree of Doctor of Education should not be awarded, but the student may submit a project for assessment for the degree of Master of Education under the provisions of the Taught Degree Regulations within three months. The student will be required to re-enrol with the University during that time and will be entitled to supervision in accordance with University guidelines. A student shall be given only one opportunity to resubmit.
  - (vi) The student should fail the examination without an opportunity to resubmit and the student's registration should be terminated.
- (c) If the examiners are unable to reach agreement on the outcome, they shall each submit separate reports to the Research Degrees Committee.

**28. Ratification of recommendations from the final examination**

- (a) The recommendation of the examiners will be considered by the Research Degrees Committee acting under authority delegated to it by the University Senate and the student will be given written notification of the outcome and a copy of the examiners' joint report. The examiners' independent reports are confidential to the examination process and will not be given to the student. Formal confirmation of any award will be withheld until the student has lodged with the University copies of the final submission as it was approved by the examiners in formats set out in University guidelines. The University may withhold confirmation of results and awards from students who owe tuition-related fees under the provisions of the Student Fee Regulations. The date of any award will be the date on which it is ratified by the Research Degrees Committee.
- (b) A student may apply to the Research Degrees Committee for an extension to the deadline for making corrections to the submission or for resubmitting work for assessment on grounds of mitigating circumstances or other significant and acceptable cause. The application should be submitted in writing in advance of the deadline and should include supporting evidence where appropriate. If a student does not meet the deadline and has not applied for and been granted an extension, his/her registration on the programme will be terminated.
- (c) If the examiners have been unable to reach agreement on the outcome of the final examination, the Research Degrees Committee will normally follow the external examiner's recommendation. Where two external examiners have been appointed, Research Degrees Committee will appoint an additional external examiner and will consider each of the examiners' reports before reaching a decision on the outcome of the examination.

- (d) The Chair of the Research Degrees Committee may revoke any award which has been conferred by the University and all privileges connected with it if at any time:
- (i) it is discovered and proved to the satisfaction of the University that there was an administrative error in conferring the award; or
  - (ii) the Research Degrees Committee, having taken account of information which was unavailable at the time the award was conferred and which has subsequently been accepted by the University, and on the advice of the examiners if appropriate and practicable, determines that the award should be revoked or that any details of the award should be altered.

## **29. Aegrotat and Posthumous awards**

A candidate who has submitted their thesis but through serious illness or other grave cause will not be able to complete the examination process, may be considered for an Aegrotat award.

The examiners, having reviewed the thesis, may make the following recommendations to the Research Degrees committee:

1. that the degree of Doctor of Philosophy be awarded
2. that the degree of Master of Philosophy be awarded
3. no award.

In the case of outcomes 1 and 2, a statement should be included in the degree certificate to indicate that this was an Aegrotat award. A statement to this effect should also be included in the copy of the thesis submitted to the Roehampton Research Repository, acknowledging that this is an uncorrected thesis.

A candidate who dies before submitting their thesis for examination may be considered for a posthumous research degree if the supervisory team consider that the candidate had completed sufficient work to be likely to merit the award of a research degree. In these circumstances, the supervisors should approach the Chair of the Research Degrees Committee who will consider the request. If the request is supported, the supervisors will be asked to provide a supporting statement to accompany the candidate's work and recommend appropriately qualified examiners to the Chair of the Research Degrees Committee. The examiners will be notified that the thesis is being considered for a posthumous award.

The examiners, having reviewed the thesis, may make the following recommendations to the Research Degrees Committee:

1. that the degree of Doctor of Philosophy be awarded;
2. that the degree of Master of Philosophy be awarded
3. no award

In the case of outcomes 1 and 2, a statement should be included in the degree certificate to indicate that this was a posthumous award. A statement to this effect should also be included in the copy of the thesis submitted to the Roehampton Research Repository, acknowledging that this is an uncorrected thesis.

### **30. Availability of the final submission**

- (a) An electronic copy of final submissions which have led to the award of a Research Degree, including any elements that are not presented in written form, will be lodged in the University Repository and the British Library to be available for public reference. The copy will be in the same version that was approved by the examiners and in formats set out in University guidelines, except that the portfolio of published works will be removed from the final submission for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy on the basis of published works before it is lodged, leaving a full bibliographic listing of the works which were considered.
- (b) A student may request that the availability of the final submission be restricted temporarily in order to allow time for commercial exploitation of the research, for a patent application, or for publication of the research by other means. Requests on these and other relevant grounds must be submitted to the Research Degrees Committee at the time of entry, or re-entry, for the final examination. Restriction of access to the final submission for a period of up to 24 months may be specified by the student without any justification or formal approval required.
- (c) The Research Degrees Committee will not normally agree to restrict the availability of the final submission for more than 24 months. Material of a confidential or sensitive nature with the potential to infringe the rights of any third party is inadmissible in the final examination for a Research Degree and cannot therefore be used as grounds to restrict access to the final submission.

### **31. Appeals**

- i. This regulation should be read in conjunction with the Academic Appeals Guidance for Students.
- ii. Students are not permitted to challenge academic judgement under this regulation, and cannot submit an appeal on the basis that they are unhappy or dissatisfied with a mark, grade or classification that has been awarded. Appeals submitted on such a basis will normally be rejected in line with Paragraph xxv.
- iii. Under no circumstances will a mark or classification be manually altered as the result of a successful academic appeal. Where an appeal is upheld, the usual approach will be, as far as is reasonably practicable, to put a student in the position they were in before the original decision was made.
- iv. Matters relating to the supervision of a research project, at any level, will not normally be considered a ground for appeal, but may be eligible for consideration under the Student Complaints Procedure.
- v. Any reference to an individual member of staff under this regulation should also be read as including reference to their nominee.
- vi. Where a student submits an academic appeal, the original decision that is being appealed against will remain in effect unless or until an appeal is upheld.
- vii. Students are normally expected to submit their own appeal and represent themselves throughout the process set out in this regulation. The University will not normally accept submissions from third parties or representatives, including students or legal representatives.
- viii. The academic appeals process is confidential, but information will be shared with certain relevant members of staff within the University in order to fully investigate any claims or issues raised by a

student. Where an individual member of staff is named in an academic appeal, they will normally be given an opportunity to respond.

- ix. Any variations to this regulation for students studying with one of the University's partner organisations will be set out in the relevant agreement and operations manual.
- x. No student will be prejudiced as a result of submitting an academic appeal. The University reserves the right to reject an appeal if there is evidence that it is frivolous or vexatious. The University may investigate the authenticity of any documents submitted in support of an academic appeal, and evidence of any falsification of documents may lead to action being taken under the Student Disciplinary Regulations.

### **The Academic Appeals Group**

- xi. The Academic Appeals Group is made up of a representative from each Academic Department of the University, who will be approved by Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee. At least four members of this group shall have experience of supervising research students, and should be approved by the Research Degrees Committee.
- xii. A minimum of two members of the Academic Appeals Group will normally be required to consider an appeal under Paragraphs xxviii - xxxii of this policy.
- xiii. Members of the Academic Appeals Group will not consider appeals from their own Academic Department.
- xiv. The Student Casework Manager is secretary to the Academic Appeals Group.
- xv. The Academic Appeals Group will provide an annual report on its business to Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee, and will feedback on individual cases to relevant University Departments as appropriate.

### **Submitting an Appeal**

- xvi. Students should first raise any issues relating to a mark or classification with their module or programme convenor, who will be able to provide further clarification and information about the University's assessment process.
- xvii. Having first discussed the matter with the relevant research degree convenor, a student is entitled to submit an academic appeal against a decision of the Research Degrees Committee
- xviii. An appeal against any of the decisions set out in Paragraph xvii can only be submitted on one or more of the following grounds:
  - a. That a procedural irregularity or administrative error has occurred in the process of an assessment which is of such a nature as to create a reasonable possibility that in the absence of the procedural irregularity or administrative error the decision in question would have been different;
  - b. That the student's academic performance was materially affected by significant, relevant and uncontrollable circumstances that were unknown to the decision-maker, and which were of

- such a nature that the student could not with reasonable diligence have disclosed to them before the decision was made;
- c. That there is evidence of prejudice or bias on the part of the decision-maker, which is of such a nature as to create a reasonable possibility that in the absence of any prejudice or bias the decision in question would have been different;
- xix. An academic appeal must be submitted to the University Secretariat by email within 10 working days of the student being sent formal notice of the decision in question.
- xx. A student can request an extension to submit their appeal in advance of the deadline. This request should be supported by evidence. An academic appeal must be submitted using the University's Academic Appeals Form and must contain all the information requested on the form. The University Secretariat is entitled to reject an academic appeal without further consideration where a student's submission is incomplete.
- xxi. An appeal submitted outside of the permitted timeframe will only be accepted where the student provides a good reason, supported by evidence, for the delay. The Student Casework Manager will determine what constitutes a good reason for the purpose of this paragraph.
- xxii. The University Secretariat will acknowledge receipt of an academic appeal via the email address stated on the student's Academic Appeals Form.

### **Eligibility**

- xxiii. The Student Casework Manager will conduct a review of the student's academic appeal submission to determine whether evidence to support the stated ground(s) has been disclosed.
- xxiv. Where evidence to support a stated ground has been disclosed, the Student Casework Manager will refer the academic appeal for consideration by the Academic Appeals Group.
- xxv. Where evidence to support one or more of the stated grounds has not been disclosed, the Student Casework Manager will reject the academic appeal and no further consideration will be undertaken. A student may submit a request for a review of the Student Casework Manager's decision under xxxix.

### **Formal Consideration**

- xxvi. The Academic Appeals Group will only consider the appeal with respect to those grounds accepted for further consideration by the Student Casework Manager under Paragraph xxv.
- xxvii. Upon receipt of an appeal, the Academic Appeals Group may undertake any investigation it considers to be appropriate in the circumstances, including none. This may include, but is not limited to, one or more of the following:
- a. Asking the student to provide additional information in support of their appeal
  - b. Asking the University Secretariat to gather and provide additional information
  - c. Asking the student's Department or Supervisor to provide a response to any issues raised in the appeal
  - d. Appointing an independent member of staff to conduct an investigation into the matters raised in the appeal
  - e. Holding an Academic Appeal Hearing in line with Paragraphs xxxi - xxxvii.

- xxviii. The student will normally be provided with a copy of any additional evidence gathered during the course the Academic Appeals Group's consideration of their appeal under Paragraph xxvii, and will be given an opportunity to provide further comment on this evidence before the Academic Appeals Group makes its decision.
- xxix. Once any consideration of the appeal under Paragraphs xxvii - xxviii have been concluded, the Academic Appeals Group will make one of the following decisions:
- a. To reject the appeal, in which case the original decision will remain in effect.
  - b. To uphold the appeal, in which case the original decision will be overturned and the Academic Appeals Group will substitute a new decision.
- xxx. The decision of the Academic Appeals Group will be communicated to the student in writing by the University Secretariat.

### **Academic Appeal Hearing**

- xxxi. In line with Paragraph xxvii, the Academic Appeals Group may determine that an Academic Appeal Hearing is necessary in order to properly consider a student's appeal, and this may occur before or after an investigation into the appeal has been conducted. It is for the Academic Appeals Group alone to determine if a hearing is necessary.
- xxxii. Such a hearing will normally be conducted by a Panel made up of three members of the Academic Appeals Group.
- xxxiii. The University Secretariat will provide a secretary to the hearing.
- xxxiv. The student's Department will be asked to provide a representative to attend the hearing.
- xxxv. The student will be invited to the hearing, and may bring a supporter who can be a student, a staff member or officer of Roehampton Students' Union, or a University Wellbeing Officer. The supporter will not normally be permitted to speak for the student.
- xxxvi. The student and the Departmental representative will be given the opportunity to make a statement and to ask questions.
- xxxvii. Once it has heard all the available evidence, the Panel will deliberate in private and make a decision in line with Paragraph xxxix, which will be communicated to the student in writing.
- xxxviii. The process set out in Paragraphs xxvi to xxxvii will normally take no longer than 70 days.

### **Review**

- xxxix. A student may submit a request for a review of the decision of the Student Casework Manager under xxv or of the Academic Appeals Group on the following grounds:
- a. That a procedural irregularity or administrative error has occurred in respect of the Student Casework Manager or Academic Appeals Group's consideration of the appeal which is of

- such a nature as to create a reasonable possibility that in the absence of the procedural irregularity or administrative error the decision in question would have been different;
- b. That the decision of the Student Casework Manager or Academic Appeals Group is unreasonable given the facts of the case;
  - c. That the student has new material evidence which, for a good reason, they were unable to provide at an earlier stage in the process.
- xli. The student's request will first be considered by the Deputy University Secretary (or nominee), who will determine whether evidence to support the stated ground(s) has been disclosed.
  - xlii. If the Deputy University Secretary considers that evidence to support the stated ground(s) for a review has not been disclosed, then the student's request for a review will be rejected and the student will be issued with a Completion of Procedures Letter in line with Paragraph I.
  - xlii. If the Deputy University Secretary considers that evidence to support the stated grounds for a review has been disclosed, they will take one of the following actions:
    - a. For decisions originally made by the Student Casework Manager under xxv, refer the appeal for consideration by the Academic Appeals Group under xxvii – xxxviii
    - b. For decisions originally made by the Academic Appeals Group, refer the student's request to the Provost (or nominee), who will review the decision of the Academic Appeals Group.
  - xliii. The student will be informed that their request has been passed to the Provost, and will be informed which of the stated grounds have been accepted for further consideration and which, if any, have been rejected.
  - xliv. The Provost will reach one of the following decisions:
    - a. The decision of the Academic Appeals Group should be upheld
    - b. The Academic Appeals Group should be required to reconsider its decision in light of any comments that the Provost considers appropriate in the circumstances. This may involve the Academic Appeals Group conducting further investigations in line with Paragraphs xxvii - xxviii.
    - c. The decision of the Academic Appeals Group should be overturned and the Provost will substitute a new decision.
  - xlvi. This decision will be communicated to the student in writing. Where the Provost issues a decision in line with Paragraph xlv(a), a Completion of Procedures Letter will be issued in line with Paragraph I.
  - xlvi. The review process set out in Paragraphs xxxix - xlv will normally take no longer than 20 days.
  - xlvi. The decision of the Academic Appeals Group will remain effective during the review stage.
  - xlviii. **The Office of the Independent Adjudicator**
  - xlix. Decisions taken under this regulation may be eligible for review by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA), which is an independent body set up to review student complaints and appeals. More information about the OIA can be accessed at <http://www.oiahe.org.uk/>. The OIA can be contacted at 0118 959 9813 or [enquires@oiahe.org.uk](mailto:enquires@oiahe.org.uk).

- I. Where applicable, students will be provided with a Completion of Procedures Letter and information about how to apply to the OIA for a review of a decision taken under this regulation.