

GENERAL SUBMISSION AND EXAMINATION REGULATIONS FOR THE AWARD OF HIGHER DEGREES BY RESEARCH

RDC-E

Document Title: General Submission and Examination Regulations for the Award of Higher Degrees by Research – RDC-E			
Version No.	6	Policy Owner	PRAB/RIS
Superseded version	5: AY 2019-20	Author Role Title	Secretary, PRAB
Approval Date	3 April 2019	Approved by	UAB
Effective Date	1 September 2020	Review Date	31 July 2021

E1 General submission and thesis requirements

1.1 Declaration of Intention to Submit for Examination

In order to confirm candidature for examination, all students registered for a research degree must first declare an Intention to Submit for Examination using the appropriate process of declaration agreed by the Board. Submission for examination cannot be made without such a declaration being made. There are no exceptions to this regulation.

Once declared, an Intention to Submit is binding and has a fixed period of three months within which a submission for examination must be made. Once declared, a candidate may make a submission earlier than the full three month period. Early submissions will be formally accepted as a submission but they may not be processed for examination until the three month period has been reached. Students who declare an Intention to Submit for Examination and do not make a submission by the end of the three month period will be required to make a new declaration of Intention to Submit for Examination with a further three month period associated with their declaration. There are no exceptions to this regulation, however a reasonable adjustment of the submission deadline may be considered for up to a period of seven days.

Students whose Expiry of Registration is within three months will be required to either make a declaration of Intention to Submit for Examination or apply for an Extension of Registration. In cases where a student expects to submit in the period shortly after the expiry of Registration, the Board may grant a period of Extension of Registration to run concurrently with the Declaration of Intention to Submit for Examination period up to 3 months without the candidate being required to submit a separate application for an Extension of Registration, as long as the Declaration is made prior to the expiry of Registration.

Students who miss a deadline for submission set by their declaration may apply for an Extension of Assessment as part of Extenuating Circumstances Regulations under the justified criteria set out in those Regulations.

1.2 Language of Thesis and Oral

Except with the specific permission of the Postgraduate Research Assessment Board ('the Board'), the thesis shall be presented and defended in English.

1.3 Abstracts

There shall be an abstract of approximately 300 words bound into the thesis which shall provide a synopsis of the thesis stating the nature and scope of the work undertaken and of the contribution made to the knowledge of the subject treated. Three loose copies of the abstract shall be submitted with the thesis. The loose copies of the abstract shall have the name of the author, the degree for which the thesis is submitted, and the title of the thesis as a heading.

1.4 Statement of sources

The thesis shall acknowledge published or other sources of material consulted (including an appropriate bibliography) and any assistance received.

1.5 Assistance and Proof Reading

The thesis must be the candidate's own work.

It is the candidate's responsibility to check the accuracy, grammar, spelling and referencing in the thesis before the final submission. This requirement does not preclude a candidate from obtaining limited assistance with proof-reading and with the routine collection and/or processing of data under guidelines and instructions clearly devised by the candidate. When such help is obtained, it should be with the prior approval of the Director of Studies who must be satisfied that the spirit of the 'own work' requirement is not breached.

Candidates who have been officially diagnosed as Dyslexic may avail themselves of funded facilities for proof-reading and should contact Student Services Disability Co-ordinator at the earliest opportunity before writing up their theses.

A Proof-Reader may only ensure that the meaning of the author is not misrepresented due to the quality and standard of the English used. This can include correcting spelling and basic grammatical errors. Inaccuracies in academic content must not be corrected.

1.6 Collaborative work

Where a candidate's research programme is part of a collaborative group project, the thesis shall indicate clearly the candidate's individual contribution and the extent of the collaboration.

1.7 Pre-Publication of work

The candidate shall be free to publish material in advance of the thesis but reference shall be made in the thesis to any such work. Copies of

published material should either be bound in an Appendix, or placed in an adequately secured pocket at the end of the thesis.

1.8 Submission for Examination

Submission of a thesis for Examination shall be constituted by submission of an electronic file of the work to be examined in Portable Document Format (PDF). Submissions shall be made to the Secretary of the Board by email attachment. Where PDF file size does not permit email attachment, submission may be made by uploading of such files to a secure University server and required access links and permissions supplied by email to the Secretary. Candidates must not use external servers.

Both internal and external examiners will be sent the PDF submission. However, external examiners are at liberty to request that a hard copy of PDF versions be made by the candidate and forwarded for their use in examination. Candidates will be informed of a request for hard copy before making a submission. In cases where a hard copy has been requested, submission of the hard copy must be made to the Secretary of the Board in addition to the submission of a PDF version by email or server upload.

Format and process for submissions which are comprised partly of non-documentary and/or non-textual materials, such as artefacts or creative works, will be agreed with candidates when Intention to Submit for Examination is declared.

Copies of the thesis submitted for examination shall remain the property of the University but the copyright in the thesis shall be vested in the candidate.

1.9 Format of Thesis

The length of the submitted thesis should conform to the specific thesis requirements set out at RDC-B4.1; RDC-C4.1; and RDC-D5/D6 depending on the type of degree for which examination is required.

The following requirements shall be adhered to in the format of the thesis submitted for examination in electronic copy and in a hard copy, if requested by the external examiner:

- a) theses shall normally be in A4 format; the Board may give permission for a thesis to be submitted in another format where it is satisfied that the contents of the thesis can be better expressed in that format; a candidate using a format larger than A4 should note that the production of copies and full-size enlargements may not be feasible;
- b) copies of the thesis shall be presented in a permanent and legible form either in typescript or print; where hard copies are produced by photocopying processes, these shall be of a

permanent nature; the printer shall be capable of producing text of a satisfactory quality; the size of character used in the main text, including displayed matter shall be in Arial font (not less than font size 11) or Times New Roman font (not less than font size 12). Footnotes shall not be less than 2.00mm for capitals and 1.5mm for x-height (that is, the height of lower-case x - Arial font size 10 or Times New Roman font size 11).

- c) where hard copies are produced, the thesis shall be printed on the recto (upper) side of the page only; the paper shall be white and within the range 70 g/m to 100 g/m;
- d) the margin at the left-hand binding edge of the page shall not be less than 40mm; other margins shall not be less than 15mm;
- e) double or one-and-a-half spacing shall be used in the typescript except for indented quotations or footnotes where single spacing may be used;
- f) pages shall be numbered consecutively through the main text including photographs and/or diagrams included as show pages;
- g) the title page shall give the following information:
 - 1. the full title of the thesis;
 - 2. the full name of the author;
 - 3. that the degree is awarded by the University;
 - 4. the award for which the degree is submitted in partial fulfilment of its requirements;
 - 5. the Collaborating Establishment(s), if any; and
 - 6. the month and year of submission.

1.10 Binding of Thesis hard copy submitted for Examination

Where a hard copy of the thesis submitted for examination is used, it may be in a temporary but fixed binding. Ring binding or spiral binding is not acceptable. Wherever possible, the thesis should be in one volume. However, should it be necessary because of size to split the thesis in order to bind in a temporary format (at an appropriate point, perhaps keeping Appendices in Volume 2), both volumes must show a title page and front cover indicating volume number.

E2 Final Thesis copies

2.1 Third-party copyright

Because final thesis copies will be held electronically for publication, before submitting their final thesis copies, candidates shall ensure that they have the permission of any third-party copyright owners to include their work in the thesis submitted. However, where permissions are not forthcoming candidates must ensure that they edit their material before electronic submission.

2.2 Electronic copy of thesis for institutional repository

Following the award of the degree the Candidate shall supply to the Secretary of the Board for deposit with the Library of the University and onward supply to the British Library EthOS service on demand/to be retained electronically:

- a) an electronic copy of the text of a thesis **in PDF format**, which shall be labelled with the name of the candidate, award, date of award and thesis title. Final electronic copies supplied in any other file format will be rejected. PDF files should be supplied by email attachment, or using a standard file-sharing service;
- b) if applicable, a copy of any other media which forms part of a thesis, e.g. film, manuscript, video as approved for the original submission if not included in the electronic format;
- c) if applicable, copies of documents previously published and not in electronic format, but included in submissions for MPhil or PhD by completed work;
- d) a signed "Electronic Thesis Deposit Agreement" form.

2.3 Confidentiality Agreements

Where the Board has agreed that the confidential nature of the candidate's work is such as to preclude the thesis being made freely available the thesis shall, immediately on completion of the programme of work, be retained by the University on restricted access and, for a time not exceeding the approved period shall only be made available to those who were directly involved in the project. The Board shall normally only approve an application for confidentiality in order to enable a patent application to be lodged or to protect commercially or politically sensitive material. A

thesis shall not be restricted in this way in order to protect research leads. While the normal maximum period of confidentiality is two years, in exceptional circumstances the Board may approve a longer period. Any Confidentiality Agreements related to either examiner confidentiality or post-final deposit embargo must be requested at the time that declaration of Intention to Submit for Examination is made.

2.4

The title page of the final thesis should include the information as given below. The date given in the thesis should be the date of original submission in the case of a thesis passed with amendments or without amendments; in the case of a thesis requiring revision and resubmission which was subsequently passed with or without amendments, the date given should be that of the re-submission.

[Specimen thesis title page]

THE ORIGINS OF THE FARMERS' CO-OPERATIVE IN EAST CLEVELAND

JOHN DAVID BROWN

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of Teesside University
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

This research was carried out in collaboration with the Lingdale Farmers' Club

October 2013

E3 Examinations - General

3.1 Stages of Examination: General Principles

The examination for a research degree shall have two stages: firstly the submission and preliminary assessment of the thesis; and secondly its defence by oral (or approved alternative) examination.

If, at first examination, following an oral examination, a thesis is recommended for re-submission, and re-examination at a second examination following re-submission, the re-examination may proceed without further oral examination. The option to hold a second oral examination at re-examination, if required, lies with the examiners.

At submission and preliminary assessment of the thesis, when the thesis is deemed by the examiners not ready for defence by oral examination and referred, without an oral examination being held, for revision and re-submission of the thesis, at re-submission the thesis must then be defended by oral examination. A thesis referred at first examination without oral examination will be treated, following re-submission and oral examination, as at the point of re-examination, and the examiners may only make recommendations applicable to a re-examination.

3.2 Taught Elements

A candidate whose programme of work includes formally assessed course work in a programme of work leading to the degree of PhD or D.Prof shall not be permitted to proceed to a further stage of the examination for the degree until the course work examiners are satisfied with the candidate's performance. The result of the assessment shall be communicated to the examiners of the thesis.

In the case of the M.Prof or D.Prof, normally the Examination Board at which a candidate's taught elements are to be considered must include representation from the relevant School, and from the Board.

3.3 Exemption from Oral or arrangement of Alternative Examination

A candidate shall normally be examined orally on the programme of work and on the field of study in which the programme lies. Where for reasons of sickness, disability or comparable valid cause the Board is satisfied that a candidate would be under serious disadvantage if required to undergo an oral examination, an alternative form of examination may be approved. Such approval shall not be given on the grounds that the candidate's knowledge of the language in which the thesis is presented is inadequate.

3.4 Location and Language of Oral

An oral examination shall normally be held in the UK. In exceptional cases the Board may give approval for the oral examination to take place abroad. Except with the specific permission of the Board, the oral shall be conducted in English.

3.5 Non-Examiners permitted at Oral

One Supervisor, Advisor or the Chair of the Board may, with the consent of the Candidate, attend the oral examination, and may participate in the discussion when invited to do so by the Examiners, but shall withdraw prior to the deliberations of the examiner on the outcome of the examination.

In cases where the above are unable to be present, and the candidate wishes to have University representation in the viva, arrangements should be made for a member of University academic staff with Supervisory experience to be present, who may, or may not be a part of the Supervisory Team.

3.6 Appointment of Independent Non-examining Chairs at oral examination

An Independent non-Examining Chair (IneC) will normally be appointed to ensure that the viva voce examination of a candidate takes place to the appropriate standard. In addition to the practical functions associated with the viva examination, the principal duty is to ensure that the examiners have agreed what questions will be required to be answered by a candidate under examination and to ensure that this is undertaken fairly during the viva voce examination. The Independent Chair plays no part in the assessment of a candidate but may be called upon to advise the examiners in the interpretation of regulations when reaching an assessment decision. If required, the Chair may request further advice for the examiners from the Chair or Secretary of the Board. The duties of this role are defined in Appendix B of the University's *Notes for Examiners of Research Degrees*.

In cases where an oral examination is convened entirely using online technologies, the Board may approve the examination proceed without an Independent non-Examining Chair in order that the operation of the online examination not be affected by the greater number of participants, as long as the conduct of the examination is monitored by the internal examiner and supported by a member of Research & Innovation Services staff.

3.7 Aegrotat Awards

The degree of Aegrotat may be awarded on the basis of a thesis completed by a candidate which is ready for submission for examination,

but where the candidate for reasons of illness or other valid cause, is either unable to proceed with examination, and Exemption from Oral has been approved, or has undertaken an oral examination but is unable to fulfil the subsequent requirements of the examiners.

In such cases, the Board shall seek evidence that the candidate would have been likely to have been successful had the oral examination taken place, or in the case of an oral examination having been held, had the candidate been required to make minor amendments or been referred for resubmission. If no other evidence is available then the Supervisory Team might be invited to make an oral or written submission on the candidate's behalf.

In these circumstances the student (or his/her parent, spouse or other appropriate individual) must have signified that s/he is willing to accept the award, and must acknowledge that acceptance of such an award implies waiver of the possibility of re-assessment. Aegrotat awards will be listed as one of the following:

Aegrotat MPhil
Aegrotat M.Prof
Aegrotat PhD
Aegrotat D.Prof

3.8 Posthumous Awards

The degree of MPhil, M.Prof, PhD or D.Prof may be awarded posthumously on the basis of a thesis completed by a candidate which is ready for submission for examination. In such cases the Board shall seek evidence that the candidate would have been likely to have been successful had the oral examination taken place.

3.9 Ratification of Examiners' Recommendations

The Board shall make a decision on the reports and recommendation(s) of the examiners in respect of the candidate. The power to confer the degree shall rest with the Academic Board of the University.

3.10 Academic misconduct suspected in the thesis.

Where evidence of academic misconduct in preparation of the thesis, or other irregularities in the conduct of the examination come to light during, or subsequent to the recommendation of the examiners, the Board shall consider the matter, if necessary in consultation with the examiners, and take action in accordance with "*Regulations Related to Research Misconduct on Research Degree Programmes*"

3.11 Conduct of Examinations

The Board shall ensure that all examinations are conducted and the recommendations of the examiners are presented wholly in accordance with the University's regulations. In any instance where the Board is made aware of a failure to comply with all the procedures of the examination process, it may declare the examination null and void and appoint new examiners.

E4 **Procedures Prior to Viva Voce Examination**

4.1 Intention to Submit for Examination and Examiner Nomination

As part of a student's declaration of Intention to Submit for Examination, the Director of Studies shall propose, using the appropriate process, the arrangements for the candidate's examination to the Board for approval. In exceptional circumstances the Board may act directly to appoint examiners and arrange the examination of a candidate. The candidate shall confirm, through the declaration, that the work to be examined is their own, or that certain parts were undertaken in collaboration with others, and whether any other persons undertook any interviews, data collection, or experimentation on their behalf, or assisted with proof reading, and that the thesis has not been submitted for a comparable academic award. The candidate shall not be precluded from incorporating in the thesis, covering a wider field, work which has already been submitted for a degree or comparable award, provided that it is indicated, on the declaration form and also in the thesis, which work has been so incorporated. The candidate shall also obtain the signatures of the Supervisors indicating that they have been consulted about the submission.

4.2 Students under Interrupted Registration

An Examination Team may not be approved whilst a candidate is under approved Interruption of Registration.

4.3 Notifications to Candidate of Procedures

The Secretary of the Board shall make known to the candidate the procedure to be followed for the submission of the thesis (including the number of copies to be submitted for examination) and any conditions to be satisfied before the candidate may be considered eligible for examination.

4.4 Notification of Date of Oral Examination

The Secretary shall notify the candidate, all supervisors and the examiners of the date of the oral examination.

4.5 Circulation of Theses to Examiners

- a) The Secretary shall send a copy of the thesis to each examiner, together with the examiner's preliminary report form and the University's regulations, and shall ensure that the examiners are properly briefed as to their duties.

- b) The Secretary shall ensure that all the examiners have completed and returned the preliminary reports to the University before the oral examination takes place.

E5 The Candidate's Responsibilities in the Examination Process

5.1 Declaration of Intention to Submit for Examination

The candidate shall ensure that a declaration of Intention to Submit for Examination is made three months prior to the submission of a thesis. If expiry of Registration is within three months then candidates must either make a declaration of Intention to Submit for Examination or apply for an Extension of Registration. In cases where a student expects to submit in the period shortly after the expiry of Registration, the Board may grant a period of Extension of Registration to run concurrently with the Declaration of Intention to Submit for Examination period up to 3 months without the candidate being required to submit a separate application for an Extension of Registration, as long as the Declaration is made prior to the expiry of Registration.

The Board may withdraw any candidate who fails to declare their Intention to Submit for Examination or who fails to submit a thesis prior to expiry of the maximum registration period.

5.2 Conditions of Eligibility

The candidate shall satisfy any conditions of eligibility for examination required by the Board.

5.3 Examination Arrangements

The candidate shall take no part in the arrangement of the examination and shall have no formal contact with the External Examiner(s) between the appointment of the examiners and the oral examination.

5.4 Candidate's discretion in Submission

The submission of the thesis for examination, for the level of award for which they are registered, shall be at the sole discretion of the candidate. While a candidate would be unwise to submit the thesis for examination against the advice of the supervisors, it is his/her right to do so. Equally, candidates should not assume that a supervisor's agreement to the submission of a thesis guarantees the award of the degree.

5.5 Thesis format

The candidate shall ensure that the thesis format is in accordance with the requirements of the University's regulations see paragraph E1.9). Where hard copy submission is made, theses may be submitted for examination either in a permanently bound form or in a temporarily bound form which is sufficiently secure to ensure that pages cannot be added or removed. The thesis shall be presented in a permanent binding of the approved type (see paragraph E1.10) before the degree may be awarded. A thesis submitted in a temporarily bound form shall be in its final form in all respects save the binding. In such cases the candidate shall confirm that the contents of the permanently bound thesis are identical with the version submitted for examination, except where amendments have been made to meet the requirements of the examiners.

5.6 Thesis Binding Costs

The candidate shall be responsible for costs incurred in the submission of the thesis for examination, except where a specific budget has been allocated within a research project for the costs associated with binding a thesis.

5.7 Dyslexia

Candidates who have been officially diagnosed as Dyslexic should consult the Student Services Disability Co-ordinator so that appropriate facilities may be sought for proof-reading the thesis, and should consult Research and Innovation Services so that reasonable adjustments may be made for the conduct of the *viva voce* examination. A copy of the candidate's Dyslexia assessment may need to be seen and, with the candidate's approval, selected information shared with the Examiners to facilitate reasonable adjustments during the viva.

E6 Examiners

6.1 Composition of Examination Team

A candidate shall be examined by at least two, and normally not more than three, examiners of whom at least one shall be an External Examiner, and in the case of M.Prof or D.Prof, at least one of whom shall have up-to-date professional expertise.

6.2 Definition of Internal Examiner

An Internal Examiner shall be defined as an examiner who is:

- a) a member of staff of the University; or
- b) a member of staff of the candidate's Collaborating Establishment.
- c) Internal Examiners must be independent of the Supervisory Team and have taken no part in advising the Student on their research degree. Any prior connection with the student must be declared at the point of nomination as an Examiner on the Examiner Experience form.

6.3 Examination of Staff Candidates

Where the candidate and the Internal Examiner are both on the permanent staff of the same establishment, a second External Examiner shall be appointed. A candidate who is on a fixed short-term employment contract (for instance, a research assistant) shall be exempt from the requirements of this regulation.

6.4 Definition of External Examiner

An External Examiner shall be independent both of the University and of the Collaborating Establishment and shall not have acted previously as the candidate's supervisor or adviser, or normally, as transfer or progress assessor, or research collaborator. Any prior connection with the candidate, whether of the above nature, or other connection, must be declared at the point of nomination as an Examiner on the Examiner Experience form. An External Examiner shall normally not be either a supervisor of another candidate or an External Examiner on a taught course in the same department at the University.

Former members of staff or former students of the University shall normally not be approved as External Examiners until three years after the termination of their employment or completion of their studies with the University.

The Board shall ensure that the same External Examiner is not approved so frequently that his/her familiarity with the academic unit might prejudice objective judgement.

6.5 Experience of Examiners

- a) Examiners shall be experienced in research in the general area of the candidate's thesis and, where practicable, have experience as a specialist in the topic(s) to be examined.
- b) Within the limits of a maximum of three examiners, every effort should be made to appoint examiners to cover the academic content of interdisciplinary theses.
- c) At least one External Examiner shall have substantial experience (that is, normally two or more previous examinations) of examining research degree candidates. In an examination for PhD or D.Prof, at least one External Examiner shall have substantial experience of examining at Doctoral level.

6.6 Ineligibility of Research Students to act as Examiners

No candidate registered for a research degree either at this or another institution shall act as an Examiner.

6.7 External Examiners' Fees and Expenses

The University shall determine and pay the fees and expenses of the examiners.

E7 Examination Procedures: First Examination

71 Examiners' Confidential Independent Preliminary Reports

Each examiner shall read and examine the thesis and submit, on the appropriate form, an independent preliminary report on it to the Secretary three days before any oral or alternative form of examination is held for exchange between the Examiners. In completing the preliminary report, each examiner shall consider whether the thesis provisionally satisfied the requirements of the degree and where possible make an appropriate provisional recommendation subject to the outcome of any oral examination. Except where otherwise authorised by the Examiners, the content of the reports will be held in confidence between the Examiners and (following the oral examination) by the Board.

72 Examiners' Final Reports on First Examination

Following the oral examination the examiners shall, where they are in agreement, submit, on the appropriate form, a joint report and recommendation relating to the award of the degree to the Secretary. The preliminary reports and joint recommendation of the examiners shall together provide sufficiently detailed comments on the scope and quality of the work to enable the Board to satisfy itself that the recommendation chosen in paragraph E7.3 is correct. Where the examiners are not in agreement, separate reports and recommendations shall be submitted. The recommendations shall be made on the appropriate form.

73 Examiners' Recommendations

Following the completion of the examination the examiners may recommend that:

- a) the candidate be awarded the degree;
- b) the candidate be awarded the degree subject to amendments being made to the thesis (see paragraph E7.4)
- c) the candidate be permitted to re-submit for the degree and be re-examined, with or without an oral examination (see section E8);
- d) the candidate be not awarded the degree and be not permitted to be re-examined (see paragraph E7.9) or,
- e) in the case of a PhD or D.Prof examination, the candidate be awarded the degree of MPhil or M.Prof, respectively, subject to the presentation of the thesis amended to the satisfaction of the examiners..

Amendments

Where the examiners are satisfied that the candidate has in general reached the standard required for the degree, but consider that the candidate's thesis requires some amendments and corrections not so substantial as to call for the submission of a revised thesis, and recommend that the degree be awarded subject to the candidate amending the thesis to the satisfaction of the internal and/or the External Examiner(s), they shall indicate to the candidate in writing what amendments and corrections are required.

The candidate shall submit the amended thesis within the time limit specified by the examiners. This time limit commences on the date of the formal notification of the outcome of the viva at which the list of amendments and corrections required is delivered to the candidate.

Amendments can constitute: spelling, grammatical, and/or typing errors; or they may take the form of reordering of material, or minor textual additions for further clarification of the research but which does not require further research to be undertaken. In such cases, two options are available to the examiners: a) to recommend the candidate make spelling, grammatical and/or typing amendments *only within a maximum of 2 months*; b) that the candidate make amendments requiring more substantial changes or additions to the text within a period to be determined by the examiners *up to a maximum of 6 months*.

Following a recommendation for MPhil or MProf of work submitted for PhD or DProf, in addition to amendments specified by the examiners, amendment must also be made to the format of the thesis so that the length complies with the maximum length permitted for MPhil or MProf theses (see RDC-B4.1 and RDC-C4.1). The maximum period permitted for such amendments is 6 months

Non-unanimous Recommendations

Where the examiners' recommendations are not unanimous, the Board may:

- a) accept a majority recommendation (provided that the majority recommendation includes at least one External Examiner);
- b) accept the recommendation of the External Examiner; or
- c) require the appointment of an additional External Examiner.

76 Appointment of Additional External Examiner

Where an additional External Examiner is appointed, the appointee shall prepare an independent preliminary report on the basis of the thesis and, if considered necessary, may conduct a further oral examination. That examiner should not be informed of the recommendations of the other examiners. On receipt of the report from the additional examiner, the Board shall proceed with completion of the examination.

77 Examinations additional to the Oral

A further examination in addition to the oral examination may be requested by the examiners. In such cases the approval of the Board shall be sought without delay. Where such an examination is arranged following an oral examination, it shall normally be held within two calendar months of the oral examination unless the Board permits otherwise. Any such examination shall be deemed to be part of the candidate's first examination.

78 Referral prior to Oral

Where the examiners are of the opinion that the thesis is so unsatisfactory that no useful purpose would be served by conducting an oral examination or alternative examination, they may recommend that the Board dispense with the oral examination or alternative examination and refer the thesis for further work. In such cases the examiners shall provide the Board with written guidance for the candidate concerning the deficiencies of the thesis. The examiners shall not recommend that a candidate fail outright without holding an oral examination or other alternative examination.

79 Notification of deficiencies of Theses

Where the Board decides that the degree be not awarded and that no re-examination be permitted, the examiners shall prepare an agreed statement of the deficiencies of the thesis and the reason for their recommendation, which shall be forwarded to the candidate by the Secretary.

710 Feedback to Candidates

Examiners may also provide comments on the Recommendation form which can be given to the candidate in writing, on matters relating to their work

711 Responsibilities of examiners following recommendation of amendments

If a recommendation of amendments is made by the examiners following oral examination, the responsibility for how such amendments will be approved shall be clearly indicated on the appropriate form at the viva voce examination. Either one or both of the examiners may request final approval of required amendments, whether external or internal examiner. If it is specified that both examiners will require final approval, but in the intervening period between recommendations being made and the amendments being submitted for final approval, either of the examiners becomes unavailable, it shall be acceptable for the other examiner to make a final approval, as long as the examiner making final approval is an external examiner. If an external examiner is unavailable, a decision about how final approval of amendments will be done will be taken by the Board.

712 Candidate non-submission of required revisions or amendments

Where, following examination, the examiners have recommended that a candidate for a research degree be required to make amendments for the award, or that revision and resubmission is required for re-examination, a candidate who does not submit required amendments or resubmit a revised thesis, will be deemed to have failed the examination. Where the examiners have referred a submitted thesis for revision prior to oral examination (RPO), a candidate who does not submit a revised thesis, will be deemed to have not completed the course requirements, because the two stages of examination will not have been fulfilled.

E8 Examination Procedures: Re-examination

8.1 Criteria and Deadlines

One re-examination may be permitted by the Board, subject to the following requirements:

- a) a candidate who fails to satisfy the examiners at the first examination, including where appropriate the oral or approved alternative examination or any further examination required may, on the recommendation of the examiners and with the approval of the Board, be permitted to revise the thesis and be re-examined;
- b) the examiners shall provide the candidate, through the Board, with written guidance on the deficiencies of the first submission; and
- c) *Deadline for Re-submission of revised thesis*

the candidate shall submit for re-examination within the period of one calendar year from the date of the latest part of the first examination. Where the Board has dispensed with the oral examination the re-examination shall take place within one calendar year of the date of this dispensation. The Board may, where there are good reasons, approve an extension of this period.

Candidates do not need to make a declaration of Intention to Submit for Examination in cases of resubmission following first examination, but resubmissions must be made within the deadline for resubmission.

The Board may fail any candidate who fails to resubmit a thesis prior to expiry of the deadline for resubmission.

8.2 Appointment of Additional Examiner for re-examination

The Board may require that an additional External Examiner be appointed for the re-examination.

8.3 Forms of re-examination

There are five forms of re-examination:

- a) where the candidate's performance in the first oral or approved alternative examination or further examination was satisfactory but the thesis was unsatisfactory and the examiners on re-

examination certify that the thesis as revised is satisfactory, the Board may exempt the candidate from further examination, oral or otherwise;

- b) where the candidate's performance in the first oral or approved alternative examination or further examination was unsatisfactory and the thesis was also unsatisfactory, any re-examination shall include a re-examination of the thesis and an oral or approved alternative examination;
- c) where on the first examination the candidate's thesis was so unsatisfactory that the Board dispensed with the oral examination, any re-examination shall include a re-examination of the thesis and an oral or approved alternative examination;
- d) where on the first examination the candidate's thesis was satisfactory but the performance in the oral and/or other examination(s) was not satisfactory the candidate shall be re-examined in the oral and/or other examination(s), subject to the time limits, without being requested to revise and re-submit the thesis;
- e) where on the first examination the thesis was satisfactory but the candidate's performance in relation to the other requirements for the award of the degree was not satisfactory, the examiners may propose instead a different form of re-examination to test the candidate's abilities; such examination may take place only with the approval of the Board.

8.4 Examiners' Confidential Independent Preliminary Reports on Re-Examination

In the case of a re-examination, each examiner shall read and examine the thesis and submit, on the appropriate form, an independent preliminary report before any oral or alternative form of examination is held. In completing the preliminary report, each examiner shall consider whether the thesis provisionally satisfies the requirements of the degree and where possible make an appropriate provisional recommendation subject to the outcome of any oral examination, or without the need for further oral being held.

Except where otherwise authorised by the Examiners, the content of the reports will be held in confidence between the Examiners and (following the oral examination) by the Board.

8.5 Examiners' Final Report on Re-Examination

Following the re-examination of the thesis or following an oral or other examination, the examiners shall, where they are in agreement, submit,

on the appropriate form, a joint report and recommendation relating to the award of the degree to the Secretary. The preliminary reports and joint recommendation of the examiners shall together provide sufficiently detailed comments on the scope and quality of the work to enable the Board to satisfy itself that the recommendation chosen is correct. Where the examiners are not in agreement, separate reports and recommendations shall be submitted. The recommendations shall be made on the appropriate form.

8.6 Examiners' Recommendations following Re-Examination

Following the completion of the re-examination the examiners may recommend that:

- a) the candidate be awarded the degree;
- b) the candidate be awarded the degree subject to amendments being made to the thesis (see paragraph E8.7);
- c) the candidate be not awarded the degree and be not permitted to be re-examined (see paragraphs E8.11 and E8.12); or
- d) in the case of a PhD or D.Prof re-examination, the candidate be awarded the degree of MPhil or M.Prof, respectively, subject to the presentation of the thesis amended to the satisfaction of the examiners.

8.7 Amendments following Re-Examination

Where the examiners are satisfied that the candidate has in general reached the standard required for the degree, but consider that the candidate's thesis requires some amendments and corrections not so substantial as would constitute the submission of a considerably revised thesis (which in the context of a re-examination would constitute a failure), and recommend that the degree be awarded subject to the candidate amending the thesis to the satisfaction of the internal and/or the External Examiner(s), they shall indicate to the candidate in writing what amendments and corrections are required.

The candidate shall submit the amended thesis within the time limit specified by the examiners. This time limit commences on the date of the formal notification of the outcome of the viva at which the list of amendments and corrections required is delivered to the candidate by the Secretary of the Board.

Amendments can constitute: spelling, grammatical, and/or typing errors; or they may take the form of reordering of material, or minor textual additions for further clarification of the research but which does not require further research to be undertaken. In such cases, two options are available to the examiners: a) to recommend the candidate make spelling, grammatical and/or typing amendments only within a maximum

of 2 months; b) that the candidate make amendments requiring more substantial changes or additions to the text within a period to be determined by the examiners *up to a maximum of 6 months*.

Following a recommendation of MPhil or MProf for work submitted for PhD or DProf, in addition to amendments specified by the examiners, amendment must also be made to the format of the thesis so that the length complies with the maximum length permitted for MPhil or MProf theses (see RDC-B4.1 and RDC-C4.1). The maximum period permitted for such amendments is 6 months

8.8 Non-unanimous Recommendations following Re-Examination

Where the examiners' recommendations are not unanimous, the Board may:

- a) accept a majority recommendation (provided that the majority recommendation includes at least one External Examiner);
- b) accept the recommendation of the External Examiner; or
- c) require the appointment of an additional External Examiner.

8.9 Appointment of additional External Examiner following Re-Examination

Where an additional External Examiner is appointed, the appointee shall prepare an independent preliminary report on the basis of the thesis and, if considered necessary, may conduct a further oral examination. That examiner should not be informed of the recommendations of the other examiners. On receipt of the report from the additional examiner, the Board shall proceed with completion of the examination.

8.10 Examinations additional to the oral Re-Examination

A further examination in addition to the oral examination may be requested by the examiners. In such cases the approval of the Board shall be sought without delay. Where such an examination is arranged following an oral examination, it shall normally be held within two calendar months of the oral examination unless the Board permits otherwise.

8.11 Recommendation for Failure without oral Re-Examination

In the case of a re-examination, where the examiners are of the opinion that the resubmitted thesis is so unsatisfactory that no useful purpose would be served by conducting an oral examination, they may recommend that the Board dispense with the oral examination and not award the degree, except in those cases where the first examination outcome was referral prior to oral examination (RPO).

8.12 Notification of Deficiencies of the thesis following Re-Examination

Where the Board decides that the degree be not awarded, the examiners shall prepare an agreed statement of the deficiencies of the thesis and the reason for their recommendation, which shall be forwarded to the candidate by the Secretary.

8.13 Feedback to Candidates

Examiners may also provide comments on the Recommendation form which can be given to the candidate in writing, on matters relating to their work

8.14 Responsibilities of examiners following recommendation of amendments

If a recommendation of amendments is made by the examiners following oral examination, the responsibility for how such amendments will be approved shall be clearly indicated on the appropriate form at the viva voce examination. Either one or both of the examiners may request final approval of required amendments, whether external or internal examiner. If it is specified that both examiners will require final approval, but in the intervening period between recommendations being made and the amendments being submitted for final approval, either of the examiners becomes unavailable, it shall be acceptable for the other examiner to make a final approval, as long as the examiner making final approval is an external examiner. If an external examiner is unavailable, a decision about how final approval of amendments will be done will be taken by the Board.

8.15 Candidate non-submission of required revisions or amendments

Where, following examination, the examiners have recommended that a candidate for a research degree be required to make amendments for the award, or that revision and resubmission is required for re-examination, a candidate who does not submit required amendments or resubmit a revised thesis, will be deemed to have failed the examination. Where the examiners have referred a submitted thesis for revision prior to oral examination (RPO), a candidate who does not submit a revised thesis, will be deemed to have not completed the course requirements, because the two stages of examination will not have been fulfilled.

E9 Candidate's Temporary Absence from Viva

9.1 Permission for temporary absence

Examiners may, if circumstances warrant, and they are in agreement, permit a candidate to be absent temporarily from a viva.

9.2 Candidate Accompanied

When leaving a viva, candidates will be accompanied by the Internal Examiner, or Observer. In the absence of either, the Examiners are required to contact the Secretary who would accompany the candidate.

9.3 Time limit for temporary absence

Candidates will normally be allowed up to 20 minutes' absence before returning to the *viva*.

9.4 Circumstances for temporary absence

A candidate may request permission to leave a *viva*, or for the viva to be halted under the following circumstances:

a) Illness

- i) If a candidate is taken ill during a *viva*, an Examiner (or Observer, if present) must contact the Secretary of the Board so that arrangements may be made for appropriate action to be taken and First Aid advice obtained if necessary.
- ii) The Secretary should inform the Chair or Deputy-Chair of the Board, if available.

b) For personal reasons

- i) A candidate wishing to leave the examination room for any other urgent reason (e.g. to visit the toilet).
- ii) When a candidate visits the toilet, the extent of supervision is left to the discretion of the person accompanying the candidate who must ensure, as far as possible, that the candidate does not have access to unauthorised material and does not communicate with any other person.
- iii) In the above circumstances, a candidate will be given 20 minutes to return to the *viva*.

- c) *Other absences from the Viva*
- i) In the event of a candidate withdrawing from the examination room for reasons other than b) above, the Examiners shall contact the Secretary of the Board who will attend the examination room for a briefing on the events.
 - i) The Observer, or Secretary should try to find the Candidate and to elicit the reason for the absence and report the circumstances to the Examiners).
 - ii) Through the Observer or Secretary, the Examiners should try to encourage the candidate back to the examination room.
 - iv) The Secretary should inform the Chair or Deputy-Chair of the Board, if available.

9.6 Recommencement of the Viva

When the candidate returns to the examination room the Examiners should ensure that the candidate is at ease and must summarise the last question answered, to help reset the agenda

9.7 Failure to return to the Viva

Failure to return to the Viva shall not in itself cause a candidate to be failed for the award of the degree for which the candidate is being examined. However, if the candidate fails to return within the deadline, or leaves without the unanimous agreement of the Examiners, the Examiners may act as follows:

- a) recommend that the remaining part of the *viva* be dispensed with if they are satisfied that a recommendation on the award can be made; *or*
- b) recommend that the *viva* be rearranged within one month, except if *Exemption from oral* applies; *or*
- c) deem the candidate to have failed the *viva* and require that a further *viva* be rearranged within one month, except if *Exemption from Oral* applies;

9.8 Rearrangement of Viva

- a) In the case of E9.7b a record must be made so that the examiners can refer back to the earlier discussion and take note of it during the reconvened viva;
- b) In the case of E9.7c, a rearranged viva will be conducted as if for the first time.

9.9 Reporting of incidents

The circumstances of any illness, or other reason for leaving the examination room, including the duration of any absence, must be reported in the Examiners' Report Form on the Recommendations for the Viva.

9.10 Candidates may use the *Extenuating Circumstances Regulations (Research Degree Programmes)* to halt a commenced examination which they cannot continue resulting in the examination not being completed. This is only applicable in situations where they cannot return.

The procedure of use of these Regulations is set out therein and should be referred to in cases where a candidate cannot continue with an already commenced examination and to which they cannot return.

E10 CONDUCT OF ORAL EXAMINATIONS USING ONLINE TECHNOLOGIES

After Declaration of Intention to Submit is made and examiners approved

RIS staff contact the examiners to begin the viva arrangements. A number of confirmations related to remote format are conducted. Tentative viva date agreed with examiners pending thesis submission.

At submission

Student submits PDF version of thesis to PGRThesisSubmission@tees.ac.uk

RIS staff forward the thesis to the examiners and confirm the viva date and arrangements previously tentatively agreed. For a viva entirely online, a Zoom meeting will be created for the date/time agreed and information about joining the online meeting sent to all participants as part of the confirmation.

Online viva conduct

The Board may approve the examination proceed without an Independent non-Examining Chair in order that the operation of the online examination not be affected by the greater number of participants, as long as the conduct of the examination is monitored by the internal examiner and supported by a member of Research & Innovation Services staff.

Online format

The viva will be conducted using the Zoom online meeting platform, with the student at one location, and the two examiners at a second and third location respectively. Online vivas will be hosted by a member of RIS staff. If a student has requested that their supervisor be present as an observer, the supervisor may also be at the meeting.

Opting out: students or examiners

Students may opt out of undertaking the viva in an entirely online form in cases where they are concerned either that the online format will have a significant negative affect on their performance or if they have accessibility or other serious personal circumstances that would make undertaking the viva online unfairly challenging for them (ie: disability, lack of suitable space, childcare responsibilities etc). If this is the case, you will be informed that the viva will need to be scheduled for a time after standard in-person vivas are possible again. As an examiner, you may also need to opt out if you have reasons that would prevent you from performing the examination duties. If this is the case, please inform RIS immediately.

Device requirements

To undertake the viva online via Zoom, participants will need access to a device capable of video and audio support suitable for a sustained interaction online, with a quality camera and microphone. A tablet, such as an iPad is ideal for this, but most modern laptops should be able to accommodate this requirement. Participants should also have access to a space in which they will have the minimum of disturbance for the duration of the viva, which can be for several hours. If participants do not have such a device or they do not have a suitable space in which to participate, RIS should be informed as soon as possible.

Viva scheduling and submission

RIS staff will schedule a tentative date and time with examiners. The tentative viva date will be based on the student's intended submission date, allowing time for examiners to assess the thesis after submission. After submission RIS staff will confirm the previously tentative viva date. At this point, examiners will be sent the details about joining the online viva and full guidance on using the Zoom online meeting platform. This correspondence will be via PGRVivaArrangements@tees.ac.uk only. However, examiners are also asked to provide a phone number where they may be contacted quickly and as contingency for technical issues during the viva or for reporting of illness.

Student not submitting on time

If a student is unable to submit within a reasonable time, up to one week late, of the intended submission date, the tentative viva date is likely to need to be postponed. Examiners will be contacted as soon as this is known and the viva date re-scheduled.

Illness

If either an examiner becomes ill in the period prior to the confirmed viva, RIS should be contacted immediately. Examiners will be contacted immediately if a student becomes ill and the viva cannot take place.