

19 May 2011

University of Birmingham

**Proposed Changes to Regulations and Code of Practice for Postgraduate Research
Degrees**

Purpose of the Paper

1. A review of Regulations and Codes of Practice relating to postgraduate research degrees has been undertaken taking into account:

Comments from the PGR annual review
Feedback from appeals cases and complaints
Feedback from members of the Research Progress & Awards Sub Panel
Comments from external examiners
Identified inconsistencies between Regulations and Codes of Practice
Identified gaps and ambiguities within the Regulations and Codes of Practice

APRC is asked to **consider**, and if thought appropriate, **approve** the proposed changes to Regulations and Code of Practice to be effective from the beginning of 2011-12.

Proposal

2. Changes are proposed to the following:

Regulations:

Higher Doctorates

7.6.2 Submission of Work

PhD by Published Work

7.2.7 PhD by Published Work

7.5.2 Adviser

7.5.3 Submission of Work

7.5.4 Examiners

Research Degree Programmes: Assessment & Award

7.4.4 Examiners

7.4.7 Corrections

7.4.5 Oral Examinations

7.4.8 Transfer from a postgraduate taught to a postgraduate research degree (New)

Codes of Practice

Code of Practice for Assessment & Award of Higher Doctorates

Code of Practice for Assessment & Award of PhD by Published Work

Code of Practice for the Supervision and Monitoring Progress of Research Students

Code of Practice for Assessment of Research Students

Code of Practice for Split Location

3. All of the above have been grouped into the following appendices:

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|-------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Appendix A: | Changes to Regulations & Code of Practice for Higher Doctorates |
| Appendix B | Changes to Regulations and Code of Practice for PhD by Published Work |
| Appendix C | Changes to Code of Practice on Supervision and Monitoring Progress of Research Students |
| Appendix D | Changes to Regulations and Code of Practice on the Assessment of Research Degree programmes |
| Appendix E | Changes to the Code of Practice for Split Location |
| Appendix F | New Regulation 7.4.8 (d) |

Text that is proposed should be deleted from 2011-12 has been crossed through and new text to be inserted is highlighted in red. The rationale and a brief summary of the proposed changes are listed at the beginning of each document.

Background information and Consultation

4. Colleges have been made aware of the review through the Graduate School Management Board (GSMB) and have been consulted on the proposed changes via the PGR leads on GSMB. Comments and feedback have been incorporated into the changes proposed.

5. UEB recently approved clarification of the terminology to be used for those registered on research degrees;

“Postgraduate researcher” (PGR) is the umbrella term used to describe all those registered on research degrees (e.g. MRes, MPhils, PhDs & Professional Doctorates).

The term ‘doctoral researchers’ (DRs) refers to those registered on doctoral level programmes (PhDs & Professional Doctorates).

Changes are not proposed to Regulations but in order to embed the above terminology it is proposed that Codes of Practice refer to “Postgraduate Researcher”. To avoid any ambiguity, a point to cross reference this to “Registered Student” has been inserted at the beginning of the Codes of Practice for Supervision & Monitoring Progress and Assessment of Research Degree Theses as follows:

“This Code of Practice is applicable to Registered Students on qualifications that are designated as research degrees under the University’s Regulations for Research Degrees. Postgraduate Researcher is the approved umbrella term used to describe all those registered on research degrees and is therefore used throughout this Code.”

6. As Academic & Student Administration will be changing its name to “Registry”, from August 2011 this change has been made throughout.
7. Where a change in Regulations affects a Code of Practice this change has been incorporated into the relevant section of the Code of Practice.
8. The proposed amendments are recommended in order to remove ambiguities; close off any identified gaps and to bring greater clarity in the interpretation of the regulations.

Areas in the Regulations and Codes of Practice which have been cited in a student complaint or appeal have been reviewed and in light of the evidence from the appeal or complaint updated to ensure greater clarity on the required process or changed to ensure that it is possible for Colleges to comply with the requirement.

Claire Evans
Assistant Manager
Research Student Administration